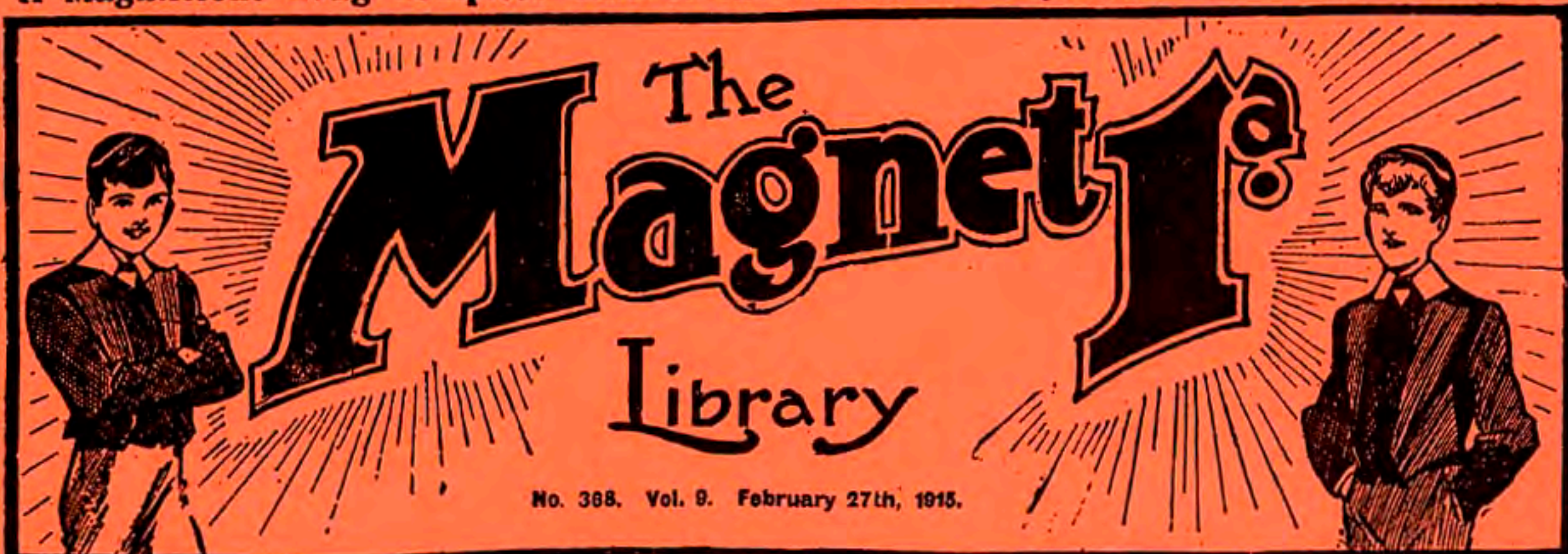


"CAPTURED AT LAST!"

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



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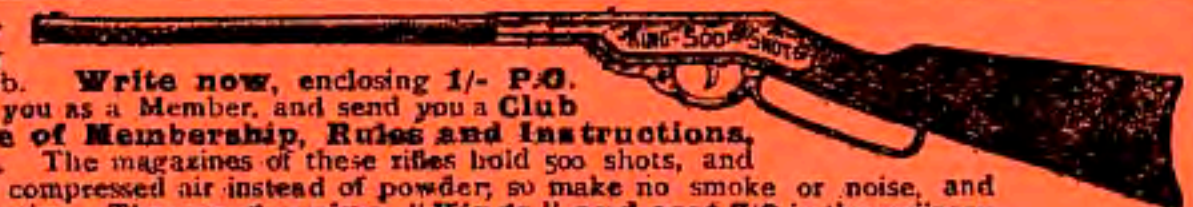
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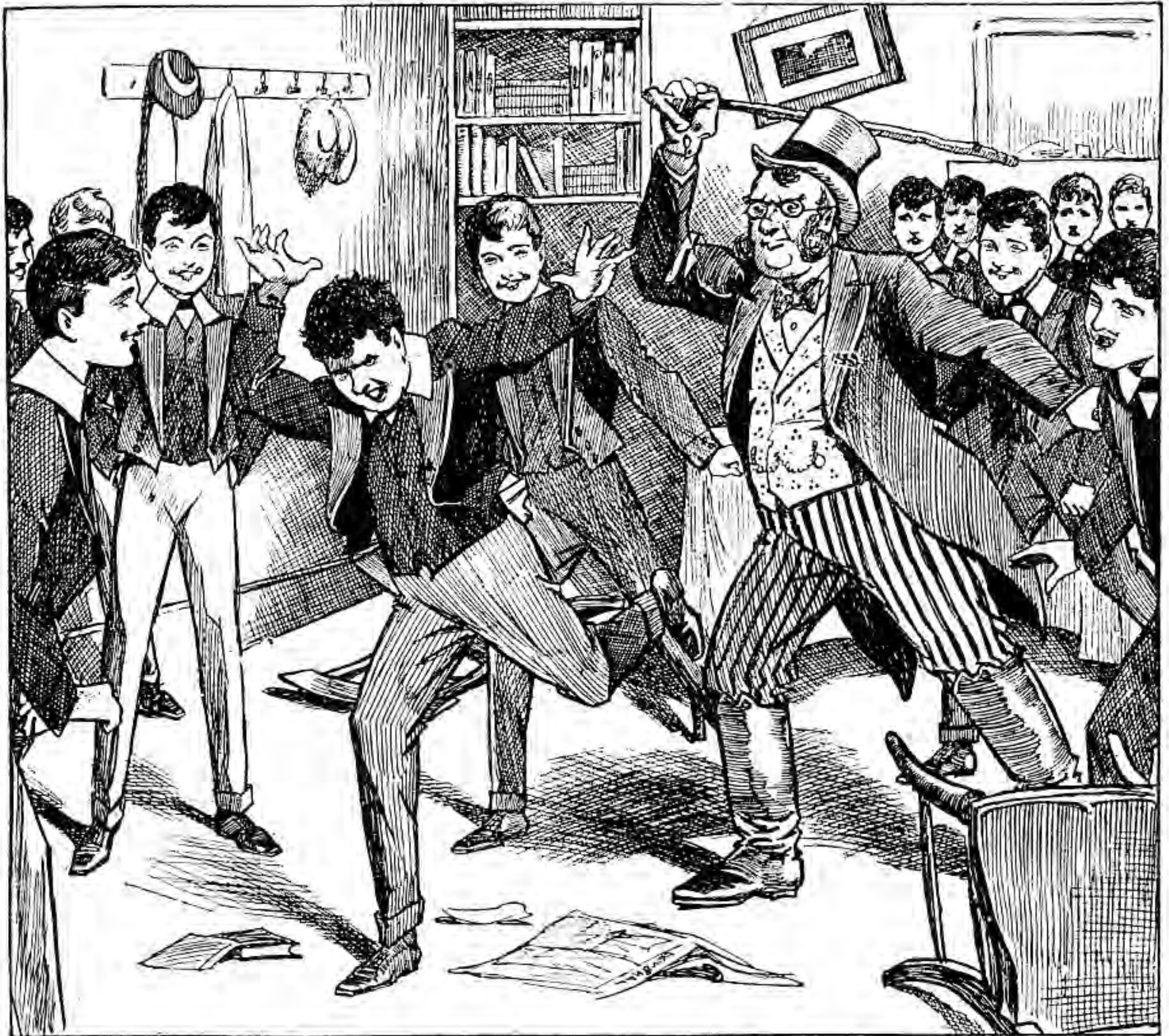


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CAPTURED AT LAST!

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

By FRANK RICHARDS.



"Yah!" roared Bull. "Ow! ow! ow! Leggo, you villain! Rescue, you fellows! Yaroo!" "Ha, ha, ha!"
"Go it, uncle!" "Give him beans!" cried the Removites. "Whack, whack, whack!" (See Chapter 4.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Little Rag in No. 1 Study!

"CAUGHT, by gum!"
Cecil Temple, of the Fourth Form at Greyfriars, uttered that exclamation in suppressed tones.
Temple of the Fourth was in No. 1 Study in the Remove passage, which belonged to Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent.

The door was shut; but on the other side of the door he had suddenly heard the sound of footsteps and voices. And, from the alarm that came into the face of Temple of the Fourth, it was evident that he was not in No. 1 Study on a friendly visit.

Temple had been very busy there for the last five minutes. The previous night there had been a Remove raid in the Fourth Form dormitory, and the Fourth-Formers had been hopelessly "whopped" in a pillow-

fight. And this afternoon, Temple had taken advantage of the fact that the chums of the Remove were out of doors, to pay a visit to No. 1 Study—not with friendly intentions.

He had been very busy. Already he had, in a short space of time, proceeded considerably with his intended "rag." He had filled the inkpot with cycle-oil, first pouring the ink into the jam-pot in the cupboard—with far from beneficial results to the jam. He had emptied a pot of honey upon the seat of the armchair, and poured a pound of pickles into the clock—which ceased ticking in protest.

Then, before he had time to proceed any further, came the footsteps in the passage, and the voices of the Removites.

Temple looked round him wildly.

If Harry Wharton & Co. caught him in the study after what he had done, the ragging he had perpetrated would be nothing whatever to the ragging that he would suffer. And it was too late to escape.

"Caught!" gasped Temple. "What the deuce are they coming in for; they were going to watch the First Eleven, the beasts! Oh, my hat!"

The footsteps were almost at the door.

Cecil Temple made a desperate dive under the table, and crouched there, breathing hard. There was a big cover on the table, and it concealed all but his feet, which were not likely to be noticed, unless the juniors looked specially under the table. He had to chance it, anyway; it was a case of any port in a storm.

He had barely ensconced himself there, when the door-handle turned. Temple of the Fourth could not see the juniors who entered, but he counted five pairs of feet.

Evidently it was the whole Co.—the Famous Five of the Remove. There was no mistaking Bob Cherry's feet, at least; they were easily recognisable from their size.

Temple almost held his breath.

Harry Wharton threw the door shut, and the hidden Fourth-Former suppressed a groan. It was not merely a momentary visit to the study to fetch something; the beasts had come to stay. If they thought of searching the room when they discovered the rag, it was all up with the captain of the Fourth.

"No need for you fellows to bother." Temple recognised the voice of Johnny Bull. "You can cut off and watch Wingate getting goals."

"No fear!" said Harry Wharton.

"We're going to help you write the letter, dear boy," chuckled Bob Cherry. "We're going to see that you put it nicely."

"A letter to your esteemed uncle requires great carefulness, my esteemed Johnny," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Our honourable helpfulness is going to be terrific."

Temple grinned under the table. If Hurree Singh helped Bull to write the letter in the same kind of English that he used in conversation, Bull's uncle would be surprised when he received it.

Johnny Bull snorted.

"Look here, you fellows——"

"We're going to look," said Frank Nugent; "it's no good, Johnny, we're going to keep an eye on you."

"You silly asses!" growled Johnny Bull.

Temple wondered what it meant. Letters home were not generally regarded with much enthusiasm. For four fellows to insist upon helping Johnny Bull to write to his uncle, apparently against his wish, was something very peculiar. Cecil Temple was getting interested.

"Now, look here, Johnny," said Bob Cherry, taking a seat in the arm-chair. "we—— Why, what—ooooch! I'm sticky! What thundering ass has been spilling treacle in the armchair?"

Bob Cherry bounded out of the armchair as if it had become red-hot. Honey was streaming down his trousers and the tail of his jacket. Bob screwed himself round and took a furious view of his garments.

"My only hat! Why, I'll—I'll—grooogh! Look at my trucks!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at, you silly asses? There isn't anything to cackle at! I'm simply smothered with treacle! Grooogh! It's soaking through! Ow!"

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"The soakfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Singh. "It is a ragful joke of some esteemed duffer!"

"I'll rag him!" gasped Bob. "Look at my bags—look at em!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This must be one of the Fourth-Form idiots! Grooh! Temple or Dabney or one of those fatheads! Oooooch! You fellows can help Johnny with his letter. I'm going to change my bags! Oooooch!"

Bob Cherry stamped out of the study. The chums of the Remove chuckled, but they took care not to sit in the sticky armchair. Bob's misadventure was funny, but they did not want to share the fun to that extent. Johnny Bull drew up a chair to the table, and sat down.

"You fellows had better go and watch the footer match," he urged; "I can write this letter all right——"

"Bow-wow!" said Nugent. "We've brought you in here to write it, and we're going to keep an eye on you. We know what you want to do; you want to be rude to a dear, affectionate old relative who's rolling in quids. And we won't allow it. Think of the quids!"

"Blow the quids!" growled Bull.

"Besides, he isn't a bad sort," urged Harry Wharton. "He's never seen you, Johnny, but he writes quite affectionately. Perhaps he wouldn't, if he had seen you," added Wharton thoughtfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And he's only lately come home from Australia, Johnny," said Frank Nugent; "it's up to you to be nice to him."

"Rats!"

"My esteemed Johnny——"

"Look here," said Johnny Bull surlily, "my Uncle Bull has treated me badly. He thinks I'm going to look over it because he's rolling in money. Well, I'm not! I'm going to show him how precious little I care about his beastly money! Coming down to see me, by gum, just as if nothing had happened! I'll show him! Hang his money! He can keep it, and be blowed! Br-r-r-r!"

"Quite right," said Wharton; "I admit he hasn't played up as one has a right to expect of an affectionate uncle. But, then, he's never seen you."

"I don't care a rap!"

"And he don't know what kind of a johnny you are, you know."

"He'll know when he gets my letter!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "I should have written before, if you silly asses hadn't been bothering me about it. Now he may come down before he gets my letter. I'll show him! Old skinflint, to think I'll stand his cheek because he's got a lot of filthy quids! Br-r-r-r! Now you see what kind of a letter I'll bung on him!"

Johnny Bull jabbed the pen into the inkpot, and began to write. Then he gave a yell of wrath.

"You thumping asses, is this your idea of a joke when you bring a chap into your study to write a letter?"

"What on earth——"

"Tain't ink," howled Johnny Bull, "you asses! It's oil! Look at my letter."

"Well, you can't send that, certainly," said Nugent.

"Some ragging beast has been here. Never mind; here's a fountain-pen."

Johnny Bull grunted and took the fountain-pen and a fresh sheet of paper. Then he began to write. Harry Wharton and Nugent and Inky watched him over his shoulder. They were taking a fatherly interest in that letter. Johnny Bull had reason to feel exasperated with his uncle, but his chums weren't going to let him express his feelings too plainly in his letter to that worthy gentleman.

Old Mr. Bull had recently come home from Australia with the intention of seeing his nephew, and, if satisfied with him, making him his heir, and taking him back to the South with him, and bringing him up to succeed him in his tremendous business.

It was a prospect of worldly advantage that might have appealed to any youth. But the old gentleman had not gone the right way to work with Johnny Bull, who was of an independent nature, and sometimes, perhaps, a little too much so. Knowing nothing personally about his nephew, and being, perhaps, a little too suspicious of being taken in, the old gentleman had sent his secretary down to the neighbourhood, to make private inquiries

concerning Johnny Bull. He wanted to have sure information about the junior—surer than he could have obtained from reports from his masters.

And as it happened that the secretary was a rascal, whose desire was to keep Johnny Bull "out of it," for his own personal advantage, the result of the old gentleman's little scheme had been disastrous. The secretary had made an attempt to blacken the junior's character, and very nearly succeeded. Fortunately, he had not quite succeeded. But it left Johnny Bull feeling extremely sore, and far from entertaining any feeling of affection for his uncle.

And now that old Mr. Bull had written to say he was coming down to see him, just as if nothing had happened, Johnny was "wrathy."

But his chums took a different view. They wisely decided that they weren't going to let Johnny Bull quarrel with a relative who wanted to make him heir to a large fortune. They were looking after Johnny for his own sake. They took great care that he did not dodge away to write the intended letter without their supervision. Johnny Bull had to put it off, and he was growing as exasperated with his chums as with his uncle.

He was writing the letter at last, with three juniors looking over his shoulder. And if the letter did not meet with their approval, they didn't intend to let him send it. They grinned as they followed Johnny's pen over the paper.

"Dear Uncle,—I have received your letter. I don't want you to come and see me. I think it was rotten to send your beastly secretary down here to spy on me. If you can't take a chap on trust, don't take him at all."

"J. BULL."

"There, that's straight from the 'shoulder,'" said Johnny, with a snort. "That'll put the stopper on."

"A great deal too straight from the shoulder," grinned Wharton. "You're jolly well not going to send that letter."

"I am going to send it!" roared Johnny Bull wrathfully. "I don't want my uncle to come bothering me here."

"Bow-wow! If he comes we'll stand him a feed in the study, and you're going to be jolly civil to him," said Nugent.

"Why, you—you—you—"

"My esteemed Johnny, I beg you to take a sweetly reasonable view—"

"Go and eat coke! I tell you— Why—what—" Johnny Bull broke off in astonishment, as his boot knocked against something under the table, and there was a sharp yelp:

"Ow!"

"Why, there's somebody—"

"My hat! It's—"

The juniors had no time to say more. Temple of the Fourth was desperate. He rose up under the table, fairly lifting the table on his shoulders, pitched it over, and bolted for the door.

"My hat! Yaroooh!" roared Johnny Bull, as he rolled over backwards from his chair, the table pitching over on him. Wharton and Nugent and Inky, who were behind him, went staggering.

Temple made one desperate bound to the door.

He had it open, and bolted into the passage, before the Removites could make a movement. When Wharton rushed to the door, Temple was already at the stairs, and he went sailing down the banisters.

"My hat!" gasped Wharton. "He was under the table—"

"All the time!" stuttered Nugent.

"Lend a fellow a hand, you silly idiots!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Johnny Bull had come off worst. The table was upside-down on him, and the inkpot was on his neck, streaming inky cycle-oil over him. Johnny Bull's face was purple. The juniors dragged the table off, and Johnny Bull sat up.

"Oh, crumbs! You fatheads, not to see that beast under the table. Grooh! I'm oily! Oh, crikey! Look at my collar! Look at my jacket! I'll—I'll—" Words failed Johnny Bull. He bounded to his feet, and rushed forth in search of Cecil Temple.

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Harry Wharton chuckled, and shoved Johnny Bull's letter into the fire. That letter home had to be re-written.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Jape of the Season!

"THIS is where we smile!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth Form smiled in chorus, with a smile that could be heard at the end of the passage.

The heroes of the Fourth were in high feather.

For once they had had the better of the Remove. Temple, Dabney & Co. were on the warpath. Although they represented the Upper Fourth, and the Remove was only the Lower Fourth, it had to be admitted that as a rule the Removites scored in their little troubles. Somehow or other the Famous Five generally came out ahead. But Cecil Temple had declared that he was going to change all that. He was going to show the Remove who was who and what was what. And he frowned majestically when Fry, who was a bit of a humorist, suggested that he should also show them which was which.

It was time that the Fourth Form put their foot down, Temple declared; and in that his chums fully agreed with him. And certainly they had scored a little success to go on with. Temple had returned to his study, after his exciting visit to No. 1, and burst in breathless, to relate to Dabney and Fry and Scott his thrilling adventures, which had been interrupted by Johnny Bull of the Remove charging into the study like a wild elephant. The four Fourth-Formers had piled on Johnny Bull like one man, and the sturdy junior was overcome by numbers, frog-marched down the passage, and driven forth to his own quarters under a general application of boot-leather.

So, as Cecil Temple justly remarked, that was where they smiled.

"These kids," said Temple airily—"these fags can't keep up their end against us, you know, if we take them in hand seriously. We've let the Remove swank too long. They can down old Coker of the Fifth—Coker's an ass—but they can't down us—what?"

"No fear!"

"You should have seen that fathead Cherry sitting in the honey—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that idiot Bull trying to write a letter home with cycle-oil!"

"He, he, he!"

Temple was elated. Often and often, after he had sought to score over the chums of the Remove, the results had been such that his faithful followers had turned upon him and called him names. This time he had an ovation. And he was not finished yet. Success only spurred him on. Like Alexander, he sighed for fresh worlds to conquer. He was determined to show the Co. that he, Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth, was really "it."

"But that's only a beginning," said Temple, when the loyal Co. ceased from chuckling, and the study was at rest. "I've got an idea, you chaps. A first-class, gilt-edged jape that will make those Remove kids look quite green and yellow. They've got an idea that they have a monopoly in japes. We're going to show them. It came into my head while I was under the table. It's a topper!"

"Go it!" said Dabney, Fry, and Scott in chorus.

"There's been a lot of jaw among those kids about Bull's uncle lately. He's come home from New Zealand or South Africa or somewhere, and there's been some trouble between him and his nephew, I don't know exactly what. But from what they were saying, he's going to visit Bull, and Bull doesn't want him. He's quite a stranger—fresh from Tasmania, or wherever it is—and Bull's never seen him, and don't want to. Now, what do you think is my idea?"

"Give it up," said Dabney, puzzled. "I don't see —"

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

"You remember the time Bunter pretended he had an uncle in the Army, and Wibley of the Remove made himself up, and pretended to be Bunter's uncle," said Temple. "I don't mean to say that I've borrowed my idea from that Remove fag," Temple added hastily. "Of course, I wouldn't do that. I'm only mentioning that as an illustration."

"Ye-es, of—of course," said Fry.

"Simply to show you what I mean," said Temple. "We can think of our own wheezes, I hope, without borrowing them from Lower Fourth kids. It came into my head when I was under their table, listening to their silly jaw. I mean I wasn't listening, of course, but I couldn't help hearing, as I was under the table. Now, those kids swank an awful lot over their dramatic society; which is like their cheek, because we had a dramatic society in the Fourth before they ever dreamed of one in the Remove. As for acting, I think everybody present will admit that we can act their heads off."

Everybody present admitted it at once.

"Well, then," said Temple, "what's the matter with making up an uncle for Johnny Bull, same as Wib did for Bunter?"

"My hat!"

"Not the same, I mean, but better," said Temple. "What that Remove ass did rather rottenly, we can do awfully well—see? The old josses has never been seen at Greyfriars, and Bull's never seen him, you know, and won't know him from Adam. Suppose a particularly ferocious old gent dropped in as Uncle Bull, with a big stick——"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"And gave Bull a jolly good hiding for not answering his letter. I heard 'em say that he hadn't answered it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You see, Bull is rather a tough beast to tackle in a scrap, but he couldn't whop his uncle. There's such a thing as respect for one's elders," grinned Temple. "His uncle comes here and thrashes him with a big stick."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rather!" gasped Dabney. "But—but—but the making up——"

"Well, I'm a good actor," said Temple modestly: "and we've got plenty of tin. We'll do the job thoroughly. Instead of making myself up, I'll get down to old Lazarus's in Courtfield. He'll lend me the things—clothes and beard and things, you know—and help me to make up. He does a lot of business with theatrical people in connection with Courtfield Theatre Royal, and I'll make him help me, and make a really good job of it—what?"

"Cecil, old man, you're a giddy genius!" said Fry admiringly. "Blessed if I know where you get these ripping ideas from!"

It was pretty plain where Temple had got that ripping idea from, but none of the Fourth-Formers would have admitted that they were beholden to the Remove for ideas. Cecil Reginald Temple smiled with satisfaction.

"You fellows come with me," he said. "You can help. Then you can come back without me, and be on the scene ready to see the fun. I'll come in a taxi from Courtfield, as if I'd come there by train—what?"

"Topping!"

"Hooray! Let's get off!" said Scott.

Temple, Dabney & Co. got off at once. They were full of that ripping idea. They sauntered across the Close with smiling faces. In the Close they passed the Famous Five, who were going down to the footer ground, with Squiff and Mark Linley, to watch the first eleven match. Johnny Bull seemed to be limping a little. He had not quite recovered from the frog's-march in the Fourth Form passage.

Johnny Bull glared at the sight of Temple, Dabney & Co.

"Hallo! Give these cads a bumping, you chaps," he exclaimed. "We can see the match afterwards."

"Hear, hear!" said Squiff.

But Temple, Dabney & Co. were not out for a scrap just then; they had other fish to fry. They made a dash for the gates, with the Removites whooping in.

pursuit. The Fourth-Formers dashed out of the gates and scudded away down the road to Courtfield, and Harry Wharton & Co. sent a derisive yell after them.

Then the chums of the Remove strolled down to the footer ground. The first eleven of Greyfriars was playing the Lantham Ramblers, and it was a first-class match, and half Greyfriars was watching it. And in the keen interest of seeing old Wingate score goals against the Ramblers, Harry Wharton & Co. soon forgot all about their old rivals of the Fourth. They little dreamed how Temple, Dabney & Co. were engaged just then.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Mr. Bull!

"BRAVO, Greyfriars!"

Harry Wharton & Co. cheered vociferously the finish of the first eleven match. The captain of Greyfriars had kicked the winning goal, and the Removites loyally rejoiced. Of course, senior matches did not appeal to them quite so much as their own matches, but they took a friendly interest in old Wingate's team. They strolled off the footer ground in high good-humour.

"Ready for tea, what?" Bob Cherry remarked. "You fellows get the fire going, and I'll drop in at the tuckshop. Cash up!"

Bob held out his cap, and the various members of the Co. dropped cash contributions into it according to the state of their funds. Johnny Bull then walked away by himself—and Bob promptly collared him.

"Where are you off to?" demanded Bob.

"Leggo, fathead! I've got a letter to write."

"You've got to wait till your kind uncles are there to look after you!" chuckled Bob. "Keep an eye on him, you chaps."

"You bet!" said Squiff.

"The eyefulness will be terrific," said Hurree Singh, linking his arm in Johnny Bull's. "We shall not allowfully let him upset the honourable apple-cart of his avuncular relative."

"Look here, you silly asses——" roared Johnny Bull.

"We're looking," smiled Wharton. "We're going to look after you, Johnny. Cut off, Bob! We'll keep an eye on the fathead!"

Bob Cherry scudded off to the tuckshop in the corner of the Close, and the other fellows kept round Johnny Bull. Sampson Quincey Ifley Field, the Australian junior, had taken his other arm. Between Squiff and Inky Johnny Bull wriggled and frowned. He was determined that he would write that letter, straight from the shoulder, as he expressed it, and his devoted chums were equally determined that he shouldn't. It was much better for that epistle not to be written till Johnny Bull had had time to calm down.

"Kim on!" said Squiff; and Johnny Bull was marched into the School House with the Co., and into No. 1 Study, where the juniors began to get tea. The sturdy junior was about to plump himself sulkily into the armchair when he remembered in time. The honey was still there.

"Put a smile on, kid," said Squiff. "We're only looking after you for your own good, you know."

"Oh, rot!"

"You can't be disrespectful to your uncle, old chap," said Mark Linley smiling. "Think over it a bit first, Johnny."

"I'm not going to be disrespectful, fathead!" growled Johnny Bull. "I'm only going to tell him that I think he doesn't play the game, and that I don't want to have anything to do with him."

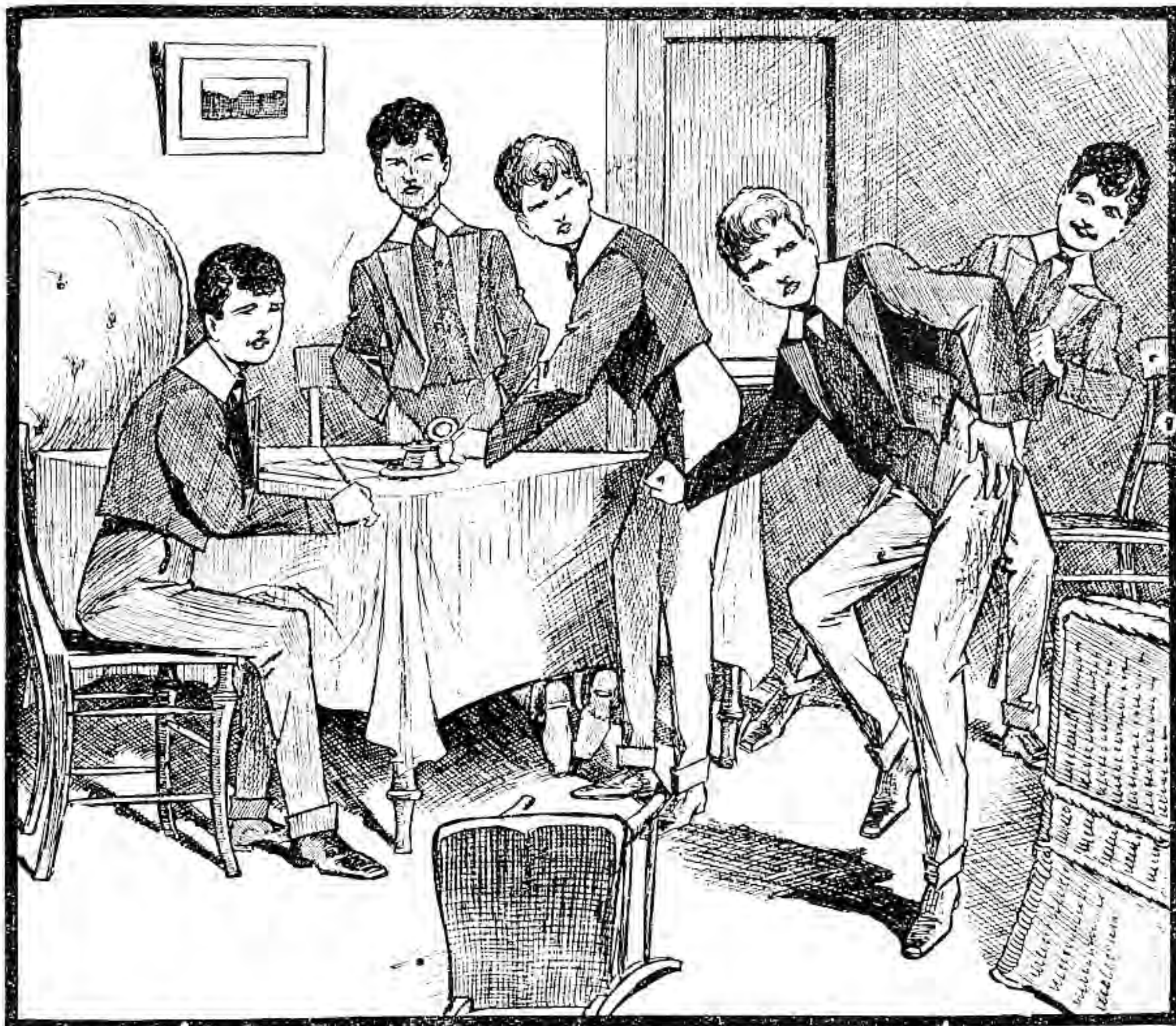
"Is that what you call respectful?" asked Wharton.

"Oh rats! It's good enough for an old bounder who sent his beastly secretary to spy on me, isn't it?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, come; it wasn't so bad as that," said Squiff mildly. "He only sent him to make some inquiries. After all, the old chap's never seen you. You might be some blighter like Skinner, or Loder, of the Sixth, for all he knows; and he only wanted to know, you know."

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Bob Cherry bounded out of the arm-chair as if it had become red-hot. Honey was streaming down his trousers and the tail of his jacket. Bob screwed himself round and took a furious view of his garments. "My only hat! Why—I'll—I'll—groogh! Look at my trucks!" "Ha, ha, ha!" (See Chapter I.)

A man must be careful before he takes a kid to his giddy bosom. And he seems to have awfully benevolent intentions towards you."

"Blow his benevolence!"

"Why, he's rolling in quids!" said Squiff. "I come from his part of the world, you know, and I've heard of the firm of Bull; they're tremendous shippers. I didn't know you were connected with them, but I've heard a lot of them. Rolling in cash."

"Blow the cash!"

"Well, there's no pleasing some people," remarked Nugent. "If my uncle wanted to take me to his avuncular heart and make a millionaire of me I should take it smiling. I should think it my duty to encourage the old sport."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, if he'd played the game straight," grunted Bull. "But you know what he did. Trying to get secret information. Poof! And his rotten secretary tried to fix it up to make me out a blackguard."

"Well, he was fooling the old chap for his own purposes," said Wharton. "You can't blame your uncle for that. He didn't know his secretary was trying to spoof him."

Johnny Bull grunted. He was not to be convinced. However, he certainly couldn't write that exceedingly

plain-spoken letter—his chums took care of that. He laid the table and opened the jam instead. Nugent built the fire and put the kettle on, and Squiff proceeded to make the toast. Bob Cherry returned from the tuckshop with a big parcel under his arm. There was a grin on Bob Cherry's face—an irrepressible grin that attracted his chums' attention at once.

"What's on now?" asked Nugent.

Bob Cherry almost exploded.

"We shall have to muzzle Johnny!" he said. "Johnny, old man, you're in for it. Promise us that you'll behave nicely."

"Eh? What are you driving at, fathead?"

"Your uncle's come."

"What?"

"At least, I suppose it's your uncle. There's an old gent downstairs inquiring after Master Bull. Chap with whiskers and a red conk," said Bob Cherry. "What colour is your uncle's nose, Johnny?"

"How should I know, fathead, when I haven't seen him?" said Johnny Bull gruffly. "Now, you silly duffers, see what you've done! He's come here because I haven't answered his letter. All your fault."

"He's just in time for tea," grinned Wharton.

"I'm not going to have tea with him!" roared Bull.

"You are, dear boy, and you're going to be nice and

polite," said Harry. "No incivility to elderly relations allowed in the Remove."

"He's got a big stick with him," said Bob. "Perhaps he's got some idea of Johnny's tender feelings towards him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There were voices and footsteps in the passage. The loud tones of Bolsover major of the Remove could be heard.

"This way, sir. He's in No. 1 Study."

"He'll be jolly glad to see you, sir," said the voice of Fry, of the Fourth. "He's been talking about you quite a lot, sir."

"Oh, rather!" chimed in Dabney. "I've seen him weeping over your letter, sir, and saying 'Oh, my dear uncle!'"

Johnny Bull gave a snort of wrath as his chums chuckled. The door of the study was thrown open, and the visitor appeared with a crowd of juniors round him. A lot of the fellows knew what Johnny Bull's feelings towards his uncle were like, though they did not know the reason, and they were curious to see the meeting.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked curiously at the visitor. He was a short, stumpy gentleman, not much taller than Johnny Bull himself, considerably stout, and dressed in an old-fashioned frock-coat, striped trousers, and boots that reached to his knee. His costume was a curious mingling of town clothes with those of a country farmer. His face was very ruddy—brick-red, in fact—and his complexion glowed from a circle of white whiskers and beard. Big spectacles gave his red face a sort of owl-like appearance. He was still wearing his hat, which was an old-fashioned, high white hat, with a very broad curly brim. Under his arm he had an enormous stick.

He stared into the study. Round him the juniors were grinning. Johnny Bull's uncle looked a most formidable personage, and nobody at Greyfriars had ever been visited by a relation like that before. His huge boots

especially excited the admiration of the Removites. He could have been heard coming from quite a distance.

"Huh," said the old gentleman, with a grunt that was very like the expressive grunt of Johnny Bull himself—"huh!"

Billy Bunter blinked into the study through his glasses.

"I say, you fellows, here's Johnny Bull's uncle."

"Huh! My nephew here?" demanded the old gentleman, in a deep, rumbling voice.

"Yes, sir!" said Harry Wharton. "Here he is, Mr. Bull. Johnny, here's your uncle!"

The chums of the Remove pushed Johnny Bull forward. The junior advanced reluctantly. He didn't want to shake hands with his uncle. But, as it happened, it was not a handshake that the old gentleman intended. He glared at Johnny Bull like a basilisk. He looked him up and down, and round about, with a disdainful expression that made Johnny turn red with rage.

"Huh! You're my nephew?"

"Yes!" growled Johnny.

"Huh! Why haven't you answered my letter, you young vagabond, what?"

"Some silly idiots interrupted me when I was going to," said Johnny Bull surlily. "I was jolly well going to tell you—"

"Huh! Don't you know that it's disrespectful to leave your uncle's letter unanswered?" rumbled the old gentleman. "Where are your manners, boy?"

"He hasn't any sir," murmured Fry of the Fourth from the passage.

"Look here!" began Johnny Bull.

"Don't argue with me!" roared his uncle. "I will have no impertinence! You are a bad-mannered boy!"

"My hat!"

"In my young days boys were respectful to their elders. My uncle would have thrashed me, sir, if I had treated him like that!"

"I dare say you'd have deserved it, too!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Don't argue with me! Huh! I'll have none of your cheek! Boys are not licked enough in these days! But I know how to deal with an unruly nephew, by gosh! Come here!"

"Wha-a-t!"

"I am going to thrash you, sir!"

"Thrash me—ME!" stuttered Johnny Bull.

"Yes, sir!"

"Why, you—you cheeky old lunatic!" shouted Johnny Bull. "Why, I'll—I'll—"

"Go it, sir!" howled the delighted juniors in the passage. "He's a cheeky beast, sir! He needs a thrash him!"

"Give him jip, sir!" chuckled Bolsover major. "Shall I hold your hat, sir?"

"You can mind your own business!" snorted the old gentleman. "Johnny, come here!"

"Why, you—you fathead!" was Johnny's disrespectful reply. "You've no right to lick me! I don't owe you! You ain't my father, and you ain't my guardian! Lick me! Why—"

"Will you come here?" roared Mr. Bull.

"No, I won't!"

"Then I'll fetch you!"

"My hat! Keep off, you blithering idiot!" shrieked Johnny Bull, as his terrible uncle came towards him, grasping the big stick. "Why, I—I—yaroooooh!"

He dodged round the study table as the old gentleman made a lick at him with the big stick. But Mr. Bull was not to be dodged. He chased Johnny round the table. Johnny Bull, truculent as he was, could scarcely hit an old gentleman who was his uncle, so he was in a difficult position. He could only dodge. But Mr. Bull was not to be denied. With an activity surprising in one of his years, he pursued the unfortunate junior, "licking" at him with the big stick with great effect.

There was a roar from the delighted crowd in the passage.

"Go it, uncle!"

"After him!"

"Two to one on the old buck! Hooray!"

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THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Going Through It!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood dumbfounded.

Johnny Bull's uncle was a surprise to them. They had been prepared for a crusty old gentleman. But crusty wasn't the word for this old gentleman. What to do they hadn't the faintest idea. To lay violent hands on an elderly gentleman was impossible. To see their chum chased and licked was not agreeable. Wharton made a wild attempt at peace-making.

"Hold on, sir!" he exclaimed, catching the old gentleman by the arm. "Don't go for Johnny, sir! It wasn't his fault—yaroooooh!"

Wharton was interrupted by a violent shove from the old gentleman, which sent him sprawling on the floor. Mr. Bull was evidently not to be reasoned with.

"Oh, my hat! Ow!"

The Co. dodged wildly out of the way. Mr. Bull's big stick was a terrific weapon, and he did not seem to care whom he hit with it. A whack that missed Johnny caught Hurree Singh across the shoulders, and the unfortunate nabob yelled and dodged. Another whack fell on the tea-table, and there was a crash of crockery that could only be described as terrific.

Johnny Bull made a wild break for the door. But the doorway, and the passage outside, were crammed with fellows almost in hysterics. There was no escape that way. As Bull crashed upon the jammed juniors in the doorway his uncle overtook him. A heavy grasp was laid upon Johnny Bull's collar behind, and then the stick rose and fell, and the dust flew from Johnny's trousers.

"Yah!" roared Bull. "Ow, ow, ow! Leggo! Leggo, you villain! Rescue, you fellows! Draggimoff—yankim-off! Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, uncle!"

"Give him beans!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Oh, my hat! Drag the old villain off!" shrieked Johnny Bull. "My word, I'll hit you if you don't stop it! I'll kick! Yarcoh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

Johnny Bull wrenched himself away at last, and darted round the table, crimson with wrath and anguish. The old gentleman stopped, and panted, and shook his stick at the enraged junior.

"There!" he gasped. "That's how youngsters were treated in my young days when they were disrespectful to their elders! Huh! Now apologise!"

"I won't!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Do you want some more?" demanded his uncle, making a move towards him.

"Apologise, for mercy's sake, Johnny!" gasped Nugent.

"Do, there's a good chap!"

Crash! The stick, apparently aimed at Johnny Bull, swept the clock from the mantelpiece. Another wild whack made a wreck of the teapot.

"Go it!" shrieked Bolsover major. "Break up the happy home!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Apologise, Johnny, you idiot!" shrieked Wharton. "Buck up, you fathead! Do you want the place to be wrecked?"

"All right!" stuttered Johnny Bull, dodging again.

"I—I'm sorry, uncle!"

"Very good—huh!" grunted his uncle breathlessly.

"I accept your apology. But don't do it again, do you hear?"

"Ow! Oh, my hat! Yes! Quite so! Yes!"

Mr. Bull laid down his stick.

"Now we'll have tea," he said.

"T-e-e-e-ea!" stuttered Wharton.

"Huh! Haven't you a cup of tea to offer a man who has come sixteen thousand miles to see his nephew?" rumbled Mr. Bull.

"Oh! Yes! Yes, rather! Certainly! Any old thing! Pray, take a seat, sir!" gasped Wharton, pulling out the armchair.

In the excitement of the moment he had forgotten the honey. But the old gentleman seemed to have very sharp eyes, or perhaps he knew something about that honey.

"What! What! You want to play a trick on me—me?" he snorted. "You think you can play tricks on

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a simple gentleman from the Colonies—what? Take that!"

"Yaroooooh!"

Wharton took it—"it" being a terrific cuff which sent him staggering. He collapsed against the wall, blinking.

"Oh, dear! I—I forgot the honey was there—on my word, sir! It was put there by a silly idiot ragging us, sir! Oh, crumbs! Oh, I wish you weren't an old man—I'd—I'd—"

"What? What?"

"I—I—I mean, please sit down," stammered Wharton, as the old gentleman picked up his stick. "Give him a chair, Franky—not the armchair. Oh dear!"

"Huh!"

Mr. Bull sat down to the table, keeping his stick between his knees in case it should be wanted. The fellows in the passage were almost weeping with laughter. They had never seen anything to equal Johnny Bull's uncle. He had not removed his hat, apparently not being a believer in ceremony.

"Now give me some tea!" he snapped. "I'm hungry! Is this the hospitality of the old country? Huh!"

"We—we—we're awfully pleased to have you to tea, sir," stammered Nugent. "We—we—we shall have to borrow some more crocks."

"I'll get 'em out of my study," murmured Squiff.

"I say, you fellows, I'll get you some crocks," chirruped Billy Bunter; "I want to have tea with Johnny Bull's uncle."

"Get out!" roared the uncle.

Bunter jumped.

"Eh? What?"

"Get out! I don't like your looks! You look to me like a young pickpocket!"

"Why, you—you—you—" spluttered Bunter.

Mr. Bull grasped his stick, and Billy Bunter melted out of the study. The old gentleman glared at the yelling juniors in the doorway.

"Is this your manners?" he snorted. "Clear off, all of you! Those two well-mannered boys who showed me in may come to tea—you two—" He pointed to Dabney and Fry of the Fourth. "Come in, my boys. It is very agreeable to see two lads who have nice manners, after what I have seen in this study."

"Certainly, sir!" said Fry.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"You also," said Mr. Bull, pointing to Scott, of the Fourth. "Come on! Don't be afraid! I know how to treat well-behaved boys. I hope that my nephew may take example by you."

"Oh, certainly!" said Scott.

"How long are you going to keep me waiting for my tea?" demanded Mr. Bull, glaring round. "Is this what you call hospitality—huh?"

"Just a minute, sir," gurgled Bob Cherry. "We—we're rather short of crocks for a minute, sir. You—you've rather smashed 'em, sir."

"Huh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. busied themselves with almost frantic energy. If tea would have a soothing effect upon Johnny Bull's uncle, they were willing to extend to him any amount of hospitality. Squiff came in loaded with crockeryware, borrowed from various studies, and the wrecked table was set again. Dabney and Fry and Scott sat round the table, with demure faces, apparently oblivious of the glares the Famous Five bestowed on them. But Harry Wharton & Co. did not raise any objection to the presence of their old rivals at the feed. They would have agreed to anything rather than have started Mr. Bull on the war-path again.

Tea was ready at last. The crowd was still in the passage, but Wharton closed the door of the study. From without came the sounds of loud chuckling. The Removites were enjoying themselves, though there was little enjoyment within the walls of No. 1 Study.

Johnny Bull was quite subdued. He was just as keen as his comrades to keep the peace now, and to get rid of his terrible uncle without any further trouble. But the fellows in the passage were waiting eagerly in blissful anticipation of another row.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
A Happy Tea-Party!

"Huh!" "Anything we can do for you, sir?" murmured Wharton anxiously.

"These eggs are not fresh!"

"They—they're the best we could get, sir."

Crash!

"Oh, crumbs!"

Plate and eggs went into the grate together. Mr. Bull had made a pretty good tea, and so had Dabney and Fry and Scott. But it did not seem to have had a soothing effect on him.

The chums of the Remove sat dismayed. Johnny Bull's uncle was evidently a tough old gentleman, but that way of showing dissatisfaction with his food was a surprise.

"Get me something better than that!" rumbled Mr. Bull. "I like jam-tarts! I used to like them when I was a schoolboy! Get me some at once!"

"Oh, c-c-certainly, sir! Buzz off, Bob, will you?"

"Any old thing," said Bob.

He rushed from the study, and returned in a few minutes with a bag of tarts. Mr. Bull condescended to sample them, and passed them round to Dabney, Fry, and Scott, apparently forgetting the owners of the study. But Harry Wharton & Co. were only too glad to keep him quiet. They didn't mind missing the tarts.

"Now I will have some cake," said Mr. Bull.

"Here you are, sir."

Mr. Bull peered at the cake through his glasses.

"That is a stale cake!"

Crash!

The cake crumbled into pieces as it was hurled into the grate.

"Go and get me some decent cake! Is this what you call hospitality?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Johnny Bull rushed out to fetch a cake. Harry Wharton & Co. gasped. What was going to happen next was beyond their imaginings. They had entertained all sorts of visitors in No. 1 Study; but never, never in their experience had the study sheltered a visitor like unto Johnny Bull's uncle. Squiff, tactfully as he thought, tried to get the old gentleman to speak of his native country.

"I come from your part of the world, sir," he remarked amiably. "I'm an Australian, sir."

"Huh! You don't look like one!"

"Don't I?" murmured Squiff.

"No. Pasty-faced young donkey!"

"Wha-at!"

"Don't talk to me! Give me some more tea!"

Squiff, with feelings too deep for words, refilled the guest's cup. Mr. Bull sniffed at the tea, and gave a snort.

"Can't you make fresh tea for me? Isn't it worth a little trouble to make fresh tea for a visitor?"

Crash!

Cup and saucer and tea joined the eggs and cake in the grate. The juniors were almost overcome. If Mr. Bull was a prominent business man in an Australian city, as was supposed, his table manners did not reflect much credit on the great colony. He certainly seemed more like a bushranger.

Sampson Quincy Ifley Field made fresh tea, and poured it out into a fresh cup. He did it in silence. He did not try to engage the old gentleman in conversation any more. Johnny Bull came back with the new cake. The happy tea-party disposed of the cake, but Mr. Bull did not seem satisfied.

"When I was a schoolboy I used to have cream-puffs," he said. "I suppose you don't think it's worth the trouble of getting cream-puffs for a relation who's come sixteen thousand miles?"

"Half a tick, sir!" exclaimed Nugent.

And Frank jumped up and fled for a supply of cream-puffs. He had to pass through a howling crowd in the passage. The constant comings and goings of the entertainers in No. 1 Study tickled the Removites immensely. It was evident that they had an exacting visitor.

Nugent came back with the cream-puffs, which were

soon disposed of by Mr. Bull and the Fourth-Formers, who took the lion's share.

"That is better!" the old gentleman condescended to announce. "But there's not enough. Go and get some more, and another cake, and some more jam-tarts."

"Yes, sir. Right-ho, sir! All right," stammered Wharton.

There was a hasty consultation among the juniors before the fresh consignment was sent for. Funds were running low. But, by turning out all their pockets, a little sum was raised, and Hurree Singh was despatched to the tuckshop. He was glad to get a rest from Johnny Bull's uncle.

The new supply of tuck was disposed off. It was amazing to see that tough and crusty old gentleman piling into things that were generally supposed to appeal only to youthful tastes. The Removites got hardly anything. They had to look after their visitors, and Mr. Bull gave them little rest.

"Johnny!"

"Yes, uncle," gasped Bull.

"You are guzzling yourself instead of looking after that nice boy beside you."

Johnny Bull silently helped the nice boy beside him, who happened to be Fry.

"How is it," demanded Mr. Bull, "that you three boys are so nice-mannered and well-behaved, while my nephew and his friends are little better than hooligans?"

His nephew and his friends glared. Dabney and Fry and Scott smiled.

"Oh, we're Fourth-Form fellows, sir!" said Dabney. "These kids are only fags in the Remove. We don't expect good manners from them, sir."

Johnny Bull clenched his fists ferociously under the table. His uncle's eye was upon him instantly.

"What are you scowling about, Johnny?"

"W-a-a-s I s-s-scowling, sir?" stammered Bull.

"You were! Why don't you take example by these nice boys, and learn to behave yourself?" demanded his uncle sternly. "With these young gentlemen before you as models, you might improve yourself very much. Huh!"

Johnny Bull breathed hard through his nose. The superior smiles of Dabney and Fry and Scott drove him almost to frenzy.

"Wharton—ahem, I think your name is Wharton!"

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"Do you call this a tea?"

"I—I—I—we've done our best, sir."

"Very well; if you don't wish to give a visitor enough to eat, I have nothing to say, of course. Don't send for another cake to please me. Oh, no!"

"I—I'll get one in a jiffy, sir," stammered Harry.

He made a wild search through his pockets. But they were empty. He looked wildly at his comrades, but there was a general hopeless shaking of heads. Money had run out.

"Well, what are you standing there grimacing for?" roared Mr. Bull.

"Oh, I—I— Half a tick, sir! I—I'll be back in a jiff!"

Wharton bundled out of the study.

A howl of laughter greeted him in the passage. His red and flustered face was, as Peter Todd remarked, worth a guinea a box.

"How are you getting on?" asked Todd.

Wharton groaned.

"Lend me a couple of bob, Toddy. I'm stumped!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd handed out two shillings at once, choking with laughter, and Wharton sped away to the tuckshop. He came back, breathless, with the cake. He found Johnny Bull writhing with rage, under a lecture from his uncle on the subject of table manners. Mr. Bull was evidently an authority on that subject.

"Here's the cake!" gasped Wharton.

"Very good," snorted Mr. Bull. "Would you three nice boys like this cake? You may cut it into three pieces, and put it in your pockets."

"Thank you, sir!" said Fry.

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Dabney. "You're very good, sir!"



From under the tin pan, which rested on his head, Bunter's voice came in a gurgle. "Gerrrrrrururururgh!" "Why, what—what!" said Miss Bull faintly. "What a dreadful trick! Johnny, I hope you had nothing to do with this!" And then the tin pan fell to the ground with a crash. (See Chapter II.)

The Remove chums watched them stow away the cake in frozen silence.

"As I asked you to tea, I wish you to be treated well," Mr. Bull explained. "As for myself, that does not matter. I should like some more jam-tarts, but I will not ask my nephew to provide them. Oh, certainly not!"

"Tarts, sir!" groaned Wharton. "Oh, certainly, sir! I'll have 'em here before you can say—"

"Don't stand there babbling! Fetch them!"

"Oh, yes, certainly!"

Wharton almost staggered out of the study. If this went on much longer he felt that it would turn his hair grey. Johnny Bull really had no right to have an uncle like that. Wharton's worried and troubled face was greeted with a fresh howl in the passage.

"Smithy, old man, lend me a couple of bob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're going it!" grinned Vernon-Smith, as he handed out the required loan. "Is the old chap a wolf or an octopus?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton hurried away. The passage was crowded now with nearly all the Remove and the Fourth, and they were

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almost in hysterics. They gurgled as Wharton came back with a large bag of tarts, and disappeared into the study.

"Oh, this beats the band!" murmured Tom Brown, the New Zealander. "Poor old Johnny! I wondered why he didn't like his uncle. I know now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In No. 1 Study the tarts were put on the table. But Dabney and Fry and Scott could eat no more, and Mr. Bull seemed at the end of his resources in that line also. He tried one of the tarts, but his appetite was quite gone. He sniffed.

"Are these tarts good?" he demanded.

"The—the very best, sir."

"Huh! Nonsense!"

Crash! Dish and tarts went thundering into the grate. The fender was nearly full now with the articles Mr. Bull did not approve of, and the crockery that had contained them. Harry Wharton & Co. felt overcome. If their visitor did not go soon they felt that the strain would be too much for them, and they would hurl him out of the study.

"Huh!" said Mr. Bull. "Huh! I suppose this is what you call looking after your uncle, Johnny. I am

disappointed in you. I shall not take you back to Australia with me."

"You jolly well won't, I know that!" murmured Johnny, under his breath.

Mr. Bull rose to his feet. The juniors gasped with relief. Was he going at last? They could still hear the laughter from the passage, but suddenly it died away. Loud exclamations of astonishment took its place. In the midst of them the voice of Trotter, the House-page, was heard.

"Make way, please, young gentlemen! Please make way for the gentleman! Let Mr. Bull pass, please!"

"My hat!"

"But Mr. Bull's there!" roared the voice of Bolsover major. "What are you getting at, Trotter? Who's this?"

"It's Master Bull's uncle, sir. Do please let the gentleman pass!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stood petrified in the study. Johnny Bull's uncle was there—they had been entertaining him—and yet here was Trotter showing in Mr. Bull!

"You—you—you've got two uncles, Johnny!" gasped Wharton.

"Oh, my hat!" That sudden exclamation fell from Mr. Bull. Dabney and Fry and Scott were on their feet now, with utter dismay in their faces.

The door of the study was thrown open. A tall, thin old gentleman with white whiskers, dressed in a black frock-coat and natty grey "bags," with a silk hat in his hand, stood in the doorway. Behind him were the wondering faces of the juniors. They were astounded. The old gentleman with the silk hat seemed somewhat surprised, too.

"Is my nephew here?" he asked.

Johnny Bull jumped.

"W-w-who are you?" he stuttered.

"I am Mr. Bull. I have come to see my nephew! Is he here?"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

After the Feast, the Reckoning!

A PIN might have been heard to fall in No. 1 Study for a moment.

The silence was dead.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked fixedly at the tall, slender gentleman in the black frock-coat. There was a hush of wonderment in the crowded passage behind him. In the study Dabney and Fry and Scott stood motionless, dumb-founded. And the truculent "uncle" who had given the Remove chums so much trouble seemed rooted to the floor. The arrival of the new Mr. Bull was dramatic.

The slender gentleman seemed astonished. He did not know why his arrival had caused such amazement and consternation. His sharp grey eyes looked from one face to another, keenly and inquiringly. Johnny Bull broke the silence.

"You're my uncle!"

"If you are John Bull I am your uncle."

"From Australia?"

"Certainly!"

"Then—then who's this?"

Johnny Bull glared at the troublesome relative who was apparently not relative at all. The stumpy man in spectacles murmured something under his breath. It sounded like "Oh, jiminy!"

Dabney made a sudden movement towards the door. But the new Mr. Bull stood in the doorway, and behind him the interested spectators were crammed. There was no escape that way. Fry and Scott broke into feeble grins. Johnny Bull shook a big fist in the face of the avuncular relative who had so worried him.

"You're an impostor!" he roared.

"Indeed!" said the new Mr. Bull, in his sharp, incisive voice. "Who is that, nephew?"

"He calls himself my uncle from Australia."

The slender gentleman jumped.

"What?"

"He came here this afternoon, saying that he was Mr. Bull, my uncle from Australia!" roared Johnny. "I—I never thought of doubting him."

The new-comer's square jaw set grimly.

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"Then he is an impostor," he said quietly. "I am Mr. Bull from Australia. Keep back, sir; you will not leave this room without an explanation!" This as the stumpy gentleman made a strategic movement towards the door. The new Mr. Bull, evidently the genuine Mr. Bull, raised his hand commandingly. "Who are you?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It—it—it's a swindle!" gasped Harry Wharton. "A beastly impostor! And what a time he's given us!"

"The timefulness has been terrific!" grunted Hurree Singh. "But the impostful villain shall answer for it sufferfully!"

"Has he attempted to obtain money from you?" asked the new Mr. Bull suspiciously.

"Oh, no, sir! He's worried us nearly to death. Look at the muck he's made of our study! If he isn't Johnny's uncle, we don't know who he is."

"It would be best to send for the police," said the slender gentleman severely. "They can question him. Doubtless he had a criminal motive in coming here under an assumed name."

"I say, you fellows, I'll go for the police!" chirped Billy Bunter from the passage. The Owl of the Remove had not forgotten that the impostor had likened him to a pickpocket.

"Hold on!" gasped Dabney. "Draw the line!"

"Do you know this man?" demanded the new Mr. Bull.

"Oh, crumbs! Yes, rather!" stuttered Dabney.

"You do!" shouted the Famous Five.

"Oh, rather! I say, we don't want any blessed police! Better own up, Temple, old man."

"Temple!"

The false Mr. Bull groaned.

"It was a jape on you fellows," he said feebly. "Mr. Bull, pray excuse me for using your name. I hadn't the faintest idea you were coming this afternoon. Oh, crumbs! What a beastly sell!"

Harry Wharton & Co. almost fell down as they heard the whiskered, white-hatted, big-footed man speaking with the familiar tones of Cecil Temple of the Fourth.

"Temple!" said Wharton dazedly.

"Temple of the Fourth!"

"It's a jape!"

"We've been taken in!"

"We have been dishfully done!"

The disguised Temple made another movement towards the door. He realised that it was time that he retired from the scene of action. But he was not to execute that retreat quite so easily. This time it was not the new Mr. Bull who stopped him. It was his nephew. Johnny Bull made a wild bound upon the japer of the Fourth, and collared him.

"Here, leggo!" shouted Temple, struggling.

There was a yell of laughter from the passage as the "uncle's" beard and whiskers came off in Johnny Bull's furious grasp, and his spectacles and wig followed. Even then Temple could not be recognised, so cleverly was he made up. But everybody knew that it was Temple now. Johnny Bull grasped him, and they rolled over on the floor together.

"Collar the rotters!" shouted Bob Cherry.

Johnny was quite equal to dealing with his sham uncle. Harry Wharton & Co. devoted their attention to Dabney and Fry and Scott. It was clear to them now that those three cheerful young rascals had been in the plot, and the remembrance of the tremendous feed they had had was exasperating. The chums of the Remove understood it all now. The hour of reckoning had come.

The unfortunate Fourth-Formers had wildly striven to break out of the study. But the crowd in the passage were jammed almost like sardines in a tin, and there was no getting through. Harry Wharton & Co. collared them, and dragged them back into the study.

"Bump them! Bump them! Squash them!"

"Rag the bounders!"

There was a wild and whirling struggle in No. 1 Study. Mr. Bull stood in the doorway transfixed with amazement. The gentleman from Australia was having his first experience of Greyfriars, and it astonished him.

The horde of juniors in the passage were shrieking with merriment. Temple & Co.'s tremendous jape had almost

taken their breath away at first. But the scene that was now proceeding in No. 1 Study exceeded all that had gone before. The four japers were having the time of their lives.

"Uncle Bull's" attire was almost in rags in a few minutes. He was rolled in the tarts he had thrown into the grate, and the disused eggs and the cinders were plastered over him. The make-up on his face was hidden now by a fresh make-up of eggs, jam, and ashes.

Dabney and Fry and Scott fared little better. All the remains of the feed on the table were plastered over them, and they were bumped and bumped again, till they had not enough breath left to gasp, and could only gurgle.

"Oh, do chuck it!" moaned Temple. "It was a jape, you duffers—only a j-j-j-jape! Can't you take a j-j-j-joke? Oh, dear!"

"Oh, gerroff!" mumbled Dabney. "Don't! Yow! Keep that jam away! Keep those pickles away, you beasts! Gerrooogh!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Bull, addressing space. "The boys are mad—mad! Nephew—Johnny, do you hear? Stop this—stop that! Bless my soul!"

"Chuck 'em out now!" panted Wharton.

"Make room, you fellows, there—they're coming!" sang out Bob Cherry.

Temple was swung off the floor. There was a wild scramble of the fellows outside to get out of the way. But they were not quick enough. Cecil Reginald Temple came whirling through the doorway, and collided with the fellows there, and Bolsover major gave a fiendish yell as he caught Temple's fist in his eye, and Tom Brown roared as Temple's full weight dropped on him.

"Oh, my hat, clear off!" gasped Vernon-Smith. "Yow, let a chap get away!"

The crowd surged away, and Temple sprawled on the floor. Dabney came flying out after him, and sprawled over him. There were loud yells and struggles in the study, and then came Fry, and, after him, Scott. Four unhappy japers rolled over one another on the floor. The study door slammed.

"Oh, dear!" moaned Temple. "Oh, crumbs! Oh, crikey!"

"Yow-ow! Booh! Grooh! Yaup! Ow-ow-ow-owohhh!"

Temple sat up blinking.

"Never mind, it was a great jape," he stuttered.

Dabney and Fry and Scott looked at him speechlessly. There was no human speech that would have expressed their feelings at that moment. They picked themselves up and limped away. Temple followed them feebly. They limped off through a horde of giggling, yelling juniors. So ended Temple's great jape.

In his study, afterwards, Cecil Temple explained, in a moaning voice, that it had been a tremendous wheeze, and that only the genuine Bull's arrival, unexpectedly, had mucked it up. The Co. did not argue with him. They only groaned.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Uncle and Nephew!

"WELL?"

Mr. Bull ejaculated that monosyllable. He adjusted a pair of rimless pince-nez upon his long straight nose, and looked grimly at the breathless chums of the Remove.

They looked at him.

In the excitement of visiting dire punishment upon the japing Fourth-Formers, they had almost forgotten the existence of the gentleman from Australia. They remembered him now. And they could not help feeling that the scene which had greeted Mr. Bull's eyes, on his first visit to Greyfriars, was not—not exactly—ahem! That was how Bob Cherry described it afterwards.

"Well?" repeated Mr. Bull. "I should be sorry to interrupt your activities. Have you finished?"

"Yes, sir," murmured Wharton, blushing.

"We have finishfully done with the esteemed rotters, honoured sahib! Will you honour us by sitfully taking a chair?"

"Not that one, ass!" said Nugent, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was pulling the armchair forward.

Mr. Bull accepted a chair—not the armchair—and sat down. Harry Wharton & Co. remained standing. They were trying to get their second wind.

They stole sly glances at Mr. Arthur Bull, of Australia. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 368.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

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ONE
PENNY.

John Arthur Bull was his full name. They hoped to see a twinkle in his eye, or a twitch in the corners of his mouth, which would reveal that he had a sense of humour. But there was no sign of a twinkle or a twitch. Mr. John Arthur Bull's jaw was very square, and just now it looked squarer than ever. His stern, grey eyes glinted.

The scene in No. 1 Study had utterly failed to impress him favourably in any way whatever. Perhaps that was not really surprising. A sedate, middle-aged merchant, the head of a tremendous shipping firm, could not be expected to see, all at once, eye to eye with the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove. They wanted a little getting used to!

"Do you generally receive visitors with this kind of ceremony, nephew?" asked the gentleman from Australia.

Johnny Bull coloured. He was immensely relieved to know that the terrible visitor he had received was not really his uncle. But, although the new Mr. Bull was a great improvement upon the old one, and was evidently a very prosperous and respectable gentleman, Johnny was not prepared to play the affectionate nephew. All his causes of resentment against his uncle remained in full force. And, considering himself a wronged party, he did not like to see that square-jawed gentleman sitting in judgment upon him, as it were.

He was in no hurry to reply. He did not want anything from his uncle, and he did not like him. And he did not feel inclined to justify himself.

"We—we—we're rather sorry you—you saw this—this little scrap, sir," said Harry Wharton haltingly. "Those bounders have japed us, you know; that awful spoofer got himself up, and passed himself off as Johnny's uncle, and took us in——"

"And he gave us a terrific time, sir," said Inky.

"We've had a regular high old time, sir," ventured Mark Linley. "Look at the state the study's in!"

"I hope you are going to stay to tea, sir," murmured Nugent.

"I have arranged to have tea with the Head," said Mr. Bull. "I came here to see my nephew. John, you did not reply to my letter."

"I've been going to write," said Johnny Bull.

"Indeed! Business life requires the prompt reply to important communications," said Mr. Bull. "Apparently you are not business-like. I fear I shall have to reconsider my intention to take you with me to Sydney, where I intended to train you to succeed me as head of the shipping business now in my hands."

Mr. Bull evidently expected this announcement to fall like a thunderbolt. But it didn't! Johnny Bull was not crushed; he only snorted.

"You jolly well wouldn't take me to Sydney with you in any case!" he said.

"Go easy, Johnny!" murmured Squiff.

"Oh, rats!"

"Pray let my nephew speak, young man," said Mr. Bull. "Do I understand, John, that you do not wish to come back to Australia with me?"

"I'm trying to make it plain," said the junior.

Harry Wharton glanced at his chums, and they made a general movement towards the door. They understood that the gentleman from Australia would rather speak to his nephew by himself. But Johnny Bull growled out at once:

"Don't go, you fellows! Stay here!"

"My esteemed Johnny——"

"Stay here, I tell you! There's no giddy secrets about this. It won't take long for my uncle to finish with me."

"Indeed it will not, I begin to think!" exclaimed John Arthur Bull, his eyes beginning to gleam. "I was prepared, nephew, to take you to my heart, to adopt you as my heir and successor, and to leave you a very large fortune at my death—always provided that you should prove worthy of my choice."

"Well, I don't want to be taken to your heart, I don't want to manage your business, and I don't want your fortune," said Johnny Bull deliberately.

Mr. Bull's face was a study. Harry Wharton & Co. stood still, dismayed. Johnny Bull had done it now! They had stopped his letter-writing, but they could not stop his talking.

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

It was some moments before the old gentleman found his voice.

"John, what does this mean? How dare you speak to me like this?"

"How dare you send your rotten secretary to spy on me, and find out things about me?" demanded Johnny Bull hotly.

Mr. Bull paused.

"It was necessary to be careful," he said at last. "I knew nothing of you, excepting the constantly laudatory letters I received from my sister, your aunt. Your aunt's prepossession in your favour influenced me; but I desired to make sure that I was not deceived. I have never seen you. Personally, I knew nothing of you. Your master's reports would have been of little value, for probably they know little of the individual character of so many boys. My instructions to my secretary were to live quietly in the neighbourhood for some time, and learn about you—whether you had any undesirable acquaintances, whether

"Yes, and all the time you couldn't trust your nephew, you could trust that rascal, and he was scheming to pull the wool over your eyes," said Johnny Bull. "He jolly nearly fixed a charge on me—nearly succeeded in making out that I was a blackguard—to keep a rival out of the field. And if a good pal hadn't stood by me jolly well, I might have been disgraced for life—all through your wanting to find things out secretly, instead of coming openly, like a man!"

Mr. Bull turned red.

"You are impertinent, John!"

"Well, you needn't listen to my impertinence," said Johnny. "Besides, I suppose you haven't finished your precious investigations yet. As your secretary hasn't done any good, I suppose you'll be employing a private detective next."

"My dear John, my secretary's conduct quite cleared my mind of any doubts with regard to you. He was a rascal, and he sought to blacken you in my eyes. This is a proof that he could not find out anything against you. He has received the punishment of his rascality; but he has, in effect, done what I desired—I have confidence in you now."

Johnny Bull grunted.

"Why did you not reply to my letter, John?"

"These chaps stopped me."

"Indeed! And why?"

"Because they're silly asses. They didn't want me to write to you that I didn't care a twopenny rap about your money, and didn't want to see you."

"Your friends seem to have a little more common-sense than you have, John," said the old gentleman drily. "It is not every boy who receives such an offer as I have made to you."

Snort.

"But doubtless," pursued Mr. Bull bitterly, "knowing that you are your aunt's favourite, you think that you can afford to quarrel with your uncle."

Johnny Bull crimsoned.

"I haven't thought anything about it; and if you think I'm sucking up to Auntie Bull for her money, you're making a mistake. I'm fond of her because she's jolly good to me, and I don't care a rap for her money. She knows that."

"I have spoken to your father, John. He was very pleased and glad at such a prospect for you," said Mr. Bull. "He leaves it to your own choice, however."

"I've made my choice."

"You refuse my offer?"

"Yes."

Mr. John Arthur Bull rose to his feet.

"Then there is nothing more to be said, nephew. I shall not press my offer upon you. One word more. If you are thinking that by this display of rude independence you will deceive me—"

Johnny Bull snorted more emphatically than ever.

"There you go again! I don't want your money, and I don't want you!"

"I shall take you at your word," said Mr. Bull.

He quitted the study without looking at his nephew again. The door closed behind him, and Bob Cherry gave a soft whistle.

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"You've done it now, Johnny!"

"And a jolly good thing, too!" said Johnny Bull. "Suspicious beast! Thank goodness he's gone!"

"I suppose you couldn't put in a word for me?" murmured Squiff. "I'm willing to be adopted."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, I—I suppose I didn't put it too plain, did I?" asked Johnny Bull, a little repentantly. "After all, he's my pater's brother, and I suppose he meant well in his fatheaded way. So long as I make him understand that I don't want him, or his money either, I'm willing to be civil."

The Co. chuckled.

"If that's what you call civil, Johnny, don't you ever be uncivil to anybody," advised Squiff. "You'd be taken for a Red Indian, if not a Prussian."

Johnny Bull grunted.

"Well, it's done, anyway. He won't bother me any more."

It certainly was done; and Johnny Bull's chums had a firm impression that his uncle would not bother him any more. After his reception at the hands of his nephew, John Arthur Bull was extremely unlikely to bother Johnny any more.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter is Useful for Once!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. did not see John Arthur Bull again before he left. After tea in the Head's house Mr. Bull departed without seeking to see his nephew to say good-bye to him. The Australian magnate had apparently washed his hands of his undutiful nephew, and Johnny Bull was glad of it.

True, the prospect held out had been an impressive one. But Johnny Bull did not want to leave Greyfriars, for one thing—though, when he came to think of it, he would have been rather keen to visit the great Island Commonwealth. His uncle had certainly intended to do well for him, but in a somewhat high-handed manner which did not please the independent junior in the least. And he was relieved that his Uncle John Arthur was gone, and that the matter was done with.

He did not mention the matter again in the following days, and if his chums had expected him to show any compunction, they were mistaken. Johnny Bull simply dismissed the matter from his mind.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were feeling very sore in these days, morally and physically. They had had a really terrific ragging in No. 1 Study; but, as their bodily aches departed, they still felt sore over their defeat. It was admitted that the sham uncle had been a good jape, and only John Arthur Bull's unexpected appearance had spoiled it. But spoiled it had been; and Temple of the Fourth felt that he must think of something new to revive his tarnished laurels, or give the Famous Five best—and that he did not intend to do at all. But when he consulted with his chums he found Dabney and Fry and Scott extremely wanting in enthusiasm. They had not forgotten that handling in No. 1 Study, and they were not keen on having any more.

But Temple did not give in. He felt that his prestige as captain of the Fourth was at stake. The jape of the season had been spoiled by bad luck, and he was going to score—somehow. How he did not quite see so far; but he was going to do it.

Everything comes to him who waits, Temple told his dispirited followers. Temple had to wait till Saturday. Then fortune smiled once more. Soon after morning lessons he looked for letters in the rack, and found Billy Bunter of the Remove blinking up at the rack through his big spectacles.

"I say, Temple, reach me down my letter, will you?" said Bunter.

"Your letter?" said Temple, looking them over. "There isn't one for you, fatty."

"There must be!" said Bunter with conviction. "I'm expecting a postal-order from one of my rich relations, Temple. It's bound to come to-day."

"Bow-wow!" said Temple.

"Owing to the war there may have been a delay," said Bunter thoughtfully. "I'll tell you what, Temple. Could you lend me five bob, and take my postal-order when it—"

"Cheese it!" said Temple.

Billy Bunter blinked desperately over the rack. He was hard-up as usual, and his celebrated postal-order had not arrived. Bunter always blinked over the letter-rack in a sort of forlorn hope that there might be a remittance for him.

"I say, isn't that a letter for me?" he demanded, blinking. "That's a B."

"It's for Bull," said Temple, glancing at the letter.

"I think it's more likely Bunter," said the fat junior eagerly. "Some of my titled relations write rather badly—lords often do, you know!"

"Fathead!" said Temple. "I know the writing. It's from Bull's aunt—that terrific old warrior who comes down to see him sometimes."

"She sends him whacking remittances sometimes," said Bunter, with a greedy gleam behind his spectacles.

Temple walked away. Billy Bunter stood regarding Johnny Bull's letter with greedy eyes. If there was a remittance in that letter, Bunter felt that it was extremely probable that the name on the envelope was really Bunter, not Bull. Some of his relations didn't write very clearly. And if there was a remittance—Billy Bunter climbed on a chair and took the letter out, and blinked at it closely through his spectacles. Certainly the writing was a little jabby.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Any letters for us?" said Bob Cherry, coming along the passage with his comrades.

Bunter hastily rolled away as the Famous Five scanned the letters and postcards in the rack. He kept the letter in his fat hand. He wasn't quite satisfied that it wasn't for him, and he wasn't going to part with it till he was quite, quite sure. And he would probably not be sure unless he found that there wasn't a remittance in it.

He rolled out into the Close and sat on one of the old oaken benches under the elms at a distance from the house, and scanned the letter again. The writing certainly wasn't clear, but even the Owl of the Remove could make out that the name on the envelope was Bull, and not Bunter. Still he hesitated. He felt the letter over with his fat fingers, and somehow—accidents will happen—the envelope came open at last. Billy Bunter jerked out the letter, and gave a grunt of disappointment. There was no sign of a remittance.

However, now the letter was open, he meant to read it. Bunter was insatiably curious, and he had no scruples on a little point like that. The letter was short, and it didn't even mention a remittance.

"Dear Johnny,—I am sorry you did not get on better with your uncle when he visited you. I am coming down on Saturday afternoon to see you, as it will be a half-holiday. I shall reach Greyfriars about half-past three. Stay in, my dear boy, to see,—Your affectionate,

"AUNTIE."

Billy Bunter snorted. He sat with the letter in his hand, disappointed and a little uneasy. Of course, he had supposed the letter was for himself. Equally, of course, it had come open by accident; but he was a little doubtful whether Johnny Bull would believe all that when he explained. The beast was much more likely to punch him without mercy for taking his letter and opening it, and refuse to listen to any explanations at all. And Johnny Bull was a dreadfully hard hitter. The Owl of the Remove was feeling exceedingly uncomfortable.

"Why, you fat rotter," exclaimed Temple, as he sauntered by under the elms, "that's Bull's letter you've got there; and I told you it wasn't for you!"

Bunter started.

"I—I thought it was for me," he stammered. "D-d-don't be a beast, Temple. I haven't read it, of course. Besides, there's nothing important in it. It doesn't matter if anybody knows that Johnny Bull's aunt is coming here this afternoon."

"You fat toad!" said Dabney. "If I were Bull I'd lick you all round the quad!"

"Oh, really, Dabney—"

"Auntie Bull coming here this afternoon, what?" said Cecil Temple.

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ONE
PENNY.

"Yes," growled Bunter. "Getting here at half-past three, so she says. Of course, I haven't read the letter."

"I wonder if Bull knows she's coming," said Temple, very meditatively.

His chums glanced at him. They could see that something was working in the mighty brain of Cecil Reginald, and they made gestures of disfavour. They were fed up with Cecil Reginald's wheezes.

"How could he know, when he ain't seen the letter?" grunted Bunter. "She tells him to stay in, as she's coming, so he can't know already, can he? Not that it matters to me. You can read the letter if you like."

"Why, you fat cad," said Temple indignantly. "Do you think I'd read another fellow's letter?"

Billy Bunter blinked at him.

"You've jolly well screwed out of me all that was in it," he snorted. "Can't see much difference, myself."

"That's because you're a mean, dishonourable beast," said Temple severely. "If Johnny Bull gets to know that you've read his letter, he'll skin you. My advice to you is to—well, I won't give you any advice. It's too rotten! I can't be mixed up in your caddish tricks. Still, Johnny Bull would lick you like thunder. As his aunt will come, anyway, it doesn't really matter much if that letter should be lost. If you tore it up and shoved it into that hollow tree, he wouldn't be able to spot you, and there wouldn't be any harm done, as his aunt's coming all the same."

Billy Bunter nodded. He had a dreadful uneasiness about facing Johnny Bull with an explanation that the letter had come open by accident. He felt indignantly that the disbelieving Johnny wouldn't take his word. His fat fingers were soon busy, and the letter was reduced to fragments, and the fragments dropped into the hollow elm. Dabney and Fry and Scott looked at Temple in amazement. Why he should give Bunter that advice was past their comprehension.

"Keep this dark, you chaps!" muttered Bunter. "Of course, it doesn't matter. The letter wasn't of the slightest value, but that beast Bull would cut up rusty."

"Serve you jolly well right if he did," said Temple, with ineffable scorn. "A fellow who would read another fellow's letter, and then destroy it, ought to be boiled in oil!"

Bunter blinked at him with wide-open mouth.

"Why, you advised me!" he stammered.

"Advised you!" thundered Temple. "Why, you fat villain, I distinctly said that I wouldn't advise you, and wouldn't be mixed up in your caddish tricks. Dab and Fry and Scott all heard me say so."

"Ye-es, but you—you—"

"I'm utterly disgusted," said Temple. "I never realised before what an utter worm you are, Bunter. I won't try to express the contempt I feel. It's impossible. But of all the mean, miserable, loathsome, crawling toads—"

"Oh, really, Temple—"

"It would serve you jolly well right if I went to Bull now, and told him you'd torn up his letter," said Temple, with burning indignation.

Bunter gave a yelp of fright.

"I—I say, you fellows, d-d-don't—you know—do keep it dark, you know—ow—I wish I hadn't done it now! Ow—ow!"

"Well, after all, it's not our business, and we're not responsible for you," said Temple loftily. "We shall say nothing. Come on, you fellows. I can't stand that dishonourable rotter; he makes me ill."

Temple & Co. walked away, leaving Bunter greatly relieved to know that his delinquency was not to be revealed to Johnny Bull. Cecil Temple did not stop till he reached the Cloisters, his companions following him wonderingly. In the Cloisters, where they were secure from overhearing, Temple stopped, and chuckled gleefully.

"Got it!" he said.

"Got what?" demanded Fry.

"The wheeze, my son—the wheeze!"

That statement was received with anything but

enthusiasm. Never had a great general possessed followers more utterly discouraging.

"Chuck it, old man!" said Fry. "I'm fed up! I've still got seven aches and a pain. Don't give us any more of your wheezes."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "If you've got a new wheeze, Temple, go and bury it."

"Bury it deep, and forget all about it," said Scott. "Don't tell us! We're fed up. We really can't stand any more of your first-class wheezes, Temple."

Temple sniffed.

"I tell you it's a topper—a real topper this time! Can't you see? It will be the jape of the season."

"So you said last time," grunted Dabney.

"But this time it's a cert—a dead cert!" howled Temple. "Can't you see? Haven't you any eyes in your silly nappers?"

"No, I can't see," said Fry.

"Oh, my hat! Johnny Bull's aunt is coming to see him at half-past three, and he doesn't know she's coming," breathed Temple. "You remember her; you've seen her before. She's like Coker's Aunt Judy, only—only more so."

His chums grinned. They remembered Johnny Bull's aunt very well. She was a formidable lady, and not easily forgotten.

"And she's coming, and Bull doesn't know it," said Temple. "I've got the scheme—got it cut and dried—through that fat beast reading the letter, and mentioning what was in it—dishonourable cad! And now he's torn it up, and won't tell Bull, so it's all serene."

"So that's why you advised him to tear it up—"

"Advised him! What rot!" said Temple. "I hope I shouldn't do anything quite so mean as that, Scott."

Scott stared. He was bereft of the power of speech for a moment.

"But never mind that," pursued Temple. "Bunter's acted like a dirty, rotten cad; he always does. But we ain't responsible for Bunter. Never mind that! The fact remains, that owing to Bunter's dishonourable conduct, for which we're not responsible in any way, we can jape those Remove rotters."

"Blessed if I see how!" said Fry.

"Of course you can't, till I explain. Who's got the brains in this party?" said Temple, with a sniff. "Now lend me your ears, as we say in the play."

His chums lent him their ears. Temple unfolded his plan; and they stared, then they gasped, and then they yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Getting Ready for Auntie!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were chatting in the Rag. The afternoon was cold, but fine and sunny, and the Famous Five and Squiff were discussing plans for the afternoon. There was a Remove footer match on with the Third Form; but the great players of the Remove were not figuring in it. On a secondary occasion like that, they gave the secondary players a chance. Tom Brown, the New Zealander, who was a great man in the Form team, was captaining an eleven mostly made up of reserves.

"What price watching the game?" asked Bob Cherry. "Encourage the kids, you know."

"Well, we'll give them a look-in," said Wharton. "But they can get on without us watching them through. The Third won't give 'em much trouble. What about a rehearsal for our next play?"

"Oh, let's get out of doors!" said Bob.

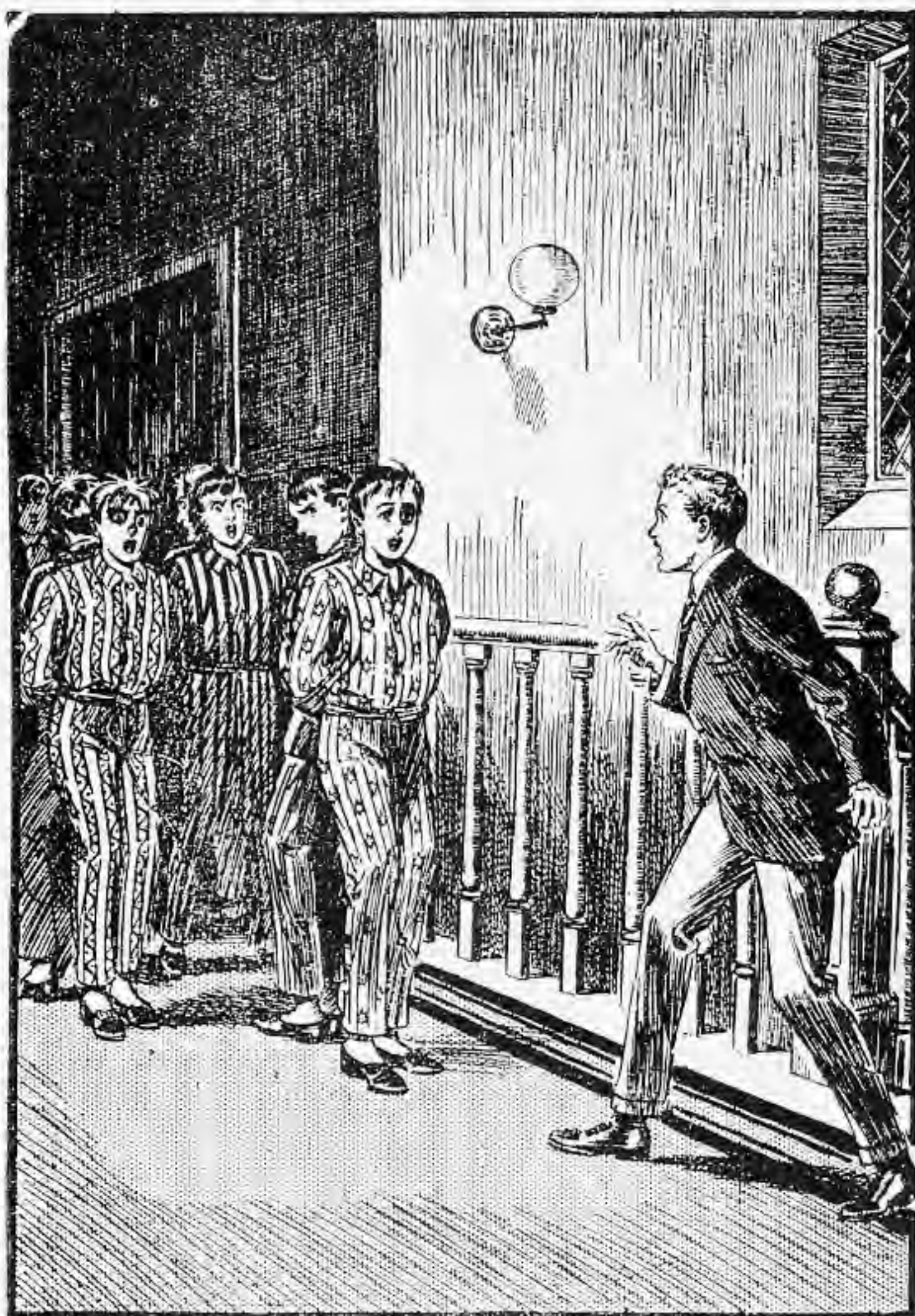
"The sea's too jolly rough to have a boat out," said Frank Nugent. "What do you suggest, Squiff?"

The Australian junior ruminated. Before he could reply, a voice came floating in at the open window of the Rag. The juniors were lounging in the window-seat, and the voice from outside, though quite subdued, came clearly to their ears.

"The Remove rotters can't possibly get on to it this time, Dab. It will simply be a howling success."

It was the voice of Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth.

Squiff put his finger to his lips, and grinned. The chums of the Remove chuckled silently. Temple, Dabney & Co. were evidently on the warpath again, and they were discussing the plan of campaign, apparently quite unconscious of the fact that they were only a few yards from the fellows they were plotting against. Harry Wharton, whose head was visible from the Close, if the Fourth-Formers had glanced towards the window, slid a little lower into his seat. All was fair in war. And if the enemy



"What's this little game?" roared Bulkeley. "What are you kids doing out of your dormitory? What are you tied up like this for?" "Ahem!" replied Tommy Dodd, with a feeble grin. "It—it—it's only a la-l-l-lark. First night, you know, Bulkeley. We called on the classic chaps, and—and they fixed us up like this!" (An amusing scene in the magnificent new, long, complete tale of school life contained in the issue of our companion paper, "The Boys' Friend," on sale everywhere to-day.)



Johnny Bull shook a big fist in the face of the relative who had so worried him. "You're an impostor!" he roared. "What!" exclaimed the new Mr. Bull, who was standing in the doorway. (See Chapter 6.)

chose to discuss their plan of campaign within hearing of the Removites, that was their own look-out.

"But can you make up as an old lady, Cecil?" It was Dabney's voice this time. "Of course, we know exactly what Bull's aunt looks like; we remember her."

"Oh, yes, that's quite easy, Dab!" said Temple confidently. "I've got a photograph of her, too, that Hobson took one day she was here. Old Lazarus will help us. And, I tell you, I shall look a good bit more like Bull's aunt than like his uncle."

Johnny Bull's face was a study.

But the Remove chums remained very quiet.

"Only they'd never seen Bull's uncle," said the voice of Fry. "You see, that makes a difference. They all know Bull's aunt by sight."

"Makes no difference. They'd never suspect me of being made up as a woman," said Temple. "That makes it quite easy."

"But suppose you don't look quite like her?"

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"I shall look exactly like her, my son. I tell you, I've got her photograph, and we all know the weird way she dresses. Old Lazarus will help, too; and he's got all the things we need. I shall look so exactly like Auntie Bull that I'll bet you ten to one in bobs that Bull himself won't have the slightest suspish."

"All very well," grunted Fry. "But suppose the real aunt should come visiting the chap, just as the real uncle did the other day?"

"Oh, that's not likely to happen twice, Fry! It was just bad luck the other day. Things like that don't happen twice over. Johnny Bull's aunt won't come here this afternoon just because I'm dressed up like her."

"Well, I suppose it ain't likely," admitted Fry.

"Of course it isn't, fathhead! And I tell you it will be as easy as falling off a form. And I'll make those rotters sit up. I've got it all cut and dried. I'll drop in about half-past three, just as if I—I mean she—had come by the ordinary afternoon train to Friardale. I'll

make out that I've written, and be surprised that Johnny hasn't had my letter. See? I'll just play the ordinary old aunt at first, so that they won't be likely to smell a rat, and afterwards——"

Temple's voice died away, and the Fourth-Formers strolled off. The Remove chums burst into a chuckle. They rose cautiously and looked out of the open window. Temple, Dabney, and Fry were strolling along, deep in discussion, without turning their heads.

"Back from that window," said Wharton. "Don't let the howling asses see you. Don't let 'em suspect we've got on to the wheeze."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The cheeky rotters!" growled Johnny Bull. "Making up as my aunt! By Jove!"

"Temple seems to be nuts on your relations," grinned Squiff. "Blessed if I should have thought of this. Of course, it was jolly clever the way he made up as your uncle, but then your giddy uncle was a stranger. This really beats the band!"

"I'll jolly well mop up the ground with the cheeky ass!"

"It does really take the cake," said Harry Wharton. "Temple is getting quite bright. The Remove Dramatic Society isn't in it with this. The brightest part of his idea is to jaw it over where we can hear him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Just as well we did," said Nugent. "I'm blessed if I should have spotted a game like that. But I don't believe Temple can make up well enough to take us in."

"He did before," said Bob.

"Yes; but we know Auntie Bull so jolly well. I'll bet you Temple will make a muck of it this time."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Never mind, let him go ahead, my sons. We'll let him come along in feminine attire, and let him think he has spoofed us—at first. Then we'll give him a surprise in the study."

The juniors chuckled gleefully. Johnny Bull was a little incensed at the idea of the captain of the Fourth having the cheek to make up as his aunt. But he grinned at the prospect of capturing Temple in such a ridiculous rig. Once the disguised junior was in the hands of the Co., he would feel very sorry for himself. Harry Wharton's eyes sparkled with anticipation.

"What price rigging up a first-rate booby trap in the study?" he asked. "We'll get a big tin pan—we can annex one from the kitchen—and fill it with ink and soot and ashes—rig it up over the study door——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then we show Auntie Temple into the study, and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Not a word!" said Wharton. "Let the silly duffers think we don't know anything about it. I fancy this will make Temple tired of japing the Remove."

"Well, it's settled for us what we're going to do this afternoon!" chuckled Squiff. "We're going to give Temple the time of his life. Let's go and get the booby trap ready. It will take time."

And with smiling faces the chums of the Remove quitted the Rag.

Meanwhile, Temple, Dabney & Co. had sauntered away carelessly out of the gates of Greyfriars. In the road they paused to look at one another and chuckle.

"Looks all right?" murmured Fry.

"Right as rain!" said Temple. "I saw Wharton's head just inside the window—and the others were there, too! They heard every word."

The Fourth-Formers chuckled spasmodically.

"They don't know Auntie Bull is coming!" gasped Temple. "But they're prepared for a japer coming along, got up as Auntie Bull. I'm inclined to suspect, my infants, that when Auntie Bull comes, they will take her for a practical joker in disguise."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"B-b-but what will they do, I wonder?" gurgled Dabney.

"Well, I don't know—perhaps rush her and bump her——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Perhaps turn the hose on her," said Temple cheerfully. "Anyway, they're pretty certain to give her a
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warm reception. And when they discover that it's the real Auntie Bull——"

The Fourth-Formers yelled.

"I shall have to keep out of sight," murmured Temple. "They're bound to rag her somehow. And after they've ragged her, I'll turn up smiling——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were very busy in No. 1 Study, about half an hour later, when Fry and Dabney looked in. There was a wide tin pan on the table, and Wharton was stirring it. Johnny Bull was pouring in red ink. Nugent was pouring in black ink. Bob Cherry was industriously scraping soot out of the chimney and adding it to the contents of the tin pan. Hurree Janset Ram Singh was clearing out of the cupboard all the remains of jam, pickles, and other necessary ingredients. Squiff was opening a bottle of liquid glue.

Dabney and Fry stared at them.

"What on earth have you got there?" demanded Dabney.

"Ahem! Making a bit of a mixture," said Wharton. "Nothing to do with you bounders. What do you want?"

"Oh, just looked in to see if you'd like to come out on the river!" said Dabney. "We want a kid to steer for us."

"Buzz off, fathead!"

"You're not going out?" asked Dabney carelessly.

"Not just now."

"Where's Temple?" asked Nugent innocently.

"Temple going with you?"

"Ahem!" said Dabney. "Temple's gone down to Courtfield, as it happens. What the deuce are you going to do with that muck?"

"Shove it over you, if you don't clear off!" said Wharton, taking out the ladle.

Dabney and Fry promptly cleared off. Harry Wharton & Co. smiled. They guessed that Dabney had come to ascertain that they would be at home when the pretended Auntie Bull arrived. They could guess, too, what Cecil Temple had gone down to Courtfield for, after what they had heard outside the window of the Rag. Bob Cherry kicked the door shut after the Fourth-Formers.

"They'll know soon enough what that mixture's for!" he remarked, with a chuckle. "I think Temple, when he gets that on his napper, will get tired of making-up as uncles and aunts and things!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dabney and Fry walked away, with blissful smiles. They had hardly dare to hope that the Remove chums would fall into the trap so utterly. But it was evident that they had done so. All was going well—from the point of view of Temple, Dabney & Co. But what Auntie Bull would think—and do—that was another matter entirely.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Too Polite!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here comes auntie!"

The half-hour had chimed out from the clock-tower. On Little Side the Remove match with the Third was going strong. Tom Brown and Linley and Penfold, and Bolsover major and Bulstrode and Ogilvy and the rest were playing up, and other Removites gathered round the field were cheering them as they made hay of the Third. But Harry Wharton & Co. were not thinking about the Form match; they were thinking about Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth.

Near the gateway Dabney and Fry and Scott were lounging with apparent carelessness. Temple was conspicuous by his absence. Harry Wharton & Co. thought they could guess where he was. After his success in making-up as Johnny Bull's uncle, he had the unparalleled nerve to make up as Johnny's aunt. And the reception he was going to get would tire him of amateur-theatrical japes; the Co. were quite sure of that. Harry Wharton & Co. were keeping an eye on the gates. And they grinned when a feminine form appeared there, so exactly like Johnny Bull's aunt that Johnny rubbed his eyes a little in astonishment.

If that was Temple of the Fourth, the chums of the

Remove had to concede that he was a past-master in the art of make-up.

The old lady who entered looked a good two inches taller than the captain of the Fourth. Perhaps that was her bonnet—an old-fashioned mid-Victorian bonnet such as Auntie Bull always wore. Her long, grey coat—Johnny Bull could almost have sworn to that coat. Her rolls of grey hair, severely flattened down to her head—the resemblance was complete. But the face was the most marvellous part—the somewhat brown, wrinkled face was exact. True, it was considerably shaded by the old bonnet, and partly hidden by a veil; but, really, it was astounding. Johnny Bull stared at the old lady blankly.

"Well, this takes the cake!" he said.

"I must say Temple is coming on," admitted Wharton. "We've always made fun of their blessed dramatic society in the Fourth, but I must say it's jolly clever to make-up like that!"

"Look at that rotter, Fry, talking to her," said Nugent.

Fry of the Fourth had approached the old lady, taking off his cap most politely. Auntie Bull stared at him. She was a somewhat formidable lady, with a very determined character, and she had been known to use her big, fat umbrella upon cheeky youths.

"Good-afternoon, ma'am!" said Fry politely. "You've come to see Johnny? He's expecting you, ma'am. He's over there by the School House."

"Thank you, my child," said Auntie Bull.

Fry grinned, and Auntie Bull passed him, walking towards the School House with her vigorous strides. Dabney and Fry and Scott whispered together and laughed. Harry Wharton & Co. saw them, of course, and drew their own conclusions—the conclusions the astute Fry intended them to draw.

"The silly asses! They're giving it away!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Fry ought to have had more sense than to speak to him under our very noses if he didn't want us to smell a rat!"

"Oh, they're duffers!" said Johnny Bull.

"My dear Johnny!" said Auntie Bull affectionately, as she joined the juniors.

And Bull gave quite a jump. The voice was exactly like his aunt's. Truly he would never have suspected Cecil Temple of being able to play a part like this.

"Come in, ma'am!" said Bob Cherry demurely. "You—you must be cold after your journey. We've got a topping fire in the study."

"You received my letter, Johnny?"

"No!" said Johnny Bull.

"What! You should certainly have received it this morning," said Miss Bull. "Perhaps you have left it in the rack."

"Perhaps!" grinned Johnny Bull, who knew very well there was no letter for him in the rack. "When did you write, auntie?"

"Last evening, Johnny."

"Ahem! It hasn't come," said Bull. "But I'm glad to see you, auntie—jolly glad! Do come in! Can I carry your umbrella?"

Bull was rather keen to get that umbrella away before the flood descended on Temple. It looked dangerous.

"My dear boy, always thoughtful of your old auntie," said Miss Bull affectionately; and she handed him the umbrella. "I want to have a long talk with you this afternoon, dear. I have a little surprise for you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, what—Johnny—what are you laughing at?"

"N-n-nothing!" stammered Johnny. "Nothing at all, auntie! But—but the fact is, we have a little surprise for you!"

"Shurrup!" murmured Squiff.

"This way, auntie," said Johnny Bull. "You know your way to the study, of course?"

"Indeed, yes!" said Miss Bull, accompanying the smiling juniors up the broad staircase. "I am glad to see you looking so well, Johnny. I must have a long talk with you about your uncle."

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ONE
PENNY.

"Righto!" said Johnny. "Hallo, what do you Fourth Form cads want?"

Dabney and Fry and Scott had come in, and they were following the Removites upstairs. Several more of the Fourth had joined them, and they were all grinning.

"Bought the staircase?" demanded Jones of the Fourth.

"Oh, clear off!" said Bull.

"Bow-wow!" said Fry.

"My dear Johnny," said Miss Bull, "don't be cross with that nice boy."

Miss Bull remembered Fry's polite greeting when she had come in.

"Nice boy!" murmured Johnny. "Oh, all right! We're going to give some nice boys a surprise soon."

"Shurrup, fathead!" whispered Bob.

Johnny Bull grunted, and they proceeded to the Remove passage. The Fourth-Formers persisted in following them, and they did not go to their own quarters—they came into the Remove passage. They were, as Bob Cherry had said, simply giving it away.

Miss Bull was moving along the passage towards Johnny Bull's own study, which was No. 4, but Johnny stopped her.

"Here we are!" he said. "No. 1 Study, auntie."

"But I wish to talk to you, Johnny—perhaps we had better go to your own study," said Auntie Bull.

"We've got No. 1 all ready," explained Johnny Bull.

The Removites burst into a chuckle at the thought of what they had got ready. Miss Bull looked a little surprised; she found her nephew and his friends quite odd this afternoon.

"Very well, Johnny," she said.

The door of No. 1 Study was ajar. The juniors drew aside to allow Miss Bull to enter first. Politeness required that they should open the door for her. But, as the booby trap was arranged on the door-top, naturally they did not carry politeness to that extent just now. It was necessary for Temple of the Fourth to open the study door if he was to have the full benefit of the arrangements that had been made for him.

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, pushing through the grinning Fourth-Formers—"I say, if you'd like me to do any shopping for you—"

"Buzz off, Fatty!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Good afternoon, Miss Bull!" said Bunter, blinking at the bonneted lady through his big spectacles. "So jolly glad to see you! Johnny's an old pal of mine, you know. I'm going to have tea with you."

Miss Bull gave Bunter a smile, and looked rather oddly at Johnny. She was surprised that her nephew did not open the study door for her to enter. As a rule, Johnny Bull was not lacking in polite attentions to his affectionate aunt.

Billy Bunter hustled forward.

"I say, you fellows, where are your manners? Allow me, Miss Bull—"

"Get away!" roared Bob Cherry ferociously.

Bunter blinked at him in astonishment.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Buzz off, you fat idiot!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull, I don't see why I shouldn't open a door for your aunt, if you won't take the trouble yourself. There's such a thing as politeness to ladies, Bull."

"You—you—you—"

Johnny Bull made a ferocious movement towards Bunter, who had put his fat hand on the handle of the door.

But his aunt interposed.

"Johnny, I am surprised at you! I am really surprised! Bunter is only acting politely, and it is very nice of him. Thank you, Bunter!"

"Not at all, ma'am!" said Billy Bunter, with a triumphant blink at Johnny Bull. "Some fellows are naturally well-bred and some are not. This way, ma'am."

Billy Bunter threw open the door with a flourish.

Crash!

There was a fiendish yell from Bunter.

"Yaroooooh! Oh! Grrrrrrrrrooggghhh!"

ANSWERS

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

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



Although one hears a lot about the flooded trenches of Belgium, knee-deep mud and water is not always the case. In certain favourable situations our cheerful Tommies manage to construct for themselves comparatively comfortable quarters, to which they retire when their arduous duties in the trenches entitle them to a spell of well-earned rest, and in the above illustration our artist depicts a typical scene in one of these cosy shelters.

"Out of you!" ejaculated Bunter. "Why, was it you who—"

"Come on!" said Squiff hastily. "I'll take you to a bath-room. You'd better take a bath, clothes and all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, leaving a trail of soot and ink and glue and pickles behind him. He was soon afterwards extremely busy in a bath-room, splashing away furiously. Auntie Bull had been taken into No. 4 Study. There was some cleaning to be done in No. 1 before visitors could be shown in there.

Auntie Bull sank into an armchair, quite fluttered by the startling experience she had gone through. She would have been considerably more fluttered if she had gone through the experience Billy Bunter had unintentionally saved her from.

Harry Wharton & Co. exerted themselves in devoted
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NEXT
MONDAY—

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

attentions to auntie. Whenever they thought of what had so nearly happened they shuddered. But they did not mean to tell Auntie Bull of her narrow escape. It was a case of the least said the soonest mended.

Meanwhile, in Temple's study in the Fourth-Form passage, the disconsolate japers had gathered, in the lowest possible spirits. Temple, Dabney, & Co. felt that fortune had used them very badly. The jape had gone so well, so beautifully, and then merely the interposition of a fat duffer, and the whole thing was ruined. Temple felt that it was too bad. He was also feeling a little bad personally, after his handling in the Remove passage. So were the Co. They groaned in chorus.

"Never mind," said Temple at last heroically. "I admit our luck was out, all through that fool shoving himself in where he wasn't wanted. But better luck next time."

"Next time!" said Fry sulphurously. "Look at my

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

eye! Look at my nose! Don't talk to me about next time, if you don't want to be thumped!"

"A rotten frost!" said Dabney. "Oh, rather—a rotten frost! I wouldn't mind a scrap if we'd brought off the jape; but this— Oh, crumbs!"

"Simply got the kybosh!" mumbled Scott. "Oh, you ass, Temple!"

"Look here——"

"Fathead!"

"Rats!"

And Cecil Temple said no more.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Way of the Transgressor!

AUNTIE BULL stayed to tea.

Never had her favourite nephew and his chums been so attentive and so devoted. They were so breathlessly relieved that the booby-trap had caught Billy Bunter instead of Auntie Bull that they felt that they could not be devoted enough to their distinguished visitor. Indeed, whenever Johnny Bull thought of his affectionate aunt's narrow escape it gave him the "shivers," as he told his chums afterwards.

Fortunately, Auntie Bull had no suspicion that that dreadful mixture had been prepared for her especial benefit. The absurd mistake into which the juniors had been led by the wily diplomacy of Temple & Co. remained a profound secret. They blushed, in fact, whenever they reflected how they had been taken in. Thanks to Bunter, no great harm had been done, excepting to Bunter. And all the juniors agreed that that didn't matter.

The Owl of the Remove came in to tea. Harry Wharton & Co. grinned at the sight of him. He had changed his clothes, and the red and flustered look of his fat face indicated that he had been doing an unusual amount of rubbing and scrubbing. But in spite of all his efforts there were traces of ink about his ears, and glue about his hair, and a sort of scent of pickles hanging about him like an aroma. Bunter wore an injured expression, but he forgot his injuries when he piled into the good things on the table.

Auntie Bull took quite an interest in him. She asked him with much solicitude how he felt. But Bunter's replies were laconic. His jaws were a little too busy for conversation.

As Miss Bull wanted a talk with Johnny, Harry Wharton & Co. rose to quit the study when they had finished tea. Billy Bunter did not rise. He was not nearly finished yet. He had only eaten enough for three so far.

"Coming for a little trot, Bunter?" said Wharton.

Bunter blinked up for a moment.

"No, thanks! Pass the jam, Bull!"

The juniors looked expressively at the Owl of the Remove. But William George Bunter was impervious to looks. So long as anything remained on the table he was not likely to move. Auntie Bull had regarded him at first with friendly solicitude, then with wonder, finally with something like alarm. The amount the Owl of the Remove put away was indeed alarming to anyone not accustomed to him.

"My dear boy," said Auntie Bull at last, "are you not afraid of being ill?"

"Ill!" said Bunter, with his mouth full. "Oh, no! I suffer a little at times—pass the cake, Nugent!—from not having enough to eat—the currant cake, I mean. Never mind, I'll go on with this. We don't really get enough to eat here—pass the currant cake, too, will you? I can manage both—but when I get a chance of a decent feed I feel much better, Miss Bull!"

"Oh!" said Miss Bull.

Harry Wharton & Co. waited as patiently as they could. Billy Bunter blinked round at them.

"Don't you fellows wait for me. I say, Miss Bull, I suppose you know that the post is pretty late in this beastly war time? Let's have those tarts, Bull!"

"No, I had not noticed it," said Miss Bull.

"Well, it is," said Bunter. "I haven't had a letter I was expecting to-day with a remittance in it, and to-morrow's Sunday, you know. I was wondering whether you——"

"Come on, Bunter!" said Bob Cherry, with a glare.

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The fat junior was evidently about to spring his postal-order story on the unsuspecting Miss Bull.

"I wish you wouldn't interrupt me when I'm talking to a lady, Cherry. If you want something to do you can pass the tarts. As I was saying, ma'am, I haven't had my remittance, and I happen to be short of——"

Bob Cherry grasped the Owl of the Remove, and lifted him bodily out of his chair. The fat junior wriggled.

"Leggo! I say, I've not finished yet; besides——"

"Yes, you have," said Bob cheerfully. "Kim on!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—— Leggo! Leggo, Inky, you black beast! Ow!"

Billy Bunter was marched out of the study with a grasp on each fat arm, and the rest of the juniors followed, and the door was shut.

The Owl of the Remove raised loud objections as he was walked away down the passage.

"Leggo, you rotters! I tell you I haven't finished tea. Besides, I've got something to say to Miss Bull—something important——"

"No sponging on visitors allowed," said Harry Wharton.

"You rotter, Wharton! You know I never sponge! I was simply going to propose to Miss Bull——"

"Great Scott!"

"Why, she's thirty years older than you, Bunter!"

"You silly asses," roared Bunter, "I say I was going to propose to her to——"

"You're after her money!" said Bob Cherry, wagging his forefinger at the fat junior. "You're a fortune-hunter, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you I meant to propose——"

"Rot! You're not going to propose to Bull's aunt! Besides, she wouldn't have you," said Bob. "I'm simply shocked at you, Bunter."

"You—you—you silly ass!" shrieked Bunter. "You know what I mean——"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Peter Todd, looking out of No. 7 Study. "What's the matter with Bunter? What are the fireworks about, fatty?"

"He's fallen in love with Johnny's aunt," said Bob seriously. "We've dragged him away just in time to stop a proposal."

"Wha-a-at!"

"You silly fathead!" yelled Bunter. "I was going to propose——"

"Well, of all the fat idiots!" said Todd. "Bunter! That silly porpoise! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Todd, you dummy——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd. "This is the second time Bunter's been smitten! But he didn't get as far as a proposal before."

"You blithering idiots!" howled Bunter. "I tell you I was going to propose——"

"And I tell you you're jolly well not going to do anything of the kind!"

"To propose to her——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"To cash my postal-order for me in advance."

"Now, don't try to wriggle out of it like that, Bunter," said Bob, with a shake of the head.

"You ass! You dummy! I was going to propose to her to cash my postal-order."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"She's got lots of money," said Bunter savagely, "and my postal-order is coming on Monday for certain. I meant to ask her as soon as I knew she was coming—I—I mean——"

"Halla, hallo, hallo!" said Bob at once. "You knew she was coming! How did you know she was coming, when Johnny himself didn't know?"

"I—I—I mean, I—I thought she might come—— I—I——" stammered Bunter. "Leggo my ear, Cherry, you beast! You know perfectly well that I wouldn't open another chap's—yow-ow—letter! Leggo!"

"So you opened a letter of Johnny's, did you?" asked Bob grimly.

"No," roared Bunter, "I didn't! Certainly not! Yow! I thought it was mine. The name looked like mine, and Temple said I'd better tear it up. It was all his fault. Yarook! I—I haven't seen any letter! Oh, crumbs! Leggo!"

"So there was a letter after all, and that fat beast opened it, and told Temple Miss Bull was coming," said Wharton. "I wondered how he knew. If we'd known that, we shouldn't have been taken in! What did you do with the letter, Bunter?"

"Nothing. I haven't seen any letter. I hadn't the faintest idea there was a letter for Bull."

"Why, you fat Ananias, you just said——"

"I didn't! Leggo my ear! Besides, Temple said I'd better not give it to Bull, after I'd told him what was in it! Ow, ow, ow! It wasn't important!" wailed Bunter. "Only a line to say she was coming at half-past three. Yow-ow!"

"Well, you beastly cad!" said Wharton wrathfully. "You opened Bull's letter, and destroyed it! You ought to be kicked out of the school! Bring him along, you chaps, we'll take him to Mr. Quelch, and report him!"

"Hear, hear!"

Billy Bunter was marched down the passage in the grasp of the Famous Five and Squiff and Todd. They all had hold of him somewhere—chiefly his ears and his hair.

The Owl of the Remove was quaking with terror now. He had satisfied his own fat conscience that his conduct was above reproach, but he realised that it would not be so easy to satisfy his Form-master.

"I—I say, you fellows, chuck it!" he groaned. "Quelch will be ratty! He may think I opened the letter to see if there was a remittance in it—he's an awfully suspicious old beast, you know! And there wasn't—not a stiver! Of course, I shouldn't have kept it. I should have settled up with Bull out of my very next postal-order——"

"Bring him along!"

"Justice must be done," said Peter Todd. "I'm sorry that a study-mate of mine should be sacked. Still, there'll be more room in the study when Bunter's gone—much more room! I suppose he'll be sent to a reformatory."

"Prison, I should think," said Bob Cherry, with a shake of the head. "Penal servitude, most likely. You see, it's war time, and he'll be tried by court-martial."

"Why, of course! Shet, perhaps!" said Todd. "I'm sorry for you, Bunter—really sorry! Still, you've brought it on yourself."

"I—I s-s-ay, you fellows, d-d-don't be beasts, you know," groaned Bunter. "I don't b-b-believe I should be tut-tut-tried by court-martial at all. Besides, it was all Temple's fault, the beast!"

"Hold on!" said Bob Cherry. "I'll tell you what! We'll let Bunter off, on condition that he thrashes Temple."

"Good!" said Wharton. "Otherwise, we'll show him up, and get rid of him! If he goes straight to Temple's study, and licks him——"

"I—I c-can't lick Temple," moaned Bunter.

"Come on, then——"

"Ow! I won't go to Mr. Quelch! Yow! I—I—I'll go and lick Temple, if you like!" howled Bunter.

"We'll see you to his door, then," said Bob. "This way! And mind you give him a jolly good whopping, or court-martial!"

The chums of the Remove marched Bunter into the Fourth-Form passage. They felt that he needed a severe lesson to keep his fat fingers off other people's letters. Mr. Quelch would certainly have ordered a flogging if he had known the facts; and, as they could not very well give him away to his Form-master, it was necessary to impress upon his mind by other means the enormity of his conduct.

If he started thrashing Temple of the Fourth, it was extremely probable that he would not need a flogging afterwards; he would be punished enough.

Bob Cherry kicked Temple's door open. The Fourth-Form Co. glared at the Removites. Bunter was whirled into the study.

"Bunter's come to thrash you, Temple!" announced Bob Cherry. "You've acted like a rotter, and Bunter's going to thrash you!"

"Thrash me—that fat owl!" gasped Temple. "Oh, my hat!"

The Removites walked away, leaving Bunter to thrash Temple. In the Fourth-Form study there were sounds of scuffling and yelling and roaring. Somebody was evidently being thrashed. But probably it was not Temple.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked back, with cheerful interest, from the end of the passage.

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EVERY
MONDAY,

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ONE
PENNY.

Through Temple's doorway came flying a fat figure, and Temple's boot was seen for a moment behind it.

Bump! Slam!

"Ow! Help! Fire! Yow-ow-ow!"

"I think Bunter may leave other chaps' letters alone for a bit now," Bob Cherry remarked cheerfully, as the juniors walked away smiling.

And, to judge by the dreadful groans that proceeded from William George Bunter as he crawled away, it was likely to be some time before he forgot his lesson.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER. Startling News!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. walked to the station with Auntie Bull when her visit was over. They noticed that auntie shook her finger at Johnny Bull when the train started, and Johnny was looking very thoughtful when they came away from the station. His interview with Auntie Bull seemed to have given him much food for thought.

"Penny for 'em, Johnny," said Bob Cherry, at last, when Bull had tramped half-way back to Greyfriars without speaking a word.

Johnny Bull grunted.

"I've been jawed," he said.

"Never mind, old chap, I daresay you deserved it," said Bob comfortingly.

Another expressive grunt from Johnny Bull.

"You see, my aunt is awfully fond of her brother Arthur," he explained. "They were both kids together—an awful long time ago, I should think—and as he's been away about twenty years, she wants to kill the fatted calf for him, and so on. They used to correspond regularly, and it seems that auntie corresponded chiefly on the subject of me! The old boy is disappointed. He wants to take auntie back to Australia with him, and auntie won't go unless I do. And—and the real trouble is, that her health isn't so good as it was, and the doctor recommends the southern climate for her. I shouldn't wonder if Nunky has put the medical johnny up to telling her that. I don't suppose the climate is as good as this really."

"My hat!" said Squiff. "This isn't a climate—this is a horror. The Australian climate beats the Riviera hollow. You don't know what a climate is till you've been to Australia. All the same, you can't go, Johnny. We should miss you too much."

Johnny Bull nodded with a worried look.

"I don't want to get away from Greyfriars," he said.

"Of course, I should come back and see you fellows at times. Australia isn't so jolly far away in these days, you know. And if I didn't care to stop there, I could come back to Greyfriars for good. But I'm jolly well not going, all the same! I'd do anything to please auntie—she's been awfully good to me; but I can't stand Uncle John Arthur at any price. Blessed if I know what auntie can see in him! Crusty old beggar, I call him! I'm jolly well not going, and that settles it!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

But the juniors were very thoughtful as they walked back to Greyfriars. They did not want to lose their chum; but, so far as worldly advantage went, Johnny was missing a tremendous opportunity in refusing his millionaire uncle's offer.

But Johnny Bull was quite firm. Uncle John Arthur had "put his back up" in the first place by showing distrust, and had made matters much worse by his evident expectation, when he visited Johnny, that his nephew would be keen and eager to accept his offer on account of his millions. All the rugged independence in Johnny Bull's nature was roused by that. As he expressed it, he was jolly well going to show how much—or how little—he cared for his rich uncle's money.

"It's N.G.," said Johnny finally. "Why, if I went now, the old boulder would think that I meant to go all along, and was only fooling; he'd think I was after the cash all the time. He can go and eat coke!"

And that settled it.

But during the next week or so it might have been

noticed that Johnny Bull was given to spells of unusual thoughtfulness.

"Thinking about the giddy millions?" asked Bob Cherry one day, nearly a week after the visit of Auntie Bull.

Johnny snorted.

"No, ass! I can't help thinking that if my aunt wants me to go it's rather rotten to refuse, since she's so good to me. That's all that worries me. Not that it makes any difference. I'm not going to give Uncle John Arthur a chance of saying that I'm after his disgusting money; and he would be bound to think so sooner or later. It's quite settled, only I hate to give auntie any trouble. And if you think I'm bothering my head about the millions, Bob Cherry—"

"Of course I don't, fathead!" said Bob. "I know you haven't got sense enough, old chap."

"Oh, rats!"

A day or two later Vernon-Smith dropped into Johnny Bull's study at tea-time. All the Co. were there, having tea with Johnny Bull. They greeted the Bounder with friendly nods. The chums had not forgotten that the Bounder had been chiefly instrumental in saving Johnny from the rascally plot of old Mr. Bull's secretary.

"Squat down, Smithy," said Bull. "'Nuff for one more."

"Well, I really didn't come to tea, but I will," said Vernon-Smith. "I came to speak to you. Thanks—toast for me. What's the name of your uncle's firm in Sydney, Bull?"

"His name?" said Johnny, with a stare. "Bull & Co., I suppose."

"Shipping firm, isn't it?"

"Yes. They own the Bull Line."

"Then there's news for you," said Smithy. "Some blessed German has sunk one of the steamers."

"By Jove!" said Johnny Bull.

"Landed the crew and sunk the steamer, just as the Emden used to do before Squiff's people nailed her," said the Bounder. "'Tain't in the papers yet. I've heard it from my pater. I suppose she was insured, so it's all right."

"Blessed if I know!" said Johnny Bull.

"I say, that'll be a pretty considerable loss, won't it?" said Squiff. "I've seen the Bull steamers in Sydney Harbour. They must come to a good figure. Still, I suppose she was insured."

It was a couple of days later, when Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, buttonholed Johnny Bull in the Close. Fish was looking excited.

"I guess there's something in the paper to interest you, Bull," he remarked.

"Germans licked?" asked Bull.

"I guess so; but that's nothing new. That old galoot who was here the other day—your uncle, I guess—he was Bull of the Bull Line, wasn't he?"

"Yes," grunted Johnny.

"Then I guess it's all up with him."

"What?"

"War losses," said Fish. "Then he seems to have lost a ship. I guess I've heard that he was going to leave you his millions, Bull. I kinder reckon there won't be any to leave now. You'd have got left, my pippin."

Johnny Bull glared at him.

"What are you driving at, you fathead?" he demanded gruffly. "Is there anything about my uncle in the paper?"

"Yep."

"Give it to me, then, you ass!"

"I guess you might be a bit more civil to a galoot taking the trouble to tell you news—"

"Oh, rats!"

Johnny Bull jerked the newspaper away from the American junior and stalked off with it, leaving Fisher T. Fish looking considerably ruffled.

"Why, the blessed jay!" ejaculated Fish indignantly.

"I guess I'd go after him and mop up the earth with him, only—ahem!—well, I'll let him off as he's had bad news. I guess this will be one in the eye for him."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Whom are you going to mop up the earth with?" asked Bob Cherry, coming along

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and bestowing a mighty slap upon Fisher T. Fish's shoulder. Fish gave a wild howl.

"Ow! You jay! Yow! Do you want a dot on the nose?" roared Fish.

"Certainly!" said Bob cheerily.

"I guess I'll disappoint you, then," said Fisher T. Fish. "And you can go and tell Bull that I hope his uncle's going to the workhouse! Yah!"

The Yankee junior walked away, with a sniff. Bob stared.

"What is the silly duffer getting at, people?" he asked, looking round. "Bull's uncle—the workhouse! He's off his rocker!"

"Must be, I should think," said Squiff. "Where's Johnny? Hallo! Here he is, deep in the war news."

The chums of the Remove bore down upon Johnny Bull, who was seated on a bench under the elms scanning the newspaper eagerly, and blind to his surroundings. He did not look up as the juniors arrived. His usually ruddy face was a little pale.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob cheerily. "Tell us the news, Johnny. Have the Gurkhas got into Berlin yet, or have the New Zealanders whacked the Turks?"

Johnny Bull looked up. His chums were startled by the expression on his face.

"What's the matter, Johnny?" asked Wharton quickly.

"I wish to goodness I'd been a bit easier with my uncle when he was here," said Bull, with a catch in his voice. "After all, I dare say he meant decently enough—it was only his way. Poor old chap!"

"Something about him in the paper?" asked Wharton, puzzled.

Johnny Bull nodded.

"Bad news?"

"Yes."

"I'm sorry!" said Wharton. "But what——"

"He's ruined!"

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Johnny Bull's Resolve!

"RUINED!"

The chums of the Remove stared blankly at Johnny Bull. They had been expecting anything but that. Bull nodded gloomily.

"The poor old chap!" he said. "It's rotten! It seems that the firm has lost a lot through the war, somehow. And then that steamer being sunk the other day, I suppose, made it worse; and the long and short of it is that the firm's gone bust, and it's doubtful if they'll pay fifteen shillings in the pound."

"By Jove!"

"That means that Uncle John Arthur's right on the rocks," said Johnny Bull, with a worried look; "and auntie, too! I know they won't let any creditors go unpaid, if they starve for it. They'll let everything go before that, whether the law takes it or not. Auntie will make him take her tin—I know that. And, by Jove, he shall have mine too, if he needs it! There's something coming to me from my grandmother when I'm of age, and if I can work it he shall have that, if it's needed to pay the debts. I can't quite understand how it's come about—the paper doesn't give details. There's just a paragraph, that's all. You can read it."

The juniors, with very grave faces, read the paragraph. It was plain enough. In a few curt lines it stated that, owing to losses in the war, the firm of Bull & Co., of Sydney, were about to file their petition in bankruptcy, and added that the assets of the firm were hoped to produce fifteen shillings in the pound. It was the morning's paper.

Johnny Bull sat with his hands clenched hard, and his brows wrinkled grimly. His thoughts were working.

The postman came across the Close from the gates, and Johnny Bull started up at the sight of him. He called out quickly:

"Anything for me, Bogg?"

"Letter for you, Master Bull."

"Give it to me—quick!"

Bogg fumbled in his bag with exasperating slowness,

but the letter was produced at last, and Johnny Bull tore it open with feverish fingers. He closed his lips as he read it, and then handed it to his chums. It ran:

"You have probably seen the news in the papers. If not, you will soon do so. You were wiser than you knew in refusing to throw in your lot with mine. At this hour, my boy, you would have been a support and a comfort to me. But that is past. Good-bye!—Your uncle,
JOHN ARTHUR BULL."

"Poor old chap!" said Bob Cherry. "Must be a fearful knock to lose all one's cash at one fell swoop!"

"And at his age, too!" groaned Johnny Bull. "I—I say, I feel a horrid worm! I feel a beast! I was a brute!"

"You can't blame yourself," said Wharton comfortingly. "You hadn't the slightest idea this was coming."

"No, thank goodness for that; he can't think I had any idea of it," said Johnny. "If I'd known, it would have been different, of course. I suppose that 'good-bye' means that he's going back to Australia at once. I shall have to wire."

"Wire!" repeated the juniors.

"Yes, or I may not catch him. He may be leaving to-day."

"But—but what——"

"I shall be sorry to leave you fellows, and sorry to leave Greyfriars," said Johnny. "That's a bit rotten."

"What on earth are you going to do?" demanded Squiff.

Johnny Bull stared at him.

"There's only one thing to be done, I suppose. I'm going to my uncle. You see what he says in the letter? If he wants me, of course, I'm going. It's different now."

"Oh, Johnny, old man——"

"The old chap will have to begin afresh," said Johnny Bull. "I dare say I shall be of some use. And I shall have a bit of tin of my own, too; that'll help. I—I wish I'd been a bit kinder to him when he was here. I—I'd like to give you chaps a word of advice, if—if you don't mind."

"Go it, Johnny!"

"Well, don't ever be unkind to old people, however much they worry you, because you never know what may happen," said Johnny. "I say, collar Bogg as he goes out. I must get him to take my wire, and then I'll see the Head, and pack. Keep your eye open for Bogg, while I write the telegram."

Johnny Bull dashed into the School House. His chums looked at one another. The blow that had fallen on Uncle Bull had fallen upon them, too. They were going to lose their chum, for the time, at least. Wharton felt a lump in his throat.

"I—I say, isn't he a brick?" he exclaimed. "Isn't he a real brick? Good old Johnny! Of course, he—he ought to do it; but there's jolly big heaps of fellows who wouldn't."

"I should say so!" murmured Bob. "He is a brick, and no mistake! If Uncle Arthur isn't proud of him, he ought to be boiled in oil!"

The juniors stopped Bogg as he came away from the house. Johnny Bull brought out his telegram. It was short and sweet.

"Dear Uncle,—Coming home at once. Coming with you to Australia, if you want me. Glad to come. Tell auntie to expect me.—Your affectionate nephew,
"JOHNNY."

Bogg took the telegram away.

Johnny Bull repaired at once to the Head's study. Dr. Locke received him with some surprise. He was looking troubled and excited. He listened in greater surprise to Johnny's somewhat incoherent explanation.

"You are not quite clear, Bull," said the Head, with a curious glance at the junior. "I understood from Mr. Bull that he wished to take you back to Australia with him, with a view to making you his heir eventually. But you declined to go."

"Yes, sir. But it's different now."

"What has changed, then?"

Johnny Bull showed the paragraph in the paper. The Head adjusted his glasses, and read it carefully.

"Indeed, that is certainly a change," he said. "Still, I do not quite understand. By going with your uncle now, Bull, you will be a loser instead of a gainer."

Johnny Bull crimsoned.

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"I suppose this isn't the time to think about that sort of thing, sir," he gasped. "I've got to get home at once, and I sha'n't be coming back. My uncle wants me."

Dr. Locke smiled.

"You may certainly go, Bull. I congratulate you upon having come to a very noble and generous decision. Good-bye, my boy!"

And the Head shook hands very cordially with the junior.

In the dormitory, Johnny Bull found his chums. They were already beginning his packing for him. The dusk was descending on the old school. Johnny Bull's last day at Greyfriars was closing in wintry night. Bob Cherry was sitting on a bed, wrinkling his brows over a time-table.

"You've got half an hour, Johnny," he said.

"Lots of time," said Johnny Bull. "I'll take a bag with me, and you fellows can pack my things and send them later. You don't mind?"

"Right-ho!" said Wharton. "We'll come down to Courtfield with you, and see you into the express, Johnny. I wish we could come with you. You'll write as soon as you can, old chap?"

"You bet!"

Johnny Bull's hands were hastily at work with his bag. When it was finished, Squiff carried it down for him. The rumour that Bull was leaving had spread, and there was a tremendous crowd gathering to see him off. Everybody was sorry he was going. His wrist almost ached with handshaking. Mr. Quelch, his Form-master, came out to shake hands with him—and nearly every fellow in the Remove. And Coker of the Fifth shoved a packet of sandwiches into his coat-pocket.

"Good-bye, Johnny!"

"Best of luck, old man!"

Johnny Bull had a lump in his throat as he walked down to the gates with his chums. There was a patter of feet behind, and Temple of the Fourth came up breathless. Cecil Reginald Temple was looking red.

"I—I say, Bull, good-bye, old fellow! And—and you don't bear any malice for our little japes—what? I'm awfully sorry you're going."

Johnny Bull gripped his hand cordially.

"Of course not, old kid. That's all right. See you again some day."

"And—and—and if you get stony out there, remember me," said Temple.

"I will! Good-bye!"

Johnny Bull started down the dusky road with his chums. There was no time to lose, and they walked sharply. They hardly broke the silence on their way; their hearts were too full. They came into Courtfield, and found that they had five minutes at the station; the express was signalled.

They were five heavy minutes to the chums of the Remove. Bob Cherry, for some reason, was blowing his nose violently, and almost incessantly. The lights gleamed down the line. The express came in with a roar, and stopped. Squiff opened a carriage door.

"Good-bye, old sons!" said Johnny Bull huskily, shaking hands all round. "Good-bye! I sha'n't forget you, and I sha'n't forget Greyfriars. Good-bye!"

He stepped into the train. The guard came along and slammed the door. Johnny Bull leaned out of the window to shake hands with his chums once more.

"Stand clear there!"

The train was moving.

"Good-bye, Johnny!"

"Good-bye!"

Johnny Bull waved his cap from the window—the Co. waved back—the express passed out into the darkness, and their chum was gone!

Harry Wharton & Co. stood on the platform, silent, grim. Bob Cherry blew his nose again. The winter night had swallowed up their old familiar chum. With heavy footsteps and heavy hearts, the chums of the Remove took their way slowly back to Greyfriars.

Johnny Bull was gone!

His chums missed him sorely.

But they felt that it would not have been so bad if he had been going out as his uncle had originally intended—to have a topping time, to make his way in the world. They would have stood it better then. But, under the circumstances, it was hard. A couple of days later there was a hasty line from Johnny, to say that he was starting for Australia, with Uncle John Arthur and Auntie Bull.

Then for a couple of days there was no news. But at last came a letter—a letter that the chums opened, all together, in No. 1 Study, and that made them gasp when they read it. It was written from the steamer which was conveying Johnny Bull and his uncle and aunt to the southern hemisphere. It had been posted at the first port of call.

And it ran:

"Dear Old Chaps,—Don't worry about me. I've been spoofed. I never thought the old sport was so deep. Fancy a giddy old shipping merchant being able to spoof the Remove! It simply beats me!"

"What the deuce—" said Bob Cherry.

"Get on with the letter!" howled Squiff.

And Wharton went on reading it out:

"You remember that paragraph in the paper? It was all bunkum. John Arthur wanted me to come. And auntie explained to him that he'd gone the wrong way to work, and it was her idea. Fancy that! Spoofed by auntie! Don't tell the Fourth Form chaps."

"The long and the short of it is, that auntie told the old sport that if I thought he was stony, on his uppers, and hadn't any beastly money, I should stick to him. Of course, any fellow would. Then the old boy had that paragraph shoved into the paper. That blessed steamer being sunk by the Germans gave him the idea how to work it. As a matter of fact, I've found out that it was insured, since I came on this ship. Auntie's told me the whole yarn now. The Bull Line is still running, like 'Charlie's Aunt.' The firm is as good as ever, and Uncle John Arthur is a bloated millionaire. It was all a ghastly spoof. I'm going to have a first-rate time, from what I hear; going to be a gilt-edged heir, and roll in Australian quids! So the prospect isn't so bad, after all. And if I prefer to return to Greyfriars, it's all right; I can come when I like. Still, I think I'd like to see Australia first. And I'll send you a kangaroo if I can. And uncle's promised to take me to see the Emden's guns. They've got 'em in Australia, you know. And he's so jolly civil that I can't very well go for him. And auntie is as pleased as Punch. And, upon the whole, everything in the garden is lovely! Nugent can have my cricket-bat, and I want you to give Linley my bike, with my kind regards. Don't forget to look after my white mice, and you can give Bunter a kick—from me. So no more at present, from your old chum, JOHNNY."

"P.S.—As you'll only be four while I'm away, you'd better take Squiff into the Co., and don't forget to keep our end up."

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton, with a deep breath. "Fancy being spoofed by auntie! It's jolly good news! Johnny's a lucky bargee! We'll give Bunter what he's sent him——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And we'll take Squiff into the Co. Eh, Squiff?"

"Hear, hear!" said Sampson Quincy Illey Field. "Very thoughtful of Johnny! He knew you required some brains in this Co."

"Why, you ass!"

"Why, you fathead!"

"Order, gentlemen!" said Bob Cherry. "Sampson Quincy—I forget the rest—Field, is now a fully-accredited and esteemed member of the select circle known as the Famous Five, and I suggest that this Co. forthwith proceeds to drink his health, and a good voyage to the retiring member of the firm."

"Hear, hear!"

And Squiff's election to the honourable position of a member of the Famous Five was forthwith celebrated in flowing ginger-pop. After which the Co. proceeded to give Billy Bunter what Johnny Bull had sent him, without eliciting any gratitude whatever from Bunter.

THE END.

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Our Companion Papers: "THE GEM" LIBRARY. Every Wednesday. "THE DREADNOUGHT," Every Thursday. "THE PENNY POPULAR," Every Friday. "CHUCKLES," 1d. Every Saturday. 2

The EDITOR'S WEEKLY CHAT WITH HIS READERS. FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Next week's magnificent long, complete story of the chums of Greyfriars is of a most absorbing and amusing nature. A spell of cold weather being experienced locally, a grand skating carnival is organised by the powers that be; and to lend additional lustre to this attractive event, a prize of ten pounds is offered to the finest exponent of the great winter sport. This award awakens the ambitions, not only of the boys of Greyfriars, but of their Courtfield rivals. Billy Bunter, the self-conceited Owl of the Remove, having deluded himself into the belief that he is an excellent skater, determines to rope in the golden quidlets by hook or by crook, and his antics at Greyfriars prior to the great event cause considerable amusement. Although Bunter actually lines up for the race, it is in reality the beginning of the end, so far as his chances are concerned, for he quite fails to get off the mark. His study mate, Tom Dutton, proves the victor after a most exciting finish; and the deaf junior has played up so valiantly on the football-field in place of the absent Johnny Bull, that when he brings off his latest coup there are none to gainsay.

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

A FLATTERING SUGGESTION.

A letter which has recently been received from one of my Malvern readers touches upon a subject which has often been brought to my notice before. There is such an earnestness in the tone of my chum's letter that I proceed to give publication to it hereunder:

"Malvern.

"Dear Mr. Editor,—You have never heard from me before, but I have read the 'Magnet' and 'Gem' since they were published at a halfpenny, and have watched with interest the development of the various periodicals which from time to time have come under your control—first the good old 'Penny Pop,' then 'Chuckles,' and the more recent acquisition of the 'Dreadnought,' and 'Boys' Friend.' I really must compliment you on the excellent way in which you have handled these journals, and on the many improvements which have manifested themselves in the case of the two last-named since the change of proprietorship."

"If you will excuse my rudeness in saying so, I have often wondered what manner of man you were—facially, I mean. Having read the excellent counsel contained in many of your Chats for years past, it is not altogether surprising that I should long for a glimpse of 'the man behind the pen.' You seem at present to be an individual surrounded with a halo of mystery. Could you not, therefore, arrange to have a photograph of yourself reproduced at the head of all your Chat pages? It is a step which many of my school chums, as well as myself, would like you to take, since it would give us a feeling of confidence in one who always claims, not only to be an editor, but a friend."

"We really think you ought to give this matter your careful consideration, and not be deterred from carrying the idea into effect by any false notions of modesty.—Believe me,

Sincerely yours,

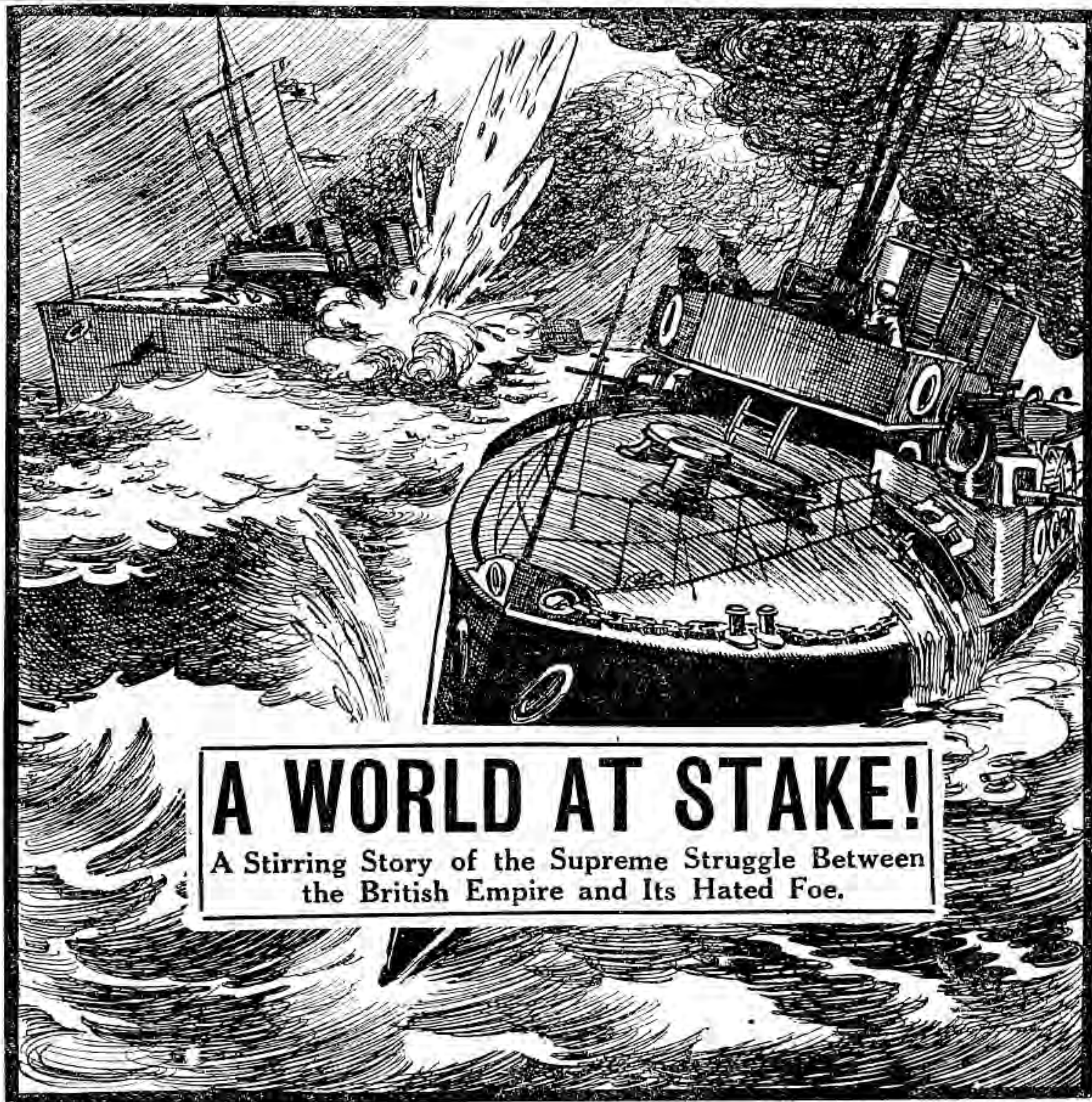
"BASIL M. CLARE."

While granting that there is a great deal in what my Malvern chum says, I must say it is very unusual for an Editor to reproduce his photograph in the pages of the periodicals he governs. Moreover, Master Clare seems to take it "on spec." that I am fairly good-looking, for if he imagined that my countenance in any way resembled that of a gorilla he would not have been in such a hurry to voice his request.

It has been my invariable rule to leave no stone unturned in carrying out my readers' wishes, so that if my chums really desire their Editor's portrait to appear in his periodicals, I shall be happy to oblige them. Perhaps they will be good enough to let me know their views on the subject.



The Concluding Instalment of Our Great War Serial Story.



A WORLD AT STAKE!

A Stirring Story of the Supreme Struggle Between
the British Empire and Its Hated Foe.

READ THIS FIRST.

Thorpe and Dick Thornhill, brothers, and inventors of the wonderful airship Night Hawk, play a prominent part in the great war with Germany on land and sea. The Germans invade Britain, with the Kaiser at their head, but cannot progress farther than Edinburgh, where they are defeated. The Kaiser escapes to Germany, and Thorpe is instructed by the British field-marshal to pursue him in his airship, and, if possible, capture him. This he does, but at the last moment is duped by a German officer impersonating the Kaiser, and when Thorpe reaches England with his prisoner the deception is discovered. The King, to whom the German officer is presented, so far from being angry with Thorpe, confers a knighthood on him as a recognition of his former brilliant services.

The two Thornhills then proceed to Russia in their latest airship, the Avenger, as they have heard that that country intends an alliance with Germany. In order to gain confirmation of this rumour, Thorpe descends from the Avenger in Moscow, but is discovered, denounced as a spy, and condemned to imprisonment in the mines of Siberia. Dick, however, comes to his aid in the airship, and successfully rescues him. The Avenger is on the way back to England when a

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wireless message is received to the effect that the Night Hawk, the sister airship to the Avenger, is attacking a German craft named the Falcon, which is commanded by a rascally German called Seigner. As the Avenger comes within sight of the battling airships a cry of dismay bursts from Thorpe Thornhill's lips. The Night Hawk is seen to be slowly settling towards the sea.

(Now go on with the story.)

All's Well That Ends Well.

Fortunately, the enemy could not depress her guns sufficiently to inflict a fatal blow, and ere she could get far enough away from her intended victim to do so, a shot from the Avenger proclaimed that her triumph was premature. She had yet another foe against which to fight.

"Curse him! It is Thorpe Thornhill!" cried Seigner, as he gazed towards the ship of his dreaded foe approaching like a minister of vengeance, as her name proclaimed her to be. "Curse him! I hoped he had perished somewhere on the Continent, as the papers said. Thunder, we must get

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MONDAY—

"TOM DUTTON'S TRIUMPH!"

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

out of this!" he added, as a better directed shot from the Avenger's guns shook the Falcon from stem to stern, as it glanced off her glittering hull.

Another shot might not prove so fortunate for the baffled German, and, leaving the Night Hawk for the moment safe on the waves, he turned his head towards the Atlantic, and fled as fast as the wings of his airship could carry him through the air.

"Are you all right? Can you keep afloat?" cried Thornhill through the megaphone, as he flew over the floating Night Hawk.

"Yes, we'll signal a tug and be towed in shore!" came back the welcome answer.

And, confident that his consort was safe, Thorpe Thornhill strained every nerve to catch his ancient enemy.

But, unfortunately, whilst the Falcon was built by sturdy British hands, under Thorpe Thornhill's own direction, the Avenger was, as we know, a German boat.

It is true she was still a splendid craft, and Thorpe had nearly doubled her capabilities since she left the works at Kiel; but still, the Falcon had a trifle the turn of speed, and in a stern chase even a trifle makes all the difference.

On they sped, straight down the English Channel, making for the waters of the Atlantic, Seigner within a hundred feet of the waters, Thorpe Thornhill keeping some five hundred feet above him.

On they sped westward, ever westward, whilst the decks of passing ships were crowded with breathless spectators to watch the exciting chase.

Again and again the Avenger's guns roared forth, sending deadly iron messengers after the foe; but at the rate they were going precision of aim was impossible.

Unwilling to lose the advantage of being higher than his opponent, Thorpe kept on his course without dropping near the sea, or perchance the chase might have ended sooner, for from long practice the gunners of the Avenger had become crack shots when level with their mark.

But Thorpe was determined not to lose his foe this time from over-confidence or hurry, and he plodded along until the wide expanse of the Atlantic Ocean appeared before him.

Then an exclamation of annoyance burst from his lips. He saw now why Seigner had kept so close to the surface of the sea, for they were rapidly approaching a large grey bank of sea-fog, under cover of which the German hoped to give his pursuers the slip.

The next moment annoyance was turned to triumph, as the Falcon was seen to swerve as though to avoid some obstacle, whilst her guns flashed forth in every direction.

The next moment the meaning was made plain, as looming through the fog appeared first the round fighting-tops of a warship, then her turret, then her steel-clad decks.

Unfortunately for Seigner, his reckless expenditure of ammunition, the result of sudden panic on board the airship, had told those on board the warship that an enemy was near ere she was visible through the fog, and the next moment, as a shot reverberated from the Avenger's hull, a deafening roar of artillery scattered the fog in all directions, and, unable to soar out of reach, the Falcon found herself in the midst of a perfect hail of enormous projectiles, more than one of which struck her hull, sending her rocking hither and thither in the unstable element, which bore her aloft like a sorely stricken bird trying to escape from the sportsman's gun.

Then she gradually settled down, disappearing in the fog just as Thorpe Thornhill's ship reached the spot.

"Above there! What ship is that? Quick, or we fire!" roared a voice from the warship's deck.

"Avenger, Thorpe Thornhill!" returned the latter, leaning over the side of his vessel.

"Ah, I thought so! Do you think the air pirate is destroyed?"

"She may float, but I doubt it," returned Thorpe. "At any rate, you had better launch boats and search for her. I'll see she doesn't rise again!"

Immediately all was bustle on board the ironclad, and a number of boats and steam-launches soon left her side, and scattered in all directions on the waves; whilst the Avenger keeping well out of the fog, moved round and round in a circle.

"Above there!" came a voice from the sea some ten minutes later. "We have her!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!" shouted Dick, leading a cheer from his gallant men—a cheer which was re-echoed from the boats and from the ship.

"Secure the prisoners, and bring them on board!" Thorpe heard the commander of the ironclad shout.

"Ay, ay, sir!" came from the fog.

The next moment a loud explosion shook the air, the fog was hurled apart in every direction, and Thornhill caught a glimpse of a shattered boat and the bodies of half a score gallant bluejackets hurled upwards.

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Then the fog closed over the scene once more, and he had for the next five minutes as much as he could do to retain his balance on board the swaying airship.

When the commotion had subsided he moved his airship cautiously back in the direction of the explosion. There was no need to ask what had happened. Either by accident or design, the Falcon had been blown up just at the moment the boat's crew touched her floating hull.

As though to assure them that such was indeed the case, the fog gradually rolled away towards the south, showing the sea littered with wreckage, evidently from the boat and the airship.

The Falcon, originally the property of the Thornhills, and stolen from them by the rascally German, was no more; and Seigner, who had turned traitor to his country, had, together with the bulk of his crew, perished in the explosion.

The wealth they had plundered from defenceless merchant-ships would now avail them nothing, as it had doubtless gone to the bottom of the sea.

As though silenced for a moment by the catastrophe, all was still around, save where, to the south, the beating of a screw told that a steamer was still forcing her way through the fog.

But the warship's engines had stopped, and Thorpe Thornhill steered the Avenger as close as he dare to the floating mass of iron and steel.

"We have bagged the brute at last, Sir Thorpe!" cried the commander of the battleship from his bridge. "Would that we could have done so a fortnight before, for we would have saved hundreds of gallant lives and an enormous amount of specie!"

"How? In what way?" demanded Thorpe.

"Ah, have you not heard how Seigner has been taking toll from ocean liners, sinking them when they refuse to comply with his demands?"

"I've heard nothing. I have been in Germany and Russia."

"Ah, then you can give us news of greater importance! Is the war over?"

Thorpe laughed bitterly.

"Over! It's but just commenced!" he replied. "But I must not say more. My information is for the Government alone, and every moment may be of consequence. Good-bye! I am glad we have settled Major Seigner ere further complications arise."

"Good-bye, Sir Thorpe, and good luck to you!" returned the commander.

And the next moment the airship and the battleship parted company.

It was too late for Thorpe Thornhill to see any member of the Government when he arrived in London; so, alighting in Trafalgar Square, he secured rooms in the Victoria Hotel, and was soon fast asleep.

As early as possible the following morning Thorpe went to Downing Street.

A couple of hours later he came home, almost beside himself with anger and impatience. It is true he had been received with the greatest courtesy and with a plethora of fine speeches; but the information that Russia was arming to attack India, or even Persia, was received with polite incredulity, and met with the reply that Russia and England were at present allied, and the advance on Persia was merely a feint to keep Austria from assisting Germany by pretending to attack Turkey through Asia Minor.

"The asses—the brainless idiots! As though anybody in their sane senses would believe that Russia, wanting money as she does, would waste it on such a futile idea!" he growled angrily. "If I could have seen Lord Roberts, it would have been different: but he is at present in Scotland!"

"Oh, never mind, Thorpe! Let things slide. They'll send for us soon enough, I'll warrant," said Dick. "Anyhow, I vote we send the Avenger to the Chepperton works to be overhauled and have a week or two's holiday. I, for one, am a bit run down."

Thorpe laughed.

"All right, old chap! But let's get into other quarters. The hall is full of reporters wanting to interview us already."

"Hang 'em, they might have left us in peace a day!" grumbled Dick.

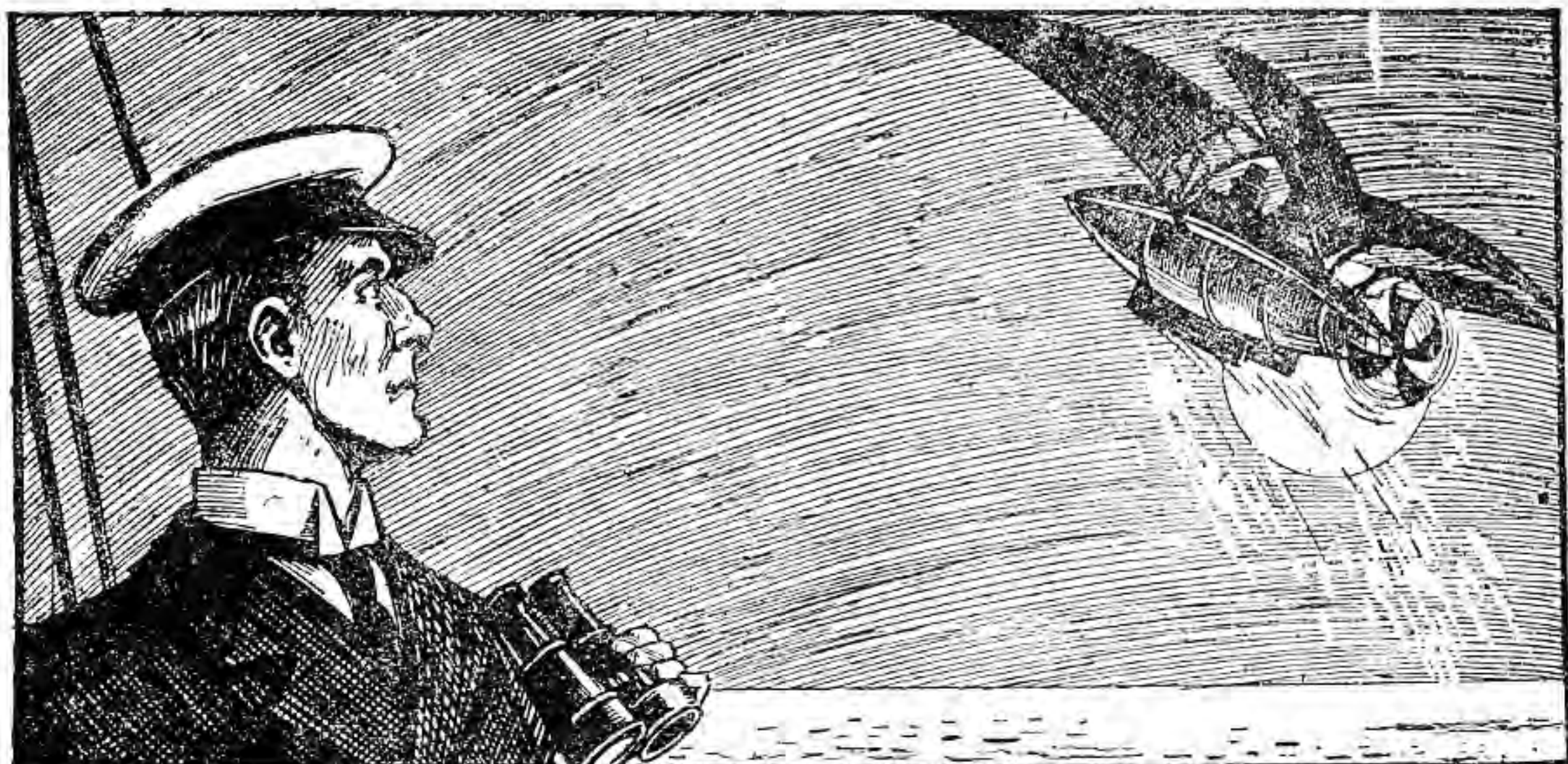
But they would not; and for the next fortnight the papers were full of Sir Richard Thornhill and Lord Thornhill of Chepperton, under which title our friend Thorpe was raised to the peerage by a grateful country.

Had they not got a friendly doctor to certify that their health needed a rest, very probably the Thornhills would have been killed by kindness. As it was, their life was a perpetual round of gaiety. Honour succeeded honour, and we leave them on the eve of the day in which Lord Thornhill of Chepperton is to receive the freedom of the City of London.

THE END.

Our Grand SIDNEY DREW Serial

THE UNCONQUERABLE



A Magnificent Story of Thrilling Adventure.
By SIDNEY DREW.

INTRODUCTION.

The well-known millionaire, Ferrers Lord, is the inventor of a wonderful vessel called the Unconquerable. On the trial trip this ship reveals her marvellous abilities by travelling alternately beneath the water and in the air. The Unconquerable is to be entered for the Florida Cup, in competition with a flying machine built by Ferrers Lord's deadly enemy, Paul Guthrey, a man who will stop at nothing. The latter hires a band of unscrupulous men, who steal the Unconquerable, and reduce the vessel to a total wreck, so Ferrers Lord is compelled to commence the construction of Unconquerable II.

Prout, Maddock, Barry O'Rooney, and Gan-Waga in the meantime go for a cruise in Ching-Lung's yacht with the Chinese prince. They land on a small island, where they meet Martin Arkland, one of the ruffians who has assisted in stealing the Unconquerable, and who is in the employ of Senor Paravalt, a wealthy Brazilian.

Paravalt takes Ching Lung and his friends prisoners with the object of preventing them from taking part in the competition for the Florida Cup, which Paul Guthrey, in whose employ Paravalt is, determines to win.

(Now go on with the story.)

Ferrers Lord turns up in Time.

"I don't, as I have told you," laughed Ching-Lung; "but I admire enterprise. As a sportsman, senor, I'll make a compact with you. If Paul Guthrey fulfils the conditions of the race, I'll do nothing more about the coals. I'll gladly take off my hat to him, shake hands with you, and let bygones be bygones. In fact, I'll pay you a friendly visit on the very first opportunity, and receive the regal welcome you spoke about. Is that a bargain?"

"With all my heart!" answered Diaz Paravalt. "And if he doesn't win, may he break his neck, for that would suit me better even than your forgiveness."

"Oho!" thought Ching-Lung. "So Guthrey has got his hook in the senor's nose? Fifty miles an hour is a large order, and it looks more like Guthrey breaking his neck

than breaking the record for airships. Oh, Hendrick, you blue-eyed, hairy rascal, why did you tempt us to come here?"

He looked at his watch—nine o'clock. In three hours they would be free, but they would still be prisoners. The Fatality might be able to creep along under sail with a favourable breeze, but the wind blew steadily from the south, and with the little canvas they could spread, she would make more leeway than headway. They had lost the game, it seemed. And yet the figure of Ferrers Lord loomed large in the background. Even if Thurston had succeeded in communicating with the millionaire, it did not necessarily mean that Ferrers Lord would dash to the rescue. There was some little consolation in the thought. He had his own schemes, his own work, and he was not the man to lay them aside for anything that did not involve dire necessity—life or death.

Ten o'clock. The ship's bell chimed musically as Ching-Lung paced gloomily up and down. The fires were roaring in the furnaces, and the perspiring stokers sang and laughed as they shovelled in the coal, for they knew that they would soon be homeward bound. Ching-Lung's box was brought up and placed in readiness. Paravalt came out of the chart-room, smoking a cigar.

"By the way, senor," said Ching-Lung, "I have a message for you to deliver to our friend Martin Arkland. You expect to meet him, I suppose?"

"I do not particularly wish it," replied Paravalt. "He caught the Lusitania, and made tracks after his dollars. Once he gets them, he will hide himself like a wise man. If Paul Guthrey wins, it will be through Arkland, but he will have to pay. That little rascal has his head screwed on the right way. He carries the secret of your Unconquerable in it, or so he told me, and he boasted that he would only sell it at his own price. No, I do not expect to meet Martin Arkland, for I am not going to the United States, but home to Brazil. I sail at midnight to the second."

"Then I must deliver my message personally, I suppose," said Ching-Lung. "I dare say I shall run across him some day."

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The signal-lamp flashed a message, that was answered from the shore by lusty cheers. It was a signal to the negroes who had been guarding the Chinese prisoners to come aboard, and they were overjoyed at the thought of saying farewell to the inhospitable and desolate island.

"Chingy," said Gan, "I sorry to be such a long timeses, but me and ole Shorts we haves a grandful times wid dat black cooksey fellers. I don't tinks I ever eats so much befores. Ooh, he treat us loveliful! He a nice chaps, Chingy, and I likes to give him a presents. Lends me some money, my butterfuls boy."

Ching-Lung pulled out a handful of gold, for none of their personal property, except their weapons, had been touched. Gan took a couple of sovereigns.

"What dat light over deres, Chingy? What Barry and Tom Sprouts stick de lamps outsidess fo', hunk?"

"Give me some glasses. There's a pair on the table there," said Ching-Lung.

His heart had suddenly begun to beat more quickly. As he focussed the glasses the hurricane-lamp and the chalked notice on the door showed up clearly.

"PORTLAND GAOL.

DO NOT TEASE THE PRISONERS.

3 + 2 + 4 + 2."

The figures were not there when he looked before. They could not be meaningless, and the lamp could not be meaningless.

"Three plus two plus four plus two," muttered Ching-Lung. "Three and two are five, five and four are nine, and nine and two make eleven. Whew! Do I dream?"

He felt a wild desire to dance a hornpipe on his hands and yell aloud, for he had read the riddle.

"Here, Gan," he laughed, "if your pal has been good to you, don't be mean! Give him a fiver. Send Schwartz along. Here, give him a tenner! Oh, my lucky stars! I thought seven was supposed to be the lucky number, but I'll swear by eleven for the future. Here, make it twenty, Gan! Be generous to-night!"

Gan-Waga, who knew as little about the value of money as his dog, was not surprised at the munificence of the gift. Unfortunately for the black cook, the dog and the cat had met at last, and the fierce noise of strife sent Gan-Waga flying to separate the combatants. Herr Schwartz was there first, laying about him with a mop, and Gan was so busy searching his dog for fatal wounds during the next five minutes that he forgot all about the present.

Shorewards, all was dark now, for the lamp had been removed from over the door of the engine-shed. The Chinese prisoners cheered as the last boat pushed off, and the negroes cheered in reply, and tossed pipes and tobacco-pouches to their late prisoners.

Hendrick's gun exploded, and the Chinamen cheered again and again, and above the clamour Barry O'Rooney's thunderous "Hurroo!" was easily distinguishable.

"Ho, ho, hoo! I tink ole Barry he swims outs to say good-bye!" gurgled Gan-Waga. "Aho-o-oy, Barry! Are yo' deres, hunk?"

"Hurroo! Ut's meself that'll be wid ye in wan minute, swatheart!" bellowed the Irishman. "Oi'm comin' loike a house a-foire! Hurroo!"

Gan went down to meet the swimmer, and to help him aboard. Attired only in a pair of trousers and a large smile, Barry grasped the Brazilian's hand.

"Sure, av ye'd left widout sayin' farewell to me, Oi couldn't have slept a wink, sor," said the famous poet. "Bedad, and isn't the wather salt?"

The Brazilian took the broad hint, and called for champagne to be brought. Ching-Lung caught Barry's eye, and a very bright and knowing eye it was.

"And when do you intend to pull up your mud-hooks, and lave us in loneliness and sorrow?" inquired the boy from the sweet green Isle of Erin.

"At midnight."

"Well, Oi can't help wishing ye a prosperous voyage," said Barry. "Faith, that's good woinel! 'Bear no malice' is my motto. Shall we drink a health, sor?"

Ching-Lung's hand was down at his side, his thumbnail touching the repeating spring of his watch. "Ting, ting, ting, ting, ting, ting, ting, ting, ting!" came the soft, metallic chimes. Ching-Lung filled his glass to the brim. He could trust his watch. It was eleven o'clock.

"A health senor!" he cried.

"A health!" shouted Barry.

"I'll drink it if it's to Lucifer himself!" said Diaz Paravalt. "Whose health do we drink?"

"The health of Ferrers Lord, senor," said Ching-Lung.

"and with three times three. Hurrah! The Lord of the Deep! Look, senor—look!"

The glass fell from the Brazilian's hand. The dark water of the bay suddenly glowed as if ablaze, and a great shining wave surged against the yacht's plates. Like a dome of light the conning-tower of Ferrers Lord's submarine rose above the surface. Fore and aft armed men rushed out and dashed across the dripping deck of the submarine, and Mr. Benjamin Maddock in the conning-tower yelled a joyous welcome.

"Senor," said Ching-Lung, "you are just one hour too late!"

"Caramba, it is a miracle! We are flying!" said Senor Paravalt. "Flying beneath the sea. All my teeth chatter. It is wonderful!"

He was in the conning-tower of the Lord of the Deep, and the submarine was racing ahead almost at full speed.

"Why, this ain't nothing, by honey!" grinned Prout. "It takes her a day or two to really warm up. We're only crawling yet, ain't we, Ben?"

The Brazilian laughed, and made both the bo'sun and the steersman a present of a cigar. His lonely house on far-away Granden Island was a heap of charred cinders, and he had lost his yacht and her crew. He did not know what was in store, or what his fate would be.

On this strange and wonderful vessel, Ching-Lung, Rupert Thurston, and Captain Kennedy treated him more like an honoured guest than a prisoner. He had played billiards on an excellent table, he had swum in fresh seawater with Gan-Waga, taken a Turkish-bath, and played snowballs in the chilly regions where the cylinders of oxygen and compressed air lay. And the more he saw, the greater was his astonishment.

"Caramba, it is a miracle—a miracle!" he repeated. "If you could fly through the air as you can fly through the water—poor Guthrey!"

"So you still think Paul Guthrey will win the race, senor?"

"So I was talking to myself?"

"I don't know to whom you were talking," laughed Ching-Lung; "but I heard what you said. Are you still of the same opinion?"

"I am afraid of forming any opinion since I have seen your vessel."

"You are wise," said Ching-Lung. "We are taking you to view the race, senor, and it will be worth the seeing."

The Florida Cup! Ever since Lister P. Hagenback, the opulent Chicago glue and size manufacturer, had offered this golden trophy and fifty thousand dollars for the conquest of the air, inventors had been in a flutter.

Hagenback found himself famous, and all for nothing. Old Lister had never given away a cent in his life, and he did not intend to do so.

The rules he drafted made the winning of the cup and stakes practically impossible until he was dead and gone, and, once dead, Lister P. did not care a pound of glue what became of his dollars.

But the newspapers had taken it up, and they had given the glue merchant the biggest and cheapest advertisement on record.

Other go-ahead Yankee men of business called the idea a "dead cinch," and rushed in madly with promises of untold wealth.

Naturally, like Hagenback, they never expected to be called upon to pay out a single dime. Airships were in their infancy. They were being constructed by the hundred, but it was always the same tale of woe.

Most of them managed to fly for longer or shorter periods, only to come to grief in the end. The airship that could complete a circle of fifty miles within a period of sixty minutes was still a thing of imagination.

The hoax went on, all the same, and every big manufacturer in the States who had anything to advertise, from chewing-gum to marine boilers, added his promise of dollars to the prize.

The race was open to the world. Already there were dozens of entries from dozens of unknown cranks. On both sides of the Atlantic the affair began to be looked upon as a huge joke, and Lister P. Hagenback was patted on the back for his smartness.

The names of competitors, most of whom did not exist, appeared in the papers, and imaginary wagers were laid. According to the "Chicago Record," the stakes, on paper, amounted to no less than twenty million dollars, or four million pounds.

Then the hoax commenced to die a natural death, only to be revived in a startling fashion that thrilled America from Atlantic to Pacific.

Paul Guthrey had entered his airship Icarus for the race.

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