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No 414. Vol. 9. January 15th, 1919.

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BOB CHERRY'S CHALLENGE!

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"Join up in the rear, if you wish to serve your King and Country," said Bob Cherry. "It's a case of 'Fall in and follow me!'" "Ha, ha, ha!" (See Chapter 9.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Holding the Fort!

"SNOW!"
Bob Cherry, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, made that expressive ejaculation as he stood at the foot of the School House steps with the other members of that select circle known to posterity as the Famous Five.

"The snowfulness," said Hurree Singh, "is indeed terrific!"

Morning lessons were over, and while Mr. Quelch had been taking his Form, the snowflakes had been falling thick and fast. As there had also been a heavy fall overnight, it lay several inches deep in some places. The early Gosling had swept clear the entrance to his lodge, but every other part of the old Close was shrouded in the mantle of winter.

"This is ripping!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully. "I hope it thaws by Saturday, though, for our match with Courtfield."

"Rather!"

"Who says that?" said Johnny Bull, who only that morning had received a handsome remittance from his Italian uncle.

"Tartie!" responded four voices, with great heartiness.

"Kim on, then!"

And Johnny led the way to Mrs. Mimble's tuckshop. Before the Famous Five could enter the time-honoured establishment, however, a sudden fusillade of snowballs smashed into their midst. Bob Cherry staggered as one of the missiles struck him forcibly in the ear; and Nugent fairly yelled when a particularly large snowball squelched on the nape of his neck, and proceeded to deposit itself down his back. Wharton and Luky and Johnny Bull also had casualties.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry, caressing his ear. "What silly see thee that? I'll jolly well scalp him!"

The juniors swung round, and beheld a party of grinning Removites, headed by the redoubtable Bolsover, glaring down upon them. All the black sheep of the Form were there, Snoop and Stott taking care to keep well in the background, and apparently a huge store of ammunition had been prepared in advance, for each of the invaders had his hands full.

"What awful nerve!" panted Nugent. "Sock it into 'em!"

"The Famous Five could easily have sought shelter in the tuckshop, but that was not their way. Had they been up against odds even more overwhelming than in the present case, they would at least have stood their ground. To beat a retreat before that avalanche of snowballs would be to acknowledge the supremacy of the arch-bully Bolsover."

At Harry Wharton's sharp command, they dived down into the snow, and hastily prepared a pile of ammunition. Then, just as Bolsover & Co. came up to them, the Famous Five repulsed the attack right nobly. Snowballs burst in great profusion amongst the heads of the Remove, and they roared and howled. Up to now they had enjoyed the proceedings, but now that it had developed into a game of give-and-take Bolsover & Co. didn't like it at all.

"Yaroooooh!" yelled Skinner, as a particularly fat snowball squelched upon his somewhat prominent nose.

"Wow! I'm hurt!"

"Shurrup, you silly ass!" growled Bolsover. "Pile in, and give the beastie—Yooooop!"

Even as Bolsover spoke, Bob Cherry singled him out for execution, so to speak, and caught him fairly and squarely under the chin. The bully of the Remove sat down suddenly in the snow, and roared.

"Good shot!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Right on the giddy bulleye, by Jove!"

Handicapped by the temporary loss of their leader, Skinner and the others retreated. They were superior numerically, but not in marksmanship, and they did not care to face the Famous Five's fierce hail of missiles without being able to do something tangible in return.

This gave Harry Wharton & Co. the chance they wanted. They knew that if the snow-fight were continued in the open they would stand a very poor chance of success. Behind a barrier, however, things would be different.

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton. "Erect a giddy fort—sharp!"

While Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent kept the invaders at bay, the other three hastily commenced the construction of a fort. There was plenty of snow, and they were skilled workmen. The foundation was speedily laid in front of the tuckshop, and when Bolsover saw what was afoot he leapt up and urged his cronies on.

"Rush 'em!" he roared. "They're going to try and skulk behind a barricade!"

But Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent piled in valiantly. Time and again Bolsover's host attempted to gain ground, but were repulsed with many casualties.

Meanwhile, the work of erection had been proceeding apace. In a remarkably short space of time, Harry Wharton and his two helpers, working like niggers, had built up a solid wall of snow. Then they called to Cherry and Nugent to take cover.

After this the battle went on in grim earnest. By

hook or by crook, Bolsover major and his warriors meant to capture that fort, and to make it share a similar fate to the historic Walls of Jericho. The Famous Five, on the other hand, were equally determined to prevent such a catastrophe.

The air was thick with flying snowballs. For a time the defenders held their own with easy assurance, but numbers soon began to tell. Bolsover and Skinner and Trulove and Trevor came within a few yards of the citadel, and there were swarms of their comrades following up. It looked as if the plucky party of five was doomed to defeat.

"Now," said Skinner excitedly, "we've got 'em at our mercy! Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"

But the Famous Five had not yet given up the ghost. They discharged a perfect volley of snowballs, and Bolsover & Co. were scattered like chaff before that fierce bombardment.

"Stick it out!" panted Bob Cherry. "Never say die! If we've got to go under, we'll go under fighting!"

"That's the spirit!" said Harry Wharton. "Oh, my hat! They're on us again!"

This time Bolsover & Co. meant business, with a vengeance! They made a big, concerted movement towards the fort, and the fellows who were defending it had the busiest time of their lives. Bolsover actually drove his boot into the barricade, but the action dislodged only a small quantity of snow, and before the bully of the Remove could renew his efforts a huge snowball, hurled with unerring aim by Bob Cherry, smote him in the mouth, causing him to choke and splutter like a person with the spasms.

"Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Bob!"

"Perhaps the ludicrous Bolsover would like some more neckful?" purred Hurree Singh, hurling a massive blow of snow at the same instant.

"Ow-ow-or!" roared the bully of the Remove, as the icy mass, melting inside his coat-collar, began to trickle down the back of his neck. "Go for 'em, Skinny, old chap! They shall pay for this!"

The next moment the Famous Five were fighting desperately. The affair had now practically resolved itself into a hand-to-hand struggle, and it was only by a miracle that the fort was kept intact.

"You give in?" asked Skinner.

"Never!" panted Johnny Bull. "Shoulder to shoulder, you fellows!"

But even the most optimistic of the Five felt that things had reached a crisis. Skinner was felled in spanking style by Frank Nugent, but a cluster of fellows came on, leaping over those who had fallen. It was warfare on a mimic scale.

Then suddenly a great shout arose—a shout of mingled triumph and relief. It emanated from Bob Cherry, whose keen eye, glancing away from the danger-zone for a brief instant, had detected a horde of friendly Removites stampeding across the Close to the rescue.

A mighty cheer burst from the lips of the members of the beleaguered garrison as Peter Todd and Mark Linley and Dick Penfold, with Russell and Bulstrode and Tom Brown pounding along in their wake, surged forward to the scene of the encounter.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire!

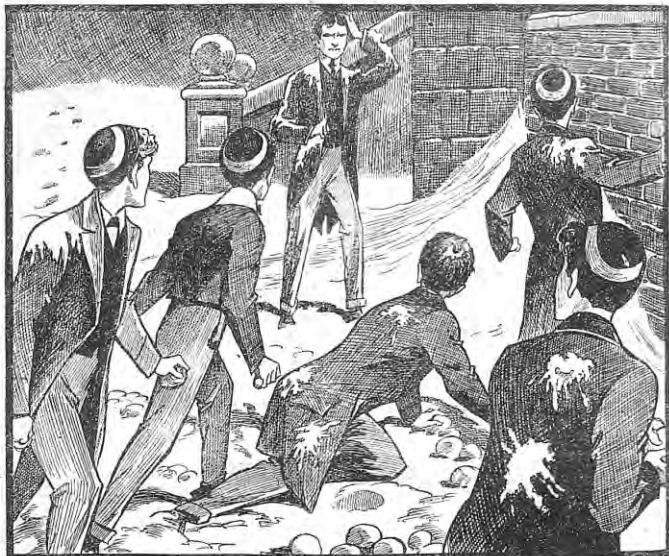
"W"ERE done!" groaned Snoop, shaking with suppressed fear. "I say, let's run for it!"

Scott, to whom the remark was addressed, would willingly have done so, but there was no way of escape open. The reinforcements simply swarmed round the unhappy couple, and a moment later their faces, hands, and ears were a-tingle with the lashing snowballs.

The retreat began almost at once. The tide had turned, and the opposing juniors carried all before them. The Famous Five left their fortress—which was still almost intact—and joined in the attack.

"Pax!" howled Bolsover, who was knocked down for

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!



"After this unparalleled exhibition," hissed Loder, "you will each write me ten thousand lines!" "Oh, my giddy aunt!" gasped Frank Nugent. "Make it billions, Loder, old sport!" (See Chapter 2.)

about the twentieth time by one of Wharton's fierce volleys.

"Rats, my son!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Get up and take your gruel! We're going to snowball you right across the Close and into the building. I'll teach you not to take advantage of us another time by bringing three times our number against us!"

After that, Bolsover & Co. had a sorry time of it. Their clothes were smothered with snow, and they had no stomach left for the fight. The pressure became so hot that they broke clean away, and retreated in undignified fashion across the Close.

The grinning Removites who followed them never relaxed the offensive for an instant. They meant to teach the ends of the Remore a lesson which would not easily be forgotten.

Billy Bunter came down the School House steps at that moment, and was promptly bowled over by a hurricane shot of Bob Cherry's. He gave a howl of anguish, and simultaneously Bolsover, receiving a perfect fusillade in the chest, rolled over the fat junior, almost obliterating him from sight.

"Ow-ow-ow! Gerroff! Lemme gerrup!" came in a smothered roar from Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Still that terrific onslaught continued; and Gerald Loder, the rascally prefect of the Sixth, rushed down the steps to expostulate with the merry throng of attackers. He could not have arrived on the scene at a more in-

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NEXT
MONDAY—**"THE COLONEL'S CUP"**

opportune moment. Johnny Bull and Peter Todd took aim together, and—whether by accident or design was uncertain—sent the senior spinning with a snowball under the chin and another in the bread-basket.

"Oh, jinniny!" gasped Bob Cherry. "That's done it!"

The juniors paused breathlessly. Bolsover & Co., only too glad of the respite, rushed pell-mell into the building.

Loder picked himself up dazedly. His eyes were gleaming with an almost fiendish hatred.

"You young rascals!" he stormed. "How dare you assault me—a prefect—in this disgraceful manner!"

"How dare we?" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You shall suffer for this!" went on the angry prefect. "Every junior concerned in this unwarrantable outrage will write five thousand lines, and bring them to me on Monday next."

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Harry Wharton indignantly. "That's coming it a bit too thick!"

Wharton's remark was perfectly justifiable. Lines were not usually dealt out by the thousand at Greyfriars, and five thousand apiece was the limit. Even the Head would never have dreamed of imposing such a herculean task, except, perhaps, in cases of exceptional gravity. The juniors were amazed as well as angry.

"You'll do as I tell you!" rapped out Loder. "It is high time you learned something of the respect due to those who are set in authority over you!"

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"But five thousand lines is monstrous!" gasped Peter Todd. "You're sure you don't mean fifty, Loder, old man?"

"Don't bandy words with me, Todd!" snapped the prefect. "The punishment fits the crime, and I'd a good mind to lick you all round into the bargain, you presumptuous young hooligans!"

Johnny Bull snorted with rage.

"Let's bump the brute!" he growled. "Might as well do the thing in style while we're about it!"

And he made a swift movement towards Loder.

The rest of the fellows followed up. After all, they reflected, if they were to be saddled with an imposition to the tune of five thousand lines, they might just as well make the offence sufficiently serious to merit such condign punishment.

"Hands off!" gasped Loder uneasily. "Don't you dare—"

But the Removites were deaf to the threats of the tyrant. They had stood Loder long enough, and were thoroughly fed-up with him. They felt that they might just as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb.

The obnoxious prefect found himself seized by many hands, and dumped down into the snow. The process was repeated, not once, not twice, but three times; and then the juniors, their blood fairly up, began to roll the luckless prefect to and fro, like a barrel. By the time they had finished, Loder was as white as Hamlet's ghost.

"Serves you jolly well right!" said Harry Wharton contemptuously.

Loder did not reply for a moment. He could not, for his mouth was choked with snow, and his ears and eyes had been treated in like manner. In all his past tussles with the determined young warriors of the Remove, Loder could never remember having received such a thorough maning as this.

He gorged frantically at his eyes and mouth, and shook himself like a drenched terrier. Then he fairly hurled himself upon his aggressors.

But Harry Wharton & Co. lined up to receive him, and stood firm as a rock. The furious prefect was driven back, and landed with a thud at the foot of the steps.

"Want any more?" asked Bob Cherry anxiously. "I'm enjoying this new game immensely."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The wrath of Loder was terrible to behold. He glared at the Removites as if he would eat them.

"After this unparalleled exhibition," he hissed, "you will each write me ten thousand lines!"

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" gasped Frank Nugent. "Make it billions, Loder, old sport!"

"Ten thousand!" repeated Harry Wharton, in amazement. "Why, he can't be sane!"

"I'll show you whether I'm sane or not!" muttered Loder. "If those impositions aren't brought to me a week from now, I shall lay this disgusting affair before Dr. Locke! It'll mean the sack for some of you if that happens! They shoot a man in the Army for striking his superior officer, and you ought to be treated in the same way!"

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "You ought to get old Prout to do it with his Winchester repeater! He'd be bound to miss!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll show you that I'm in grim earnest!" continued Loder. "These lines must be handed into me, complete, in seven days! And if they're done by anybody other than yourselves I shall come down very heavy!"

And with that the infuriated Sixth Former turned on his heel and strode away, leaving the Removites wondering if he had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Loder Declines to be Decent!

"MAD!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Mad as a hatter, or a March hare!" growled Nugent.

The Famous Five were at tea in No. 1 Study, and were discussing the recent skirmish with Gerald Loder.

"Ten thousand lines—and a week to do 'em in!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Why, it would mean burning the midnight oil every night, and sacrificing every minute of our spare time!"

"And even then it's doubtful if we'd get them done!" said Wharton. "Besides, what about Saturday's match with Dick Trumper & Co.?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Nugent, with a start. "I'd clean forgotten that! The rotter's got us in a cleft stick, and he knows it. What's to be done?"

"Might appeal to the Head," suggested Bob Cherry hopelessly.

Wharton gave him a freezing glare.

"Fat lot of good that would do us!" he said. "The Head would side with Loder for a cert! He must buck up his prefects, you know, especially when one of them's been bumped and used as a punching-ball!"

"The backupfulness would be terrific," agreed Harree Singh. "The matchfulness would be promptly declared off, if the esteemed Head got to know."

The chums went on with their tea in silence. They were writhing under the ban of Loder's displeasure, and the experience was not pleasant.

"We must play the match at all hazards," said Harry Wharton. "Trumper's got a particularly hot team out, and if we don't turn up, you know what all the chaps will be saying."

"That we funk a licking!" said Nugent gloomily.

"Precisely."

"It's rotten!" granted Johnny Bull. "We always happen to run foul of Loder just before an important footer match!"

"Is it any good appealing to his sense of decency?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Decency!" shouted Wharton. "You connect decency with a brute like Loder? I'd as soon apply it to a Hun!"

"There's no harm in trying, though," said Bob. "We can talk to him like Dutch uncles, and either ask for an extension of time to do the lines, or that lickings should be substituted."

"Very well," said Wharton, with resignation. "We'll try, but that's about as far as we'll get."

The Famous Five rose from the table, and made their way in a deputation to Loder's study in the Sixth-Form passage. They realised that it was a forlorn hope; but, as Bob Cherry pointed out, Loder might possibly have cooled down somewhat.

"Whither bound?" asked Peter Todd, looking out of his study.

"We're going to beard the lion in his den," explained Wharton. "He's a pretty obstinate lion, and I don't suppose we shall succeed in bringing him to reason, but there's no harm in trying."

"You'll want a lawyer with you," said Peter briskly. "I'll come along in."

"And go out on your neck, most likely!" said Johnny Bull.

"That remains to be seen."

Loder was seated before a blazing fire when the procession of Removites wended its way into the study. Valence and Carne were with him, and they gave a guilty start as the door opened. Both were smoking.

Loder leapt for a cricket-stump at once when he saw who his visitors were.

"Get out of it!" he roared. "Make yourselves scarce, before I brain you!"

"Not a very promising beginning," murmured Peter Todd. "The feathers of the Loder-bird seem to be ruffled pretty considerably."

"Lam the young rotters, old man!" said Carne viciously.

Loder swung the cricket-stump above his head, and pointed to the door:

ANSWERS

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"Sent!" he said tersely.

But the juniors seemed in no hurry to obey. They were at least determined to get a proper hearing.

"Look here, Leder," said Wharton abruptly. "You know jolly well that to expect a fellow to write ten thousand lines of his own but in a week is sheer lunacy. Can't you rescind the punishment, or give us a licking instead?"

"No, I can't!"

"Ahem!" said Peter Todd diplomatically. "Perhaps you could let the lines wait over until after next week, Leder, old man? You see, we're playing Courtfield at footer on Saturday, and it's a jolly important match, so far as we're concerned."

"You won't even so much as lace a football-boot until those lines are written!" said Leder grimly. "I've had quite enough of your nonsense, and it's time all the cheeky fags of the Remove were put in their places! If Wingate won't do it, I jolly well will!"

"Well spoken!" drawled Valence, puffing at his cigarette.

"We—were awfully sorry about the way we handled you this morning, Leder," went on Peter Todd, though it cost him a great effort to say it.

"I expect you are!" said Leder drily. "Perhaps you'll know better than to lay your beastly paws on a prefect another time! Now get out!"

Peter Todd did not budge.

"Do you hear me?" demanded Leder, striding forward.

"I'm staying here," said Peter Todd grimly, "till I've won my point."

Leder gritted his teeth. He was in a royal rage, and hardly knew to what lengths his ungovernable temper had driven him. He gave the unfortunate Peter a sharp rap over the shoulders with the stump, causing him to emit a yelp of pain.

"You cad!" muttered Harry Wharton, with blazing eyes. "Are we going to stand that, you fellows?"

"Rather not!" came in a roar from the others. "Go for the rotter!"

And with one accord the Famous Five sailed in to the attack. Bob Cherry wrenched the weapon forcibly from the bully's hand, and Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent pounded into him for all they were worth. Hurree Singh was satisfying himself that Peter Todd's injury was not serious.

Valence and Carne were not slow to go to their chief's rescue. They hurled their half-smoked cigarettes into the fireplace, and dashed into the fray.

Peter Todd and Hurree Singh, hitherto non-combatants, joined in with a will; but, although the six Removes put up a stubborn resistance, the odds were heavy against them, the seniors having the advantage of height and reach.

Frank Nugent found himself whirled into the passage without, and Hurree Singh followed. Leder managed to eject Peter Todd after a hard struggle, and Peter roared as he sat down violently on the unsympathetic stone floor. Wharton, Cherry, and Johnny Bull were made of sterner stuff than the other three, but they, too, were overwhelmed after a time, and joined their clumps in the passage. Then there was the grating sound of a key being turned in the lock.

"Yow-ow!" moaned Peter Todd. "I believe my back's broken!"

"Is my nose at straight?" asked Bob Cherry. "It seems to have got round to my left ear!"

With divers grunts and groans, the bruised and battered juniors picked themselves up. They were indeed in a parlous state. Harry Wharton's collar and tie were streaming loose; the claret was flowing freely from Bob Cherry's nose; and Johnny Bull gave the impression that he had been through a mangle. Peter Todd limped away, fearing lest the others should fall upon him and smite him hip and thigh for failing to bring Leder to reason; and the Famous Five crawled rather than walked back to No. 1 Study. Like the celebrated lady in the nursery rhyme, they found that the cupboard was bare. It was not difficult to guess that William George Hunter, the greedy cormorant of the Remove, had been on the warpath.

"We seem to be up against it properly to-day!" growled Johnny Bull. "And as for Saturday's match, we're no forwarder than we were before."

"As a last resource," said Harry Wharton, "let's tap old Wingate. He's a lover of fair play, and perhaps, if

we put it to him nicely, he'll persuade Leder to let us have Saturday afternoon free."

"P'raps!" snorted Nugent. "Anyway, you can ask him yourself. I'm not going to be a party to another campaign like the last one."

"Same here," said Bob Cherry emphatically. "Naff's as good as a feast."

Harry Wharton quitted the study with a clouded brow. He well knew that he would incur the wrath of the Remove at large if Saturday's match failed to come off. And it would certainly have to be scratched unless something fortunate turned up at the eleventh hour.

Of the fellows who had been given lines by Leder, ten were members of the eleven, the remaining player being Vernon-Smith, who had cycled into Friarfield at the time of the snow-fight, thereby missing all the fun.

Had Trumper & Co. been a mediocre side, there could be no harm in putting a fifth-rate eleven into the field against them. But the Courtfielders were keen as mustard, and footballers all. Even with their usual strong combination, the Remove would have all their work cut out to win.

Such were the thoughts which passed through Harry Wharton's mind as he made his way along the passage to Wingate's study.

"Hallo!" called the captain of Greyfriars, in response to the junior's knock.

Harry entered, to find Wingate seated astride the table, engrossed in conversation with Courtney of the Sixth.

"What is it, kid?" asked Wingate kindly.

Wharton coloured.

"I don't want to cause friction between you and Leder," he began, "but he's given about a dozen of us ten thousand lines."

Wingate almost rolled off the table.

"What?" he exclaimed.

"It's a fact!" said Harry. "What's more, we've got to get the beastly things done in a week, which is a human impossibility! We're playing Courtfield on Saturday, too; and unless Leder lets the lines hang fire for a bit we shall have to cancel the fixture."

"Great Scott! But a prefect doesn't give fellows ten thousand lines for nothing! What have you young rascals been up to now?"

"Ahem! We er—snowballed Leder in the Close. It was quite accidental at first, but when he cut up rusty about it we went for him properly."

"You laid hands on a prefect?"

"Yes; but under grave provocation, you know."

Wingate frowned.

"I certainly think the punishment Leder has given you is excessive," he said, "but I don't feel called upon to interfere in the matter. Discipline must be maintained at all costs. We can't have law and order set at defiance, and prefects snowballed indiscriminately."

"We wouldn't snowball you, Wingate," said Harry.

"No, I'd take jolly good care you didn't!" said the captain of Greyfriars grimly.

"Won't you intercede for us to Leder?"

"I fear I can't!"

"Then we—we must give up our game on Saturday!"

"You should have thought of that before."

Harry Wharton saw that Wingate was in earnest, and turned on his heel. There seemed to be no way out. Leder had given his sentence, and Wingate showed no desire to override his authority. With a heavy heart Wharton retraced his steps to No. 1 Study, to break the discouraging news to his chums.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Reckless Resolve!

SATURDAY dawned at length—a clear and cloudless day, with football in the very atmosphere. The snow had disappeared, and the weather was milder, though still cold.

Leder had not budged an inch from his position. Indeed, he seemed to glean an unholy relish from the fact that Harry Wharton & Co. were doomed to a long

spell of detention. The chums of the Remove had striven, but without success, to wipe off the ten thousand lines before Saturday. They had speedily been compelled to give it up as a bad job. Even Mark Linley, one of the best scholars and quickest writers in the Form, could only manage fifteen hundred an evening. The prospects of the Remove football eleven loomed black and ominous.

"What's to be done?" asked Bob Cherry, after dinner.

"Blessed if I know!" said Harry Wharton morosely. "I haven't the heart to wire to Trumper crying the fixture off. It savours too much of funk."

"The only alternative," said Frank Nugent, "is to send over a reserve team."

"To return whacked by unlimited goals?" grunted Wharton.

"Look here!" said Johnny Bull suddenly. "Let's bunk for it!"

"What?"

The very thought of taking the law into their own hands, and setting Loder at defiance, almost took the juniors' breath away. They were in hot enough water as it was, and to transgress in the manner suggested by Johnny Bull would only be to court further disaster.

But the reputation of the Remove was at stake. If they failed to put in an appearance on the Courtfield recreation ground, nasty rumours might be given credence. Trumper's side was a strong one, and it might easily be supposed that Harry Wharton & Co. had feared to face the ordeal. Trumper himself might not think so; but there were many who would.

"It sounds a little steep," said Wharton, after a long pause; "but, hang it all, it's the only way!"

Utterly reckless of the consequences, the Famous Five, together with the other members of the team who were supposed to be detained, made trucks for the Remove dormitory. Vernon-Smith was there, changing into his footer togs.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "Think you were going to kick Courtfield on your own, Smithy?"

The Bouncer laughed.

"I thought I'd change," he said, "in case you decided to put ten reserves in. We should, at any rate, have put up a good game."

"But we shall put up a better!" said Nugent.

"The betterfulness shall be terrific!"

The Bouncer started.

"You're going to play, after all?" he asked.

"We is—we are!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Never shall it be said that the Remove funk a match with Trumper & Co.! We're going ahead as if no such person as Loder had ever crossed our path."

Vernon-Smith whistled.

"I say, what awful nerve!" he exclaimed. "You're bound to be bowled out, and then you'll get it where the chicken got the chopper!"

"What of it?" said Bulstrode. "We've faced the music before, and we can face it again! What ever the punishment is, it can't very well be worse than ten thousand lines!"

"That's true," said Vernon-Smith. "I wish you luck! Perhaps Loder won't miss you this afternoon. He's having a little flutter in his study with some more of his kindy."

It was a slender reed to lean upon, but the juniors were hopeful, nevertheless. They would be back at the school within three hours, and if only Loder remained in his study during that time all would be well.

But the hopes of the footballers were soon to be dashed to the ground; for just as they were crossing the Close, in all the glory of their blue jerseys and white knickers, and with maces thrown over their arms, they were hailed by a sudden shout.

"Loder!" gasped Nugent.

He has spotfully discerned our departure!" said Hurree Singh.

"Let's bolt for it!" muttered Harry Wharton.

And the juniors went pelting out at the school gates.

"Stop, you young demons!" roared Loder, streaking along in the rear like a champion of the cinder-path. "How dare you! Come back at once!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

"Not this evening!" called back Bob Cherry politely. Some other evening! Good-bye, Bluelbell!"

And, with a mock flourish of his hand, the humorous Bob disappeared with the rest.

"My hat!" ejaculated Nugent. "We've given the beast the slip, but only for the moment! He'll come over to Courtfield and stop the match!"

"He jolly well won't!" said Peter Todd. A sudden gleam showing in his eyes. "I've got a wheeze, my sons; a topping, gilt-edged wheeze! Trot along by my side, and I'll expound it!"

As the juniors dashed down the hill towards Friar Dale Station, with Loder in hot pursuit, Peter Todd explained his scheme, and his comrades roared with laughter.

"If only it'll work!" said Wharton, with a deep breath.

"It'll work all right!" gasped Peter. "The train's in now. Run for it!"

With Loder close at their heels, the footballers sped into the little station, and Harry Wharton jerked open the door of a second-class compartment. The whole of the eleven swarmed in just as the train began to puff its way out of the station. Loder, determined to nip the football match in the bud at all hazards, got in, too, a few carriages away.

Then, quick as thought, the juniors opened the door on the other side, and scrambled out on to the metals. The train had not yet got up speed, and they were enabled to alight unharmed.

Loder, who didn't happen to be looking out of the window, was in ignorance of the Remove's ruse. He naturally imagined that the train was bound for Courtfield, and that he would come face to face with the law-breakers at the other end.

The daring juniors hastily clambered up on to the platform, and watched the express tearing along in the distance.

Bob Cherry held his sides, and fairly shook with suppressed laughter. Peter Todd's wheeze was apparent to everyone now. The train, so far from being a local, was a non-stop train to Folkestone!

"Poor old Loder!" spluttered Bob. "He's been dished, diddled, and done this journey, with a vengeance. It would be worth a guinea a box to see his face when he gets out at Folkestone Harbour!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It'll take him at least a couple of hours to get back," mused Harry Wharton. "The match ought to be nearly over by then."

"Ye gods! There'll be a row about this, I'm thinking!" said Tom Brown.

"Blow the row!" said Harry. "We'll stand together in this act. It isn't an easy matter to expel eleven fellows, and, anyway, the game's well worth the candle. Better hop back to the other side now. The local train's coming in."

And, with many chuckles over the amazing manner in which Gerald Loder had put his foot in it, the juniors boarded their train. They had won handsomely in the first round of their feud with the rascally prefect; but what would the final be?

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Spartan Tussle!

DICK TRUMPER and his merry men, looking as fresh as daisies and in the pink of condition, greeted the Remove's cordially as they trooped on to the ground.

"You've arrived, then?" said Trumper genially.

"Only by the skin of our teeth," replied Harry Wharton, as he shook hands with the Courtfield captain. "Between you and me and the gatepost, we're supposed to be slogging away at lines at the present time."

"Go on! And you've taken French leave to come over here?"

"That's it."

"My hat! Then we can look out for equals. I suppose one of your masters or prefects will come over and put their oar in just when we're about to put on the winning goal?"

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"Wrong both ways!" laughed Harry. "In the first place, the only pre-arranged on our track is Loder, and we've put him in a non-stop train to Folkestone. In the second place, the winning goal—if there is to be one—will be scored by our little selves."

Trumper stared at Harry Wharton in amazement. "You've put Loder in the Folkestone express?" he gasped.

"Certainly! It's entirely his own fault. He should have found out where the train was going before he got in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Courtfielders laughed loud and long. Not being directly concerned, they could afford to take a humorous view of the case. Later on, however, the enterprising Removeites were pretty certain to get it in the neck.

The rival eleven retired to the dressing-room to make ready for the fray. That it was to be a stern, grizzling tussle was assured in advance. The Courtfield eleven were foemen worthy of their steel. They were trained to perfection, too, for they knew that the Greyfriars Remove were hard nuts to crack.

Wharton won the toss, and elected to kick with the slight breeze that was blowing. Although it was a junior match, quite a crowd of sightseers had gathered round the ropes.

The opening was sensational, to say the least of it. Straight from the kick-off the Remove forwards swept down the field. Harry Wharton, hard pressed by an opposing half, lobbed the leather across to Hurree Singh, who promptly took a flying kick at goal.

The custodian fumbled the shot badly, and the ball crashed into the yawning net.

"Hurrah!"

"One up!"

"Good old Inky!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur purred with pleasure. It was seldom his luck, as a winger, to open the score-sheet when the game was but a minute old, but he had done so this time with a vengeance.

Warning to their work, Harry Wharton & Co. kept up a persistent bombardment, but the goalie, recovering from his bad start, speedily made amends. He fisted out shots galore, and once, when he tipped a hot drive from Vernon-Smith over the bar, the spectators cheered him to the echo.

But Trumper & Co. were by no means a dead letter. They broke away in spirited style, and Trumper himself had the honour of scoring the equalising goal, with a shot that beat Bulstrode all the way.

After this, play was fiercely contested, but was mostly confined to midfield, and the interval saw no alteration to the score.

"Not so dusty," said Bob Cherry, as he gave himself a brisk rub-down in the dressing-room. "We've got to win somehow, but, like Tipperary, it's a long way to go."

"Their beastly backs are hot stuff!" grunted Wharton. "I've never been robbed of the ball so much in my life. They don't mean to leave a single giddy loophole."

The game was resumed in dramatic fashion. Apparently Dick Trumper, during a council of war at half-time, had issued instructions that Courtfield were to force the pace. And force it they did. They realised that attack was the very surest form of defence, and acted up to this reasoning. Five minutes after the resumption Johnny Bull, at back, was unfortunate enough to miskick, and Grahame, following up, drove the leather home.

Bob Cherry groaned.

"This sort of thing makes you wish the ground would open and swallow you up!" he declared. "They seem to be carrying everything before them."

But the chapter of accidents was not yet at an end. Tom Brown was penalised shortly afterwards for unintentionally handling the ball. The fact was, that before Tom Brown came to Greyfriars he had played under the Rugby code, with the result that he frequently forgot himself.

The ball was placed on the fatal line, and Trumper took the kick. He made no mistake. The ball crashed right into the top corner of the net, and Bulstrode could no more have checked its course than a fly.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

NEXT
MONDAY—"THE COLONEL'S CUP"

"Three to one!" chuckled Wickers, of Courtfield. "Pile up the munitions!"

The Removeites were, indeed, in a parlous state. Half an hour only remained for play, and they were two goals to the bad. It seemed quite on the cards that they would receive two lickings—one from the redoubtable Courtfielders, and another from Loder when the latter had found his way back from Folkestone.

The very thought of all they had gone through in order to play the match spurred the Remove into new life. They wore down the Courtfield defence by degrees, and Vernon-Smith centred for Wharton to score an easy goal.

"That's a bit better," said Frank Nugent. "Strong and steady does it!"

The Greyfriars forwards pressed hard, stimulated by Wharton's goal, but the Courtfield defence was founded as upon a rock. Innumerable corner-kicks were forced, but all to no purpose, and the Removeites, knowing that time was flying fast, played on with the energy of despair.

Vernon-Smith netted after some sterling play by the whole of the forward line, but the point was disallowed for offside, greatly to the juniors' chagrin. This was indeed a bitter pill for the Friars to swallow, but it did not cause them to relax their efforts in the least.

Then came one of those dangerous breakaways by the home team. Trumper gained possession, and shot hard and true for goal. The eyes of the Greyfriars players were riveted anxiously upon Bulstrode, whose iron nerve did not fail. He dived low at the speeding leather, and gathered it up just in time.

Play was soon transferred again to the other end—this time with more success. Dick Penfold cleverly dodged round the back who challenged him, and wound up with a fast rising shot, which gave the Courtfield custodian no chance.

"Level!" roared Bob Cherry. "Hurrah!"

And the crowd, sported to the very finger-tips, echoed the cheer.

The ding-dong struggle went on, Trumper & Co. now devoting themselves to defensive tactics. They knew that the Remove were out for blood, and to leave the goal practically unguarded would be fatal. Harry Wharton & Co. had on their shooting-boots, and were quick to spot the slightest semblance of an opening.

Despite the strenuous efforts of the home defence, however, Mark Linley, rushing up from his position in the half-back line, all but scored, the ball crashing against the crossbar. Then Nugent essayed a shot, and missed by inches.

The referee consulted his watch. The action caused the Remove vanguard to summon up all their strength for the final stage of that grim struggle.

"Pass, Inky!" panted Wharton, as the dinky junior robbed an opponent of the ball, and sprinted goalwards.

At the crucial moment, Hurree Singh sent the leather across. Wharton was upon it with the spring of a tiger. His right foot shot out, and the leather shot in. The Courtfield goalie rolled over and over in a frantic yet futile endeavour to save that hurricane shot. The ball travelled in with a velocity which fairly broke the net.

"Goal!"

Simultaneously the referee's whistle rang out, and the great game was ended. The spectators, stirred to a pitch of the highest excitement, fairly swarmed on to the ground to congratulate the victors. It had been a magnificent sight, from a spectacular standpoint, to see a team fighting with its back to the wall, as Greyfriars had been, and, although two goals in arrears, to make up the leeway and win. Harry Wharton & Co. could seldom remember having been so prominently in the limelight.

Among the first to congratulate the victorious Removeites was Dick Trumper. He grasped Wharton warmly by the hand.

"Gud, what a game!" he declared. "It was the hottest ninety minutes possible! You kicked so fair and accurate, too! No half measures about it. That last goal was a winner all the way!"

"Thanks!" laughed Harry, his face ruddy with the healthy glow of youth. "You're a real sportsman!"

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Suddenly Bob Cherry gave vent to a sharp exclamation. He gripped his chum by the arm.

"What the merry deuce—!" began Wharton.
 "This is where we sing small!" said Bob, gazing at a tall form approaching in the distance. "It's Loder!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. A Licking for Loder!

"L ODER!" The Greyfriars fellows looked at each other glumly. After the feast came the reckoning, and it was pretty obvious, judging from his stride, that the bully of the Sixth was in a royal rage.

Trumper and his comrades retired to the dressing-room. They felt that it was no business of theirs, and that, if it came to an encounter with fists, the sturdy Removites were well able to look after themselves.

"You cheeky young sweeps!" roared Loder, coming up to the footballers. "You shall suffer for this in fall. Not only have you played football against my orders, but you had the unparalleled audacity to hoax me into going to Folkestone. Folkestone, mind!"

Loder repeated the name as though he were referring to a Hun. He had no reason for falling in love with the famous seaside resort, for his sojourn there had been of a most unpleasant description. He had had to wait an almost interminable period for the train back, and the railway fare had touched a very hefty figure.

"Excuse me, Loder," said Bob Cherry, "but we didn't ask you to go to Folkestone, you know. If you choose to spend a day at the seaside at this time of year, it's your own biznez!"

"Absolutely!" said Johnny Ball.

Loder almost went with rage. He was quite beyond himself. Usually he prided himself on being very "fly," and not a fit subject for japes of any sort, but he had met his match this time, and the thought drove him to fury. "You grinning young cubs!" he snarled, clenching his big fists. "The Head shall hear of this! I'll have you flogged! I'll have you expelled! I'll jolly well—"

"Nice sort of day, isn't it?" said Bob Cherry, taking a survey of the heavens.

"You—you—"

Loder was quite at a loss for words. He strode forward and dealt Bob Cherry a savage blow on the side of the head. The Removite, strong and sturdy though he was, reeled and fell.

"You awful end!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, his face pale with passion. "Are we going to stand that, you chaps?"

"I should think not!" roared Peter Todd. "Scalp the savage!"

Just as the indignant Removites closed in upon Gerald Loder, a good-looking youth, garbed in a sweater, and with an air of quiet determination, pushed his way forward.

"What's all this?" he demanded.

Loder swung round upon him fiercely.

"Go about your business!" he snarled. "How dare you interfere in a matter which in no way concerns you?"

The new-comer clenched his hands hard.

"I saw the way you struck that fellow!" he exclaimed, indicating Bob Cherry, who had risen to his feet with difficulty. "And I think you're just the biggest bully I've ever clapped eyes on, and I've seen a few in my time!"

Loder scowled.

"If you call me that again," he said passionately, "I'll wipe up the ground with you!"

"Better buzz off, old chap," said Harry Wharton kindly, taking the stranger by the arm. "You don't know Loder as we do. He'd squash you to a pulp before you could say fiddlesticks!"

The other merely laughed.

"I'd like to see him," he said. "By the way, what's he down on you for?"

Harry Wharton hesitated.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

"I don't think it's quite playing the game to tell tales out of school," he said slowly.

"But this is an exceptional case, and you can rest assured I shall say nothing about it to anybody else."

"Very well," said Harry, who was very favourably impressed by the stranger's frank, boyish manner. And he related the whole chapter of events, out of Loder's hearing.

"You mean to say he's given you ten thousand lines each?" gasped the youth, when Wharton had finished.

Harry nodded.

"And he'll report you to your headmaster for coming over here to play football?"

"Most likely."

"Then I think I'll take a hand."

And the speaker stepped up to the furious Sixth-Former.

"Just now," he said quietly, "you bragged that you would wipe up the ground with me. I'm quite willing to let you try."

Loder stared.

"You're game to pit your puny strength against mine?" he asked incredulously.

"That's so. But I make one condition."

"And that is?"

"That you let these chaps off doing the lines you've given them, and take no further action in the matter, if I succeed in beating you."

"Done!" said Loder promptly. He almost shrieked with mirth at the idea of this diminutive youth attempting to stand up to him for a single moment.

"I'll have it on paper, I think," said the stranger grimly. "You don't look the sort of fellow I'd like to trust."

Loder almost choked.

"You insolent young ruffian!" he roared. "Just you wait! I'll paste you so that your own mother won't know you!"

"Sign the agreement first, then," was the amiable reply.

And the amazing youth in the sweater proceeded to write something on a sheet of paper. This done, he handed Loder his fountain-pen, and the prefect affixed his signature to the document, which ran thus:

"I hereby certify that, in the event of my being beaten in listie encounter by a person who challenged me on the Courtfield Recreation Ground, I will readily cancel the lines imposed upon the Removite football team, and I will take no further action against them in connection with the recent disturbance."

The whole of the Removite players witnessed Loder's signature, and then the party adjourned to the lower end of the field, to avoid undue publicity.

"The silly ass!" said Frank Nugent, referring to the mysterious stranger. "It's jolly sporting of him to do this, but he'll be licked to a frazzle!"

"I've pointed out to him that Loder's a bully of the first water," said Wharton, "but that only seems to make him more determined than ever. Still, we can guarantee him fair play, if nothing else. Loder's not going to take advantage of him like he did poor old Bob!"

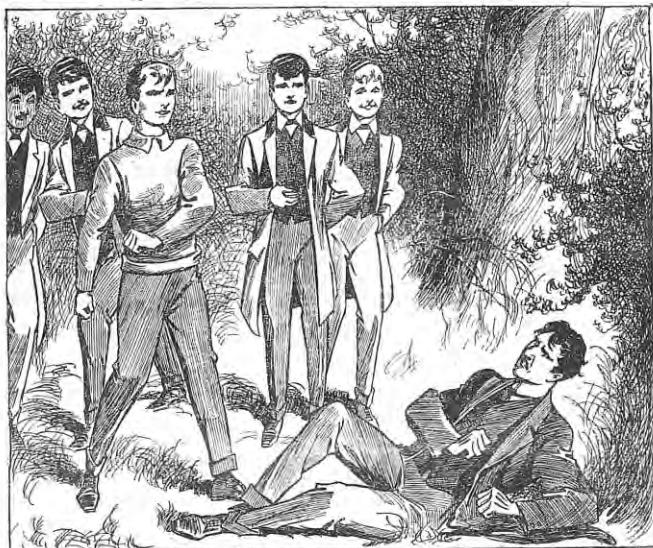
"The brute!" said Bob Cherry. "Talk about a surprise blow! I didn't know anything about it until it got there."

"Never mind," said Johnny Ball consolingly. "We'll all have a go at the rotter after he's licked this kid."

Loder did not trouble to relieve himself of his coat. That, to his mind, seemed quite a superfluous proceeding. His opponent, on the other hand, divested himself of his light raincoat, and prepared to fight in his sweater.

The Removite eleven formed a ring round the couple, and Peter Todd, who had inherited his father's aptitude for the law, wisely took into his possession the signed document. Then Harry Wharton took out his watch, and signed to the two combatants to commence.

Loder rushed at his opponent as if he meant to end the affair in half a minute. He wanted to let off steam badly, and felt that it would do him good to lick this presumptuous intruder. Yes, he reflected savagely, he



Harry Wharton counted almost in awe. Loder lay still, and failed to respond. "Licked!" said Bob Cherry. "Counted out, by jinnny!" (See Chapter 6.)

would make a public example of him before the cheeky fags of the Remove.

A nasty jab under the chin made the prefect wonder if it was not all part of some strange dream. A terrific left-hander, smashing full in his chest just as he dropped his guard, staggered him still more.

Harry Wharton & Co. were too amazed to cheer. They had expected the stranger to be swept off his feet at the very outset, instead of which he was fighting like a tiger, and with infinite skill. When the first round ended, the claret was streaming from Loder's nose, and one of his eyes seemed to have temporarily shut up shop. He was never more surprised in his life.

But if the first round had been amazing, the second was more so. Loder had the threefold advantage of height, weight, and reach, and, apart from that, he was a boxer of no mean order. But his opponent was a muscular marvel. His hits were timed to perfection; his footwork was dazzling, and the way in which he avoided the prefect's sledge-hammer blows bordered on the marvellous. He was indeed a champion among champions.

"Oh, my aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry as Loder received a beauty in the ribs, which almost made him curl up. "I s'pose I shall wake up presently, and find that this is all a delicious dream!"

"The chap's a marvel!" said Peter Todd. "I seem to remember having seen his chivvy before, at some time or another. Freddie Welsh must take a back seat after this."

this, and as for poor Jimmy Wilde and Jack Johnson—well, they're nowhere in it!"

"Our amazing friend seems to thinkfully imagine the ludicrous Loder is a punching-ball!" grunted Harree Singh.

Loder had bellows to mend at the end of the second round, and he staggered, rather than walked, into the improvised ring at the call of "Time!"

"Had enough?" asked the stranger genially.

"No, hang you!"

"So be it!" was the reply. "If you insist upon emulating Oliver Twist, and asking for more, there's nothing for it but to humour you. Here goes!"

And the youthful exponent of ringcraft sailed in once more. He was in deadly earnest this time.

Loder fought desperately. No one could say he wasn't game. But he might just as well have hurled himself against a brick wall, for all the effect it had. His clumsy assaults were easily nullified, and then the stranger, breaking through his guard for the ninety-ninth time, shot out his left in hurricane style, and felled the bulky prefect like an ox.

Harry Wharton counted almost in awe. Loder lay still, and failed to respond.

"Licked!" said Bob Cherry. "Counted out, by jinnny!"

With one accord, the Hemovites surged in upon the smiling victor, and showed their approval in true school-boy fashion. They thumped his back till it ached, they

nearly wrenched his arm out of its socket in attempting to wring his hand all at once, and they cheered him till they were hoarse. Even a V.C. home from the Front, and bearing his blushing honours thick upon him, would not have been treated to such a unique demonstration.

"Saved!" said Peter Todd dramatically. "No lines! No lickings! No tyranny! Everything in the garden is lovely!"

Gerald Loder picked himself up slowly and painfully. He gave his conqueror one bitter look, and then slunk from the ground—baffled, broken in spirit, and beaten!

"After the exhibition you've just given us," said Harry Wharton, turning to the stranger, "you might favour us with your name."

The other smiled, and drew out a neat visiting-card. Wharton glanced at it curiously, and a cry of astonishment burst from his lips.

"My only hat!" he exclaimed. "Tom Belcher, by all that's wonderful!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Tidings of Great Joy!

TOM BELCHER, of boxing-booth fame, regarded the Greyfriars juniors with an amused smile. They, for their part, gazed at him as if transfixed. The young champion's name was not unknown to them. His dazzling exploits in the ring were familiar in their mouths as household words. Only a wizard could have bestowed upon Loder such a terrific thrashing, and here was the wizard in flesh and blood. What was more remarkable still was the fact that the juniors had met Tom Belcher many months before, but, curiously enough, they had failed to recognise him on this occasion, not dreaming, of course, that he would be on view in Courtfield.

"Tom," said Wharton, after a long pause, "we owe you a debt we can never hope to repay. The way you knocked the stuffing out of Loder was simply stunning. And you've got us out of one of the nastiest holes we've ever been in. You're a brick—a first-rate, gilt-edged brick!"

"Don't mench!" said Tom Belcher cheerily. "I saw trouble was brewing, and was only too happy to take a hand. It's a sort of pastime with me—skirmishing with undesirable aliens."

"What are you doing in this part of the world?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Haven't you seen the boardings? Ben Adams' boxing-booth is at Courtfield for a week. There's a big show on to-night, for the benefit of the Red Cross. There will be black champions and white champions, heavy-weights and feather-weights, and goodness knows what. Care to come?"

"It would be ripping!" said Wharton. "The chaps at Greyfriars are awfully keen on boxing. But it's doubtful if the Head would grant us his permission."

"He will, if you put it to him nicely," said Tom Belcher. "Headmasters are pretty tolerant sort of merchants, from what I've seen of them. Anyway, here's a dozen tickets, if you find you'll be able to turn up."

"I say, you're a real sport!" said Wharton, with enthusiasm. "We won't allow you to treat us, though, especially as the money's for a good cause. We'll pay for our seats off our own bat—eh, you fellows?"

"Rather!"

"Are you on view to-night?" asked Bob Cherry, glancing admiringly at Tom Belcher's sturdy, well-knit figure.

"Yes; I'm fighting a ten-rounder with Jimmy Doyle, of New York. He's supposed to be a bit of a brainer."

"My hat!" said Bob. "If the Head won't let us come, I shall feel like taking French leave again!"

"Better not," advised Penfold. "We've saved our bacon once, thanks to Tom Belcher, but we mightn't get the same chance again. We shall manage it all right, if Wharton puts forth some of his eloquence."

"I?" exclaimed Harry. "Who said I was to tackle the Head?"

"You're the man!" said Bob Cherry flatteringly. "Everybody knows what a spiffing spokesman you are, THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 414.

Harry, Johnny Bull or Peter Todd or myself would make a giddy muck-up of it. You must put it to the Head in your best Daniel O'Connell style."

"Rats!" laughed Harry. "There's just a chance that Locke will be up against our going, and the fellow who asks him might get the boot from his study. We'll draw for it. That'll be perfectly fair."

Wharton tore up eleven pieces of paper, marking one with a cross. He placed the portions in his cap, and the members of the team drew in turns.

"Not this child!" said Bob Cherry, in a tone of relief, as he unfolded a blank.

"Not me, either!" chuckled Bulstrode.

"Or me!" smiled Mark Linley.

"More likely to be me!" growled Johnny Bull. "I was born on a Friday, and haven't had a single stroke of good luck in my life!"

But Johnny broke his long sequence of ill-success at last. He also drew blank.

Vernon-Smith and Tom Brown and Dick Penfold plunged their hands into the cap, and all three of them were relieved to find themselves without the dreaded cross. Then a gasp of dismay came from Hurree Singh. "The lucklessness," he observed, "has fallen upon my worthy self!"

"Hurrah!"

"I fail to understandfully gather where the gratefulness comes in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"(Cheer up, Inky!" said Nugent. "You're just the man for the job. You can put it to the Head in the best Oriental language."

"Well, I wish you luck!" said Tom Belcher, shaking hands with Harry Wharton. "If you visit the Assembly Hall to-night, you'll get a glimpse of what real boxing is like. I'm not referring to my own bout, of course!" added Tom hastily. "It's in the Heavies and Middles that most of the talent is. It'll open your eyes to see Slogger Sawyer and the Pixie Kid."

The footballers took their leave of Tom, delighted with the turn events had taken. A few hours before, they had been down in the dumps to the lowest extent. With the victory over Trumper & Co., their spirits had revived; the licking of Loder, together with the cancelling of their punishment, had made them feel that life was indeed worth living; and the fact that they might be able to witness some first-rate boxing that evening sent them into the seventh heaven of delight. Hurree Singh was the only one among them who looked serious as the train bore the party back to Friarfield. One could never be certain how Dr. Locke would take things. His views on boxing had never been made public. He might be a staunch supporter of the noble sport, and, on the other hand, he might regard it, as some fanatics did, in the same light as horse-racing or ha'penny naps. Whether Hurree Singh would be successful, or fail dismally, was, therefore, uncertain.

"Good luck, Inky!" said Tom Brown, as the junior made his way to the Head's sanctum on the arrival at Greyfriars.

"I will do my esteemed best," answered the nabob. "No one can do more fully."

He passed along the corridor, and knocked softly on the Head's door.

"Come in!"

Hurree Singh softly opened the door, and advanced respectfully to his superior.

"Singh!" The Head's voice was stern, though the suspicion of a smile lurked about the corners of his mouth. "How many times have I told you not to bow to me in that ridiculous Oriental fashion? I am not a demi-god!"

Hurree Singh felt that this was a bad beginning. However, he determined to put a brave face on the matter, and go through with the business.

"If you please, honoured sahib," he began, "I should like to receive your kind and august permission for eleven boys in the Remove to pay an esteemed visit to the Assembly Hall, in Courtfield, to-nightfully!"

"What is taking place there?"

"The boxfulness, worthy sahib!"

"I fail to understand you, Singh."

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Hurree Singh squared up to the Head in true pugilistic style, and Dr. Locke instinctively shrank back.

"Boy!"
"I will displayfully assert my meaningfulness!" smiled the nabob.

And he commenced to saw the air with his fists.
The Head smiled as Hurree Singh's meaning dawned upon him.

"I understand," he said. "There is to be an exhibition of boxing?"

"Precisely, respected sahib!"

"Ahem! It is rather a large privilege to allow eleven Lower Fourth boys to spend the evening in Courtfield."

"But the cashfulness," explained Hurree Singh, "is to providentially obtain comforts for the esteemed and worthy troops."

"Oh, I see! A very commendable motive!" said Dr. Locke. "Under the circumstances, I will excuse you and your friends from preparation this evening, and you may have your wish."

The nabob's eyes sparkled.

"That is most kind, honoured teacher sahib!" he murmured; and then he passed out into the corridor, leaving the Head smiling.

"Well, old scout," said Bob Cherry boisterously, thumping his chum on the back, "what's the verdict?"

"We can departfully proceed to Courtfield," was the reply.

"Hurrah!"

"Bravo, lanky!"

"The Head's a brick of the first water!" said Johnny Bull.

"Rather!" assented Bob Cherry. "We'll have tea now, and buzz over after we've changed. We'll walk the distance; it isn't far."

And the footballers went off to their respective studies in high feather.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Gets Left!

"I GUESS I'm on!"
Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, made that announcement as he came into the Remove dormitory later on that evening.

"On what?" asked Bob Cherry, straightening his necktie with a jerk.

"Why, this hyer boxing stunt, some!"

"But you haven't got permission—"

Fish snorted.

"Permission be blowed!" he growled. "I don't care a Continental red cent about permission! The Head can go to Jericho! I guess I'm freezing on to this hyer bizney. Jimmy K. Doyle, of New York City, is a man I wouldn't miss seeing for anything. Nope! I calculate he'll make shavings of that kid Belcher!"

"You can calculate till you're black in the face, Fishy!" said Wharton. "But if Tom Belcher couldn't lick a swashbucklering Yank, I'd eat my hat! If he can hammer Loder to a jelly, he's capable of knocking out anything on two legs!"

Fish smiled superior, as a novelist might say.

"I guess he'll meet his match, just a few," he said.

"There aren't any good boxers in this sleepy old island. We breed 'em all over there, sir, in Amurrica! Look at Jack Johnson. Where's the galoot who could hold a candle to him? I guess."

"Oh, dry up!" said Nugent. "This isn't a guessing competition! And if you take my advice, you'll go and get on with your prep."

"I'm coming with you mugwumps!" said Fish obstinately.

"Oh, let him go ahead!" said Harry Wharton, with an air of resignation. "If he chooses to put a halter round his neck, that's his own look-out!"

The Removites trooped down into the Close, and strolled towards the school gates. Billy Bunter, his fat little legs going like clockwork, waddled after them.

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, pulling up short. "What's the matter now?"

"I'm coming along, Bob, old chap!" said Bunter, flanking his arm affectionately in that of Bob Cherry.

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NEXT MONDAY—

"THE COLONEL'S CUP!"

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The latter shook the Owl of the Remove away from him and glared.

"Don't 'Bob, old chap' me!" he said. "Travel!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Vamoose!"

But Billy Bunter showed no inclination to relieve the Removites of his company. Instinct told him that they were on the way to a royal repast. Bunter's mind seldom rose above eating and drinking, and he judged everyone else by his own gluttonous standard.

Bob Cherry clenched his big fists, and looked as if he would bowl the fat junior over in the Close; but he suddenly changed his mind, and grinned.

"Come along, then," he said affably.

And Billy Bunter trotted amicably along beside the others.

"What's the little game, Bob?" whispered Wharton.

"Shush! It's a bit of leg-pulling, that's all. Bunter imagines we're going to a Lord Mayor's banquet, or something."

Wharton laughed, and the joke was passed round to the others.

Gradually, almost imperceptibly at first, the fellows began to put the pace on. Billy Bunter, scant of breath, and puffing like an antiquated steam-engine, toiled along in the rear.

"I—I say, don't be bonas! Wait for a pal, you know!"

But the juniors neither seemed to hear nor heed. They passed through Friardale at a terrific speed, and Fisher T. Fish, who was not an athlete, entreated them to slow down.

"I guess we shall get there too early, you jays!" he said.

The party slowed up at length, but not until they had gained the other side of the village. A few moments later, Billy Bunter came wadding up, the perspiration rolling down his flabby cheeks.

"You rotters!" he panted. "You thought you'd given me the slip, I suppose? You wanted to do me out of my whack at the feed!"

"Feed?" said Johnny Bull. "Who's talking about feeds?"

"That's where you're going, ain't you?"

"Well, I expect there'll be some bars of chocolate brought round at the interval; but you'd hardly call that a feed, would you?"

"Chocolate!" hooted Bunter. "You're tramping right over to Courtfield for a bar of chocolate? And what interval are you talking about?"

"The one in between the boxing bouts," explained Johnny Bull, with a sardonic smile.

Billy Bunter almost fell down. His jaw dropped, and he gasped like a fish out of water.

"Then—then there's no grub?" he murmured.

"Nix!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

The look on Billy Bunter's florid face was so comical that the juniors could no longer restrain themselves. They positively shrieked with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Bunt!"

"No ice-cream, old man!"

"No delicate pastries that fairly melt in your mouth!"

"Nothing at all—"

"Except a two-mile tramp back to Greyfriars!" said Bulstrode.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You rotters!" howled Bunter. "You beastly spoofer, Cherry! You dragged me over here to see a rotten boxing tournament! I—I've a good mind to wade in and slaughter the lot of you!"

"Waal, I swear!" grinned Fish. "I guess you've been left this journey, Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove gave the humorous juniors a glance which should have shrivelled them up. Then he turned on his heel, and trudged back to Greyfriars, hungry and fuming.

Loder of the Sixth encountered the fat junior in the Close three-quarters of an hour later. Dusk had fallen, and a violent collision took place in the gloom.

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"Ow!" gasped Loder, as something hard and hefty cannoned into him. "Who's that?"

Billy Bunter made a movement to escape, but the prefect's grasp closed on his collar. Loder caught a glimmer of spectacles in the gloom.

"Bunter!" he roared.

"Ow-ow-ow!"

"What d'ye mean by it, you young rascal?"

"Yow! I didn't see you coming, Wingate!"

"I'm not Wingate, you thundering idiot! I'm Loder, and you're jolly well busted my ribs, barging in with your confounded carcass! Now I'm going to lick you!"

Billy Bunter shivered. He couldn't escape that iron grip which was fastened upon his collar, and a licking from Loder was a thing to fight shy of. At that moment, however, a sudden inspiration came to him.

"If you touch me, Loder," he said, "I shan't say a word about what Wharton & Co. are up to!"

"Eh? What's that?" asked Loder eagerly.

"You promise not to lick me?"

"Yes, hang you!"

"Well, I think it ought to be brought to your notice that a dozen Remove fellows have gone into Courtfield without a pass out of gates. There's a beastly boxing tournament on at the Assembly Hall!"

"You're sure of that?" asked Loder, his eyes gleaming with malicious triumph at the prospect of making such a rich haul.

"Positive!" said Bunter.

The prefect strode off, and Billy Bunter was glad to scuttle away to his study. He felt a thrill of satisfaction at having incriminated the Famous Five and their friends, who would doubtless be made to pay a heavy penalty for their escapade. Bunter was quite in ignorance of the fact that they had the Head's permission to go to Courtfield.

"The heave!" he muttered to himself. "This is where they get it in the neck, and serve them jolly well right!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

So Does Loder!

"SECONDS out of the ring!"

A sudden hush fell upon the excited throng of spectators at the Courtfield Assembly Hall.

"Time!"

Tom Belcher, not one whit the worse for his passage-of-arms with Gerald Loder that afternoon, stepped briskly into the ring, and shook hands with his opponent, Jimmy Doyle, a youth whom the American journalists, letting themselves go, had described as "the very latest in lightning-strokes."

Half a dozen bouts had already taken place, under the official eye of jovial Ben Adams, and the boxing had been of a very high order. Especially had this been so in the case of Slogger Sawyer and the Pixie Kid, a well-matched pair of heavyweights. The Slogger had scored a win on points, and his offensive tactics had been a sight to see and wonder at. But the Greyfriars juniors had been eagerly looking forward to the contest in which gallant Tom Belcher figured, and they gave their hero a loud cheer as he stood face to face with his opponent, who was the taller by almost a head.

There was none of the cautious sparring which usually marks the commencement of a glove-fight. The two boxers went for each other hammer and tongs in the first round, both giving and receiving heavy punishment. When "Time" was called, however, it was seen that Tom Belcher was by far the least perturbed of the two.

"He is a perfect Trojan!" murmured Bob Cherry, with enthusiasm. "I've heard of Doyle before; he's supposed to be hot stuff. And Tommy seems to be touching his top form, too. It's a case of Greek meeting Greek!"

"The odds were three to one on Tom Belcher," said Vernon-Smith. "I'll bet he's got a jolly sight more stamina than the Yankee Johnny!"

"Shucks!" said Fisher T. Fish scornfully. "I guess James K. Doyle's got him where his hair's short! There's no fines on Doyle! Nope!"

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The referee rapped out his command, and the two combatants dashed into the fray once more. It was a fine fight, with plenty of give-and-take about it; and it was fairly obvious that a knock-out would ensue sooner or later.

"Gee! I guess that's great!" chorled Fish, as Doyle succeeded in forcing his man towards the ropes. "Look at that, you jays! I sorter calculate it got Tom Belcher where he lives!"

Jimmy Doyle, breaking through his opponent's guard, had driven home his right. The blow caught Tom Belcher on the chin, and he staggered.

But the revival soon came. Tom was not a fellow to take hard knocks without returning them with interest. He gradually forced the American into the open, and fairly peppered him with blows.

It became swiftly apparent that either James K. Doyle was a very much overrated boxer, or that Tom Belcher was a perfect paragon of excellence. At the end of the second round the Yankee had bellows to mend, and his second was kept very busy with the towel and sponge.

Round Three was suggestive of fireworks. Tom Belcher drove his antagonist round and round the ring, smiting and sparing not. His hits were not wild, either. They were judicious and well timed, and a purpose lay behind each of them.

"I guess Jimmy Doyle's cased off some!" said Fishy, with an air of easy assurance. "He doesn't want this lyer affair to be a walk-over for him, and he's giving the public a run for their money."

Vernon-Smith, who sat next to Fish, smiled grimly. "If I'm anything in the nature of a prophet," he said, "there'll be no more rounds after this. Tom Belcher's got the chap in the hollow of his hand. He's simply playing with him!"

The Bounder was right. Just before the three minutes were up Tom Belcher landed a terrific punch in the American's ribs, and following up the advantage gained, got in a mighty uppercut, which sent Jimmy Doyle to earth with a resounding thud.

The referee began to count. Fisher T. Fish were rather an anxious look. He averred in loud tones that his fellow-countryman was merely shamming, but the theory sounded rather thin, even to Fishy himself.

"Five!" said the referee. "Six, seven—"

The Yankee made a great effort to rise, but sunk back, and lay inanimate.

"Eight, nine—"

"Exit the Stars and Stripes!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ten—"

"Hurrah!"

"A knock-out, by Jove!"

"Three cheers for Tom Belcher!"

And the rafters rang again and again.

"How's that, Fishy?" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" groaned the Yankee junior. "I guess there was a hitch somewhere! That galoot Belcher wouldn't do it again in a blue moon!"

"Perhaps he won't get the chance," suggested Nugent.

"Doyle may be too proud to fight."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The result of the last encounter came as a severe blow to Fisher T. Fish, who, with his usual arrogance and cocksureness, had imagined that no common or garden Britisher could hold a candle to a New York citizen. As the exhibition continued Fish groaned, and volubly abused James K. Doyle. Like Rachel of old, he mourned, and would not be comforted.

Wharton glanced at his watch.

"Time you were getting back, Fishy," he observed. "You can just do it by looking-up time, and p'raps nobody at Greyfriars has noticed your absence."

Fish decided to take the hint. He was not of the stuff of which heroes are made, and did not relish the prospect of a hefty flogging, which would most assuredly be his fate if his misdeeds came to light.

During the final bout the Yankee junior rose to his feet, and left the hall. No sooner had he stepped out into the old High Street than a hand shot through the gloom, and took him by the scruff of the neck.

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

Fishy turned pale with apprehension. What if the intruder were Mr. Quelch?

"Fish!" rapped out the familiar voice of Loder of the Sixth. "What are you doing here?"

"Ow! I guess—"

"Have you had permission to visit this undesirable place?"

Fisher T. Fish groaned diamally.

"Nope!"

Loder's heart leapt for very joy. Then these juniors had taken French leave, and absented themselves from the school at so late an hour! And he—Gerald Loder—had caught them red-handed! At last, he felt, he would be able to get his own back.

"I presume there are other young rascals with you, Fish?" he asked.

"Yep! Wharton & Co. are in the front seats, I guess." Loder's eyes glinted, and he strode into the Assembly Hall. Fisher T. Fish, quick to seize the opportunity, sprinted away towards Greyfriars.

The spectators, jovial and good-humoured, were on the point of coming out as the prefect entered. Even among so many he could scarcely miss the Greyfriars fellows, especially as there were eleven of them.

Loder's eyes gleamed as he sighted Harry Wharton & Co. The Removites, so far from showing any signs of fear, merely smiled at him.

"Caught!" said Loder vindictively. "Caught in the very act!"

"What's all the giddy rumpus about?" inquired Bob Cherry seriously.

"It is useless to attempt to brazen this out!" snarled Loder. "You're caught red-handed, frequenting one of the lowest resorts in the neighbourhood!"

"This ain't the Cross Keys," said Johnny Bull, in surprise.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, Bull! So you juniors have come over here with the intention of witnessing a bestial exhibition of prize-fighting?"

"Nothing of the kind!" retorted Harry Wharton. "What we've seen to-night is boxing—the real thing!"

"Have you a pass out of gates from Wingate?"

"No."

"Or any other prefect?"

"No."

"Has Mr. Quelch given you permission to come over here?"

"No."

"I thought as much!" snarled Loder. "Come back to the school with me at once, the lot of you!"

"Very well, Loder."

With many subdued chuckles, the party left the hall in the custody of the obnoxious prefect. Loder was overjoyed, and he took no pains to conceal the fact. True, he had given his pledge not to punish the juniors any further in connection with the snow fight, but this did not apply to any misdemeanours they might commit afterwards. A sound flogging at least, he reflected, would be administered to the members of the football eleven for their wilful escapade.

The walk over to Greyfriars was most amusing. Bob Cherry insisted upon mimicking the senior's giant stride, and everybody else followed his example. In this extraordinary fashion, the long line of defaulters trooped into the Close.

"What the merry dickens?" exclaimed Boleover major, who was standing at the school gates with Skinner.

"Join up in the rear, if you wish to serve your King and Country," said Bob Cherry. "It's a case of 'Fall in and follow me!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder snorted furiously, and led the way to the Head's study. Dr. Locke started up in surprise as the invaders entered.

"Bless my soul!" he gasped. "Loder, what—what does this mean?"

"These juniors have broken one of the most rigid rules of the school, sir," explained Loder. "I tracked them down myself, and found them in one of the worst haunts of the locality!"

"Dear me!" The Head looked genuinely distressed.

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NEXT MONDAY—

"THE COLONEL'S CUP!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"Do you mean to say that all these boys have been imbibing at a public-house?"

"Not that, sir, but something equally as bad."

The Head frowned darkly.

"I am sorry to hear of this, Wharton," he said. "I had always regarded you as being clean-living and upright. That you should stoop to the depraved malpractices of the gin-palace passes my comprehension. Cherry! How dare you saunter at my words, sir?"

Bob Cherry, who had been on the point of exploding for some time, had suddenly giggled outright. Loder had put his foot in it this time, and no error!

"Excuse me, sir," said Bob, repressing his merriment with an effort. "We have never seen the inside of a gin-palace—not this evening, at any rate."

"Where have you been, then?"

"To the boxing exhibition for the Red Cross Fund, sir. You gave us permission, if you remember."

"I certainly gave my assent for you to witness the contest at the Courtfield Assembly Hall."

Loder staggered.

"You—you gave them permission, sir?" he shouted.

"Most decidedly!" said the Head, with asperity.

"And I would request you not to raise your voice in that tap-room manner!"

"Sir, I—I—" stammered Loder.

"You found these boys at the boxing tournament?" rapped out the Head.

"Yes, sir."

Dr. Locke's brow cleared. He was greatly relieved to find that Harry Wharton & Co. had not been guilty of the momentous crime of "pub-haunting."

"Wharton, why did you not inform Loder that you had my permission to see the contests?"

"He seemed so determined to land us into trouble, sir," said Harry, "that we thought we'd humour him. He insisted on our returning to the school with him at once, and we couldn't refuse, could we, sir?"

"Ahem! I am very glad that my first impressions were ill-founded," said the Head. "You should be careful to verify your accusations, Loder, in the future."

The prefect looked daggers at the juniors who thronged the study. They gave him an amiable smile in return.

Then it suddenly occurred to Loder that Fisher T. Fish had been present at the Assembly Hall. He turned to Dr. Locke.

"Did you give Fish permission to go, sir?" he asked.

"Is Fish in the Remove football eleven?"

"No, sir."

"Then he certainly had no right to absent himself from the school without permission. Kindly find him and bring him to me."

And Loder departed on his errand with great gusto. His efforts to bring the Famous Five and their chums to book had missed fire, but he would at least have the consolation of seeing the Yankee junior avished by the Head.

"You may go, boys," said Dr. Locke, addressing the eleven juniors who stood before him. "I am sorry there has been any suggestion of misconduct in connection with yourselves, and trust you enjoyed the—er—performance."

"It was ripping, sir!"

"Simply stunning, sir!"

The Head smiled, and the Removites withdrew, chuckling hugely over their fine score off Loder. On their way out they encountered Fisher T. Fish, who was being whirled along in the grip of the irate Sixth-Former.

"Poor old Fishy!" grinned Bob Cherry. "I expect you'll get a worse licking than James K. Doyle did!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry was right. A few moments later wild howls of anguish issued from the Head's study. Fisher T. Fish had sown the wind, and he was now reaping the whirlwind.

And the burden of his plaint was:

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!"

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD," 1d.

No. 9, Out To-day.



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Art Editor.



H. VERNON SMITH,
Sports Editor.



HARRY WHARTON,
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BOB CHERRY,
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THE TENTH CHAPTER. A Couple of Challenges!

LAY the cloth, Bob!"

"Buck up with those sasses, Inky!"

"Nip round to the tuckshop for an ice-
cake, Johnny."

In No. 1 Study all was merry and bright. Two days had elapsed since the memorable conflict with Loder at the Assembly Hall, and after morning lessons that day Harry Wharton had cycled over to Courtfield to invite Ben Adams and Tom Belcher to tea.

"The worthy sausages are done to an esteemed turn," said Hurree Singh, turning out a number of the tempting comestibles on to a plate.

"That's good!" said Wharton, smacking a quantity of honey into a soup-dish. "We want to give 'em a decent spread while we're about it!"

"Here they are!"

said Frank Nugent suddenly, gazing down into the Close. "M-m-my hat!"

"What's up?" asked Wharton, in surprise.

"They've brought Jack Johnson with them!"

"Gammon!"

"Have a look for yourself, then!"

The others crowded over to the window. Tom Belcher and Ben Adams were crossing the Close, and with them was a hulking, ebony-faced negro, who gaped in wonderment at the vast and venerable pile of buildings.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "That fellow's no more Jack Johnson than I am! It's Sam Walcott, one of the coloured boxers we saw the other night. Don't you remember?"

"So it is, by

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gum!" laughed Harry Wharton. "We were only expecting two; but it don't matter! Let 'em all come!"

A moment later the three sportsmen entered the study, and shook hands cordially with the juniors. At the same instant Johnny Bull put in an appearance, laden with a gigantic ice-cake, such as would have sent a thrill through the heart of William George Hunter.

"Squat down," said Wharton, "and make yourselves at home!"

"My word! You do things in style here," said Ben Adams, rubbing his hands. "The scent of those sausages seems to give you a double-sized appetite in advance—eh, Sam?"

The negro nodded his dark head vigorously.

"It's berry good!" he observed.

"What did you fellows think of the show the other evening?" asked Tom Belcher.

"It was first-class!" said Nugent, with enthusiasm. "I'd give my right hand to be able to box like you, Tom!"

"Every man to his trade," said Tom Belcher. "I'd feel jolly hooked up with myself if I could draw like you do in the 'Greyfriars Herald.' Wharton gave me a copy this morning, and it's stunning! Those Bubble and Squeak sketches are doo-dle funny!"

"They are extremely comical, Maest' Tom Belcher, sah!" said Sam Walcott, pitching into the sausages with rare enjoyment.

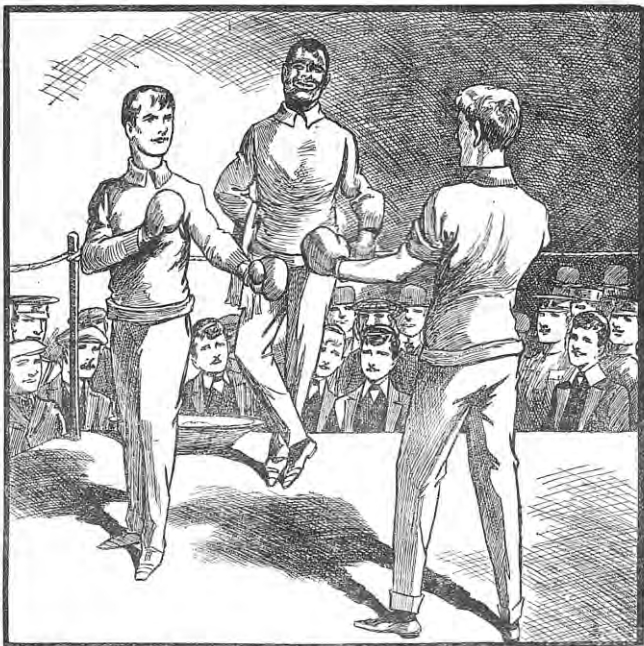
Frank Nugent flushed.

"Oh, rot!" he said. "Any old fool could do a few comic sketches!"

"I must be something worse than a fool, then,"

NEXT MONDAY. "THE COLONEL'S CUP!" By FRANK RICHARDS.





There was a breathless hush amongst the spectators at the Courtfield Assembly Hall as Bob Cherry and Tom Belcher prepared for the all-important tussle! (See Chapter 13.)

smiled Tom Belcher. "I couldn't draw like that to save my life!"

The meal proceeded right merrily. The fare was of the best, and the visitors did full justice to it. Then Ben Adams pulled out his cigar-case, and he and Sam Walcott lit up.

"Do you remember," said Ben reminiscently, "the time when your football team played an eleven made up from members of the booth?"

"Do we not?" chuckled Bob Cherry. "We always remember matches we win."

"I was thinking," said Ben Adams, puffing away at his fragrant cigar, "that we might sort of renew hostilities. That whacking has always rankled in our breasts, and we should like to avenge it."

"We'll meet you when and where you like," said Harry Wharton.

"Good! What about Wednesday afternoon?"

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"That'll suit us admirably!" said Harry. "We'll play on Little Side."

"Right you are! I'll tell our fellows to get into training."

"The trainfulness," said Harree Singh, "will have to be terrific!"

"M-m-my hat!" murmured Ben.

He was unaccustomed to the quaint English of the Nabob of Dhanipur, as instructed by the native teachers in Bengal.

The conversation centred upon footer for some time, and then Bob Cherry, who had been very thoughtfully nibbling a banana, suddenly rose to his feet.

"Tom Belcher," he exclaimed dramatically, "I challenge you to a boxing match."

The rest of the Famous Five stared at Bob as if thunderstruck. That he would have the nerve, after witnessing Tom Belcher's extraordinary prowess in the

ring, to challenge that youth to a contest, seemed incredible. But Bob Cherry's nerve, like the ocean, was boundless.

"I'll take you on, with pleasure!" said Tom. "I don't want to swank or give myself airs, but you ought to understand that you'll be up against a tough proposition. Boxing's my livelihood, you know, and it isn't often I fail."

"You must be mad, Bob!" said Wharton aghast. "You know jolly well that you'll be licked to a frazzle! How can you possibly hope to be a match for a fellow who laid out Loder, and wiped up the floor with Jimmy Doyle?"

But Bob Cherry was obdurate. When he said a thing he meant it, and he was never more in earnest than now.

"I wanted to challenge Tommy," he said, "when we had that football tour of the Southern Counties a long time ago, but you chaps wouldn't let me. You said it would put me off my game if I got backed about. Things are different now, though, and I'm quite game to tackle Tommy."

The juniors looked serious. Bob Cherry was far and away the best fighting-man in the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars; but to compare him with Tom Belcher was like comparing a Lilliputian to a giant. With all their faith in Bob's coolness and courage, his chums felt that he wouldn't be able to last a single round against the boy boxing marvel.

"Look here, Bob!" said Harry Wharton seriously. "Don't be a prize idiot! You know jolly well that you're not up to Tom Belcher's weight!"

"It's no use your trying to chuck cold water over the scheme, Harry," said Bob Cherry determinedly. "My mind's made up!"

"Well, you've got some pluck in you, anyway!" said Ben Adams approvingly. "Not many kids would be willing to risk a terrific walloping. You took a boxer, too. Come along to the gymnasium, and let's see how you shape."

The boxing-booth proprietor was delighted when Bob Cherry entered upon a brief spar with Sam Walcott. Sam was a boxer of great ability, and could have licked anybody at Greyfriars with one hand. He could have beaten Bob Cherry, too, with ease; at the same time, the latter succeeded in breaking through the negro's guard on several occasions, and the manner in which he thrust and parried, and fainted and elude-stepped, evoked murmurs of approval from the onlookers.

"I should say that I'm not what you might call streets above Bob," said Tom Belcher to Ben Adams. "If you ask me, it'll be a pretty even contest."

Ben blew out a cloud of smoke from his cigar. "You think it would be worth while holding the affair at the Assembly Hall?" he asked.

"Rather!"

"Oh, my stars!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I didn't expect anything like that! When I suggested a scrap with Tom, I was thinking of having it in the gym here."

"You're well worth a show in public," said Ben Adams cordially. "We'll fix it up for Wednesday night."

The news spread round Greyfriars like wildfire. Bob Cherry, a humble Removite, was to meet the celebrated Tom Belcher in the ring! The seniors gasped at Bob's colossal nerve; his own Form-fellows sagely shook their heads and predicted a win for Tom Belcher in the first minute; and the fags of the Second and Third giggled openly. One opinion prevailed everywhere—that the presumptuous Bob didn't possess a dog's chance.

Shortly after the spar in the gym, the three boxers took their leave. The Famous Five saw them down to the gates, and then, talking in animated tones of the forthcoming bout, retraced their steps to No. 1 Study.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER. Black, but Not Comely!

GERALD LODER, ashlant in hand, stood waiting for the Famous Five as they came in. The prefect's brow was stern, and he frowned bitterly at the juniors.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"Still looking for trouble, Loder?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY, No. 414.

"You young sweeps!" said the Sixth-Former angrily. "You've played a pretty game with me in the past, but I've bowled you out now! That guttersnipe Belcher took me by surprise the other day, and I gave my written bond not to punish you. Then you deceived me over the boxing affair in Courtfield; but this time I've laid you by the heels!"

"What in thunder is he talking about?" growled Johnny Bull.

"Potty!" said Nagent, tapping his forehead significantly.

"The pottyness is terrific!"

"Of course you'll make out you're innocent as new-born babes!" sneered Loder. "But it won't wash this time! Precious set of rotters, I must say! I had an idea all along that you were playing a double game—posing as Good Little Georgies and Sinless Samuels—and all the time getting up to the most infamous tricks!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Wharton hotly.

"This!"

And Loder displayed to view a couple of cigar-ends.

"You've been smoking!" he said, his eyes gleaming with malicious triumph.

"Go on!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"If this isn't sufficient proof, then I don't know what is! This study fairly reeks with cigar fumes! I'll mean the sack from the school this time, for a cert!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a laughing matter!" said Loder. "You'll be whining presently for the mercy you'll never get!"

"Hark at him!" gurgled Nagent. "This is better than a pantomime!"

Loder had known nothing of the recent visit of Ben Adams & Co. Happening by chance into the study, he had discovered the cigar-ends which Ben Adams and Sam Walcott had thrown in the grate, and regarded them as crushing evidence against Harry Wharton and his chums. A thorough-paced blackguard himself, Gerald Loder judged everyone else by his own standard.

"You'll follow me to the Head at once!" he snapped.

"Look here, Loder!" said Harry Wharton. "You've made a champion ass of yourself once, and Dr. Locks mightn't like it if there's an encore! You ought to know us well enough by now! We're not in the habit of smoking common or garden fags, let alone strong cigars! We leave that sort of thing to the black set in the Sixth!"

"Hear, hear!"

Loder waxed furious.

"You dare to insinuate—" he began.

"Oh, dry up! You make a chap ill! Why can't you take a leaf out of old Wingate's book, and be decent? It's a rotten trick, to be always following chaps about, and trying to catch them on the hop!"

"You—you—" stammered Loder.

His ashlant sang through the air, and there was a yell of anguish from Hurree Singh as it swept across his shoulders.

"Yaroooooh!"

"I say, we're not standing this, you fellows!" exclaimed Wharton passionately. "It's high time we made an example of this end! Pile in!"

And the Famous Five rushed at Loder like tigers. Wharton wrenched the ashlant from the prefect's hand, and Bob Cherry and the others bore him to earth. In another moment he lay panting on the hearthrug.

"You young devils!"

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry calmly. "This is where you get it in the neck, Master Meddling Maulding Loder! Shy over that window-cord, Johnny!"

Johnny Bull obeyed, with a grin, and Loder's arms were pinned to his sides. Then Wharton knotted his handkerchief securely round the prefect's ankles.

"You shall pay for this!" hissed Loder. "Smoking and assault! It'll be the winding-up of your school careers!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"You can threaten till you're black in the face," he said, "but we'll jolly well put you through it! Yank him nearer the chimney, you chaps! We'll make him a thing of beauty and a joy for ever!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

The industrious Bob then seized the shovel, and scraped diligently up the chimney for that most useful commodity, soot.

"Don't you dare—" began Loder thickly.

But Bob Cherry did dare. He distributed that soot liberally over Loder's face, neck, and hair. In the ordinary way, the Famous Five would never have dreamed of rugging a high-and-mighty prefect; but Loder's unjust allegation that they had been smoking, coupled with his subsequent treatment of Hurree Singh, had spurred them on. What ever Loder might say or do afterwards, Harry Wharton & Co. were undisputably in the right.

If Loder thought that his punishment began and ended with that fearful avalanche of soot, he was sadly mistaken. Johnny Bull availed himself of the honey in the soup-dish, and Hurree Singh, his dark eyes aflame with righteous anger, took a bottle of Frank Nugent's Indian-ink from the cupboard. The Famous Five were desperately in earnest, as Loder was soon to discover.

"Keep that vile stuff away from me!" he shouted, as the Nabob of Bhanipur bent over him with the ink.

Hurree Singh took no heed.

"Look here!" spluttered Loder desperately. "I won't say a word to the effect that you've been smoking if you leave me alone!"

But Hurree Singh refused to listen to the voice of the charmer. He tilted the ink-bottle upside-down, and a miniature cataract overflowed, and splashed on to the prefect's already blackened face.

"Goooooooh!" he spluttered wildly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Make way for the honey!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, my hat!"

Loder was by this time in a shocking state. His own mother would have failed to recognise him. His face was as black as the ace of spades, save where a yellow streak of sticky honey showed itself.

And the Famous Five had not finished yet. Coal-dust and ten-leaves and butter were liberally bestowed upon the prostrate prefect; and then Bob Cherry indited on a piece of drawing-board the words:

"PLEASE THROW SOMETHING"

The prefect was lifted to his feet, and the card pinned to his back.

"Now you can get out!" said Harry Wharton. "I should have thought you wouldn't have needed this lesson, after the licking Tom Belcher gave you!"

"Grent Scott!" gasped Frank Nugent. "You mean to say you're going to let him roam about the school in that state, Harry? He'll be mistaken for the Wild Man of Borneo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's his own fault!" said Wharton curtly. "Open the door for the beast, Inky!"

Loder tottered off into the passage. His arms and ankles were tied, and he stumbled along like a competitor in a three-legged race.

Peter Todd and Mark Linier, together with several other fellows who had just come in from the footer, stared at the hideous spectacle in amazement.

"What on earth is this?" panted Peter.

"Shure, an' it's a frightful object!" chuckled Micky Desmond.

Then, as Loder passed the grinning crowd, the notice on his back attracted attention.

Micky Desmond was carrying a particularly muddy football. He was a very obliging youth, and willingly obeyed instructions. He hurled the ball full-tilt at the unhappy Loder, who was bowled over like a skittle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Struggling desperately, Loder managed to regain his feet. He turned his jet-black face upon the juniors in the passage.

"You shall pay for this!" he hissed savagely.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch came striding along the Remove passage. He almost fell down as he beheld the weird and wonderful object before him.

"Gug-gug-good heavens!" he gasped. "What ever is it?"

"It's me—Loder of the Sixth!" hooted the prefect frantically. "Untie me, can't you, you silly idiot?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

NEXT MONDAY—

"THE COLONEL'S CUP!"

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

"Fellow!" roared Mr. Quelch, wondering if he had heard aright. "How dare you address me in such an insolent manner!"

"I've been assaulted!" howled Loder. "Grossly assaulted! My hat! Just wait till I get my hands free! I'll half-kill those young demons!"

"Loder! Boy! Have you taken leave of your senses?" panted Mr. Quelch. "What is the meaning of your present disgusting state? You would do discredit to a dust-heap, sir!"

"Those infernal pests—" began Loder.

"Silence! I will not tolerate such opprobrious language!" roared the Remove-master, fairly dancing with rage.

"Oh, my hat!" grinned Peter Todd. "I'd like to see this twice nightly!"

Loder was in a state of ungovernable fury, and his words and actions were not tempered with that measure of respect which was a Form-master's due.

"Wharton and the others are to blame for this!" he shouted. "I have been subjected to the most scathing indignities! I was practically thrust up a chimney, and honey, ink, and other properties have been slabbled all over my face and hair!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Todd, how dare you laugh!" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

"Untie Loder at once!"

Peter did so, and then kept his distance. He did not wish to be pounced upon and pumelled by the irate senior.

"Loder, come with me!" commanded the Remove-master, and he rustled away along the passage, halting outside No. 1 Study.

"You assert that the juniors who laid hands upon you are here?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch threw open the door. The Famous Five rose respectfully to their feet as he entered.

"Boys!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Can it be possible that you are responsible for the disgusting condition of Loder, a prefect of Dr. Locke's appointment?"

"We certainly gave him a lesson, sir," said Harry Wharton. "We can't stick ends at any price."

"What?"

"Loder accused us of cigar-smoking in this study, sir. He insisted on taking us to the Head, but he made a fool of himself like that the other day, so for his own sake we didn't go. We dealt with him here instead."

The thunderclouds vanished from the Form-master's brow.

"How did you arrive at the conclusion that these juniors had been smoking?" he asked, turning to Loder.

"These cigar-ends were found in the grate," said Loder, with vigorous satisfaction.

"Wharton, how do you account for such a discovery?"

"We've had guests, sir," explained Harry. "Ben Adams, the boxing-booth proprietor, and Sam Walcott, who belongs to the show, came over to tea. They each smoked a cigar after the meal."

"And neither of you boys smoked?"

"No, sir."

"Honour bright, sir!"

"Then your accusation is wild and ill-founded!" snapped Mr. Quelch, swinging round upon Gerald Loder, who, thwarted once more in his attempts to make things warm for the Famous Five, was almost choking with rage.

"Lies!" he raved. "Lies from beginning to end! It's a trumped-up story of the young rascals to take you in, Mr. Quelch!"

"Nonsense, Loder! I have always found Wharton to be a boy of his word. If he assures me that there has been no smoking in this study, except on the part of adults, I am perfectly willing to believe him. And now go, sir, and make yourself presentable! What would happen if a governor of the school saw you in your present revolting state?"

Without a word, Gerald Loder quitted the study, and made tracks for the nearest bath-room. He could not have trusted himself to speak just then. Had he done

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so he would most certainly have said something calculated to deprive him of his position as prefect.

Mr. Quelch turned to the Famous Five.

"You were quite justified in defending yourselves against such an unwarrantable attack," he said. "At the same time, I disapprove most strongly of your treatment of Loder. You should have reported the matter to me, instead of taking the law into your own hands. Each of you will write me a hundred lines."

"Thank you, sir!" said the juniors. They felt hugely relieved at having got off so lightly.

"And do not let me have a recurrence of this scandal!"

"No, sir! Certainly not, sir!"

With rustling gown, Mr. Quelch withdrew. Then the Famous Five fell upon each other's necks and fairly hugged themselves with glee.

"Quelch's a brick!" said Wharton enthusiastically. "He's properly put the kibosh on Loder, and I expect it will be a long time before we have any more scrimmages with the beast!"

And Wharton was right.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Goals Galore!

LITTLE SIDE was galloping with something approaching a record crowd on the day of the football match. It was certainly a great novelty to witness the evolutions of eleven boxers of different dispositions and nationalities. A negro keeping goal, and James K. Doyle playing the part of centre-forward, with Ben Adams lumbering about in the half-back line, was bound to be a sight for gods and men and little fishes, as Bulstrode major remarked.

"Mind you keep a good goal," said Tom Belcher to Sam Walcott. "Don't let the boulders in at any price. We mean to win this match, or die in the attempt!"

"Berry good, Massa Tom Belcher, sah!"

Wingate, who was officiating as referee, blew a shrill blast on his whistle, and simultaneously the two teams rushed into the fray.

The boxers were a mixed side. Some of them played sparkling football right from the outset; others were hopelessly incapable, and their play would have moved angels to tears.

For ten minutes the conflict raged in midfield; then Tom Belcher broke away on the wing, and sent the ball neatly across to Jimmy Doyle, who was haunting the goal mouth.

"Now," said Fisher T. Fish, with deep satisfaction, as he stood on the touch-line, "this is where Amurrica takes a hand, sir! Just you watch out!"

The juniors Fishy addressed "watched out," and grinned. Jimmy Doyle might have been a very creditable exponent of the noble art of self-defence, but his knowledge of football, unlike Sam Weller's knowledge of London, was neither extensive nor peculiar. He kicked wildly at the ball, and ballooned it high over the bar, to the infinite delight of most of the spectators.

Bulstrode, in goal, smiled serenely.

"We usually reserve sky-rockets for the Fifth of November!" he said.

Jimmy Doyle glared at him.

"I guess I was a bit off the map that journey," he said, "but jest you wait!"

Bulstrode waited, but not once during the first half of the game was his citadel in danger. Play was transferred to the other end, and there it stayed. The visiting defence was woefully weak, and Sam Walcott was called upon time and again to save the situation.

Ben Adams, at centre-half, was puffing and blowing like a grampus. In his day he had been a worthy disciple of the celebrated Steve Bloomer, but a heavy weight of years had chained him down, and the virile forward line of the Remove was much too speedy for him.

Just before the interval the ball whizzed in from the foot of Frank Nugent, and the Friars drew first blood.

"Looks as though we're booked for a licking, Ben," said Tom Belcher glumly.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 424.

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

"Nonsense! Those kids are hot stuff, but we'll jolly soon put it across them in the second half!"

It was Ben's nature to be optimistic.

On resuming, the boxers showed to much better advantage. They had gradually got to know some of the more scientific points of the game, and but for the bad leadership of James K. Doyle might have netted on numerous occasions. Their first goal was registered by Tom Belcher, who cleverly feinted round Johnny Bull, and drove the ball past Bulstrode in mastery style.

There is nothing like an equalising goal to liven a game up and to keep the spectators on tenterhooks. After Tom's grand goal the game ruled fast and furious, and goals were plentiful as blackberries. Harry Wharton netted in hurricane fashion, following a misskick on the part of Ben Adams; and then Bob Cherry, rushing up from the half-back line, sent in a scorching shot which Sam Walcott could scarcely see, much less save.

"Three to one!" panted Peter Todd. "Keep it up, Remove!"

But the boxers came into the limelight after this. Tom Belcher made a fine individual burst, and shot on his own, without troubling to centre the ball to the erratic Doyle. Bulstrode fumbled the shot, and Tom, rushing in, drove the leather home, amid the plaudits of the crowd on the touch-line.

Following this there was another wild scrimmage in front of Bulstrode. For the first time in the course of the match Jimmy Doyle had got the better of Johnny Bull, and seemed likely to score. Tom Brown rushed to the rescue, but he arrived the fraction of a second too late. Doyle scored with a swift ground shot, which passed between Bulstrode's legs.

"Level!" said Harry Wharton. "Buck up, you fellows! There's only twenty minutes to go! We mustn't let Tom keep on doing this!"

Thenceforth the Remove backs played stubbornly. On numerous occasions Doyle and his fellow-forwards swooped down upon their opponents' goal, but they were met with a defence like a barn-door. For ten minutes the score remained unchanged.

But towards the end goals came thick and fast, and the excitement was at fever-heat. Tom Belcher scored again for the boxers, thus putting them a goal to the good, and then Vernon-Smith netted twice in quick succession for the Friars. One of the coloured boxers equalised, but, just as Wingate's lips were on the whistle, Harry Wharton put in a sparkling run, and crashed the leather home.

"Goal!"

"Goal!"

Goal's "Goal, by Jove!"

The exultant crowd simply swarmed on to the field, and bore their heroes off in triumph. An extraordinary game had ended with the equally extraordinary score of 6-5 for the Friars.

"Well played!" said Tom Belcher, panting and breathless, as he gripped Harry Wharton's hand. "I've never enjoyed myself so much in all my life! We divided eleven goals, and I don't begrudge you your victory."

"Guess if I'd had a couple of competent wingers to back me up these school kids would have skedaddled pretty slick!" said Jimmy Doyle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm with you there, pard!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish. "Your play was great, just a few! Coming along to the tuckshop?"

Jimmy Doyle, delighted at having found a kindred spirit, went off arm-in-arm with the Yankee junior; and a moment later Fisher T. Fish was pitching into a pile of pastry, and enjoying himself to his utmost capacity—at his fellow-countryman's expense!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Pride of the Ring!

BOB CHERRY, the champion boxer of the Greyfriars Remove, was in high feather as he walked over to Courtfield that evening with his intimate chums. He had been in rigorous training since his challenge to Tom Belcher, and felt very sanguine as to the result of the forthcoming encounter.

Greyfriars went over as one man to witness the contest. Even the high-and-mighty Goliaths of the Sixth could ill suppress their excitement. Horace Coker of the Fifth adopted an attitude of lofty scorn towards the whole business; but he induced his chums to turn up, all the same. Temple & Co., the warriors of the Fourth, had secured good seats in advance, and the babes of the Lower Forms had scraped together their pennies in order to benefit the heroes of the trenches.

For the first time in his life Bob Cherry had the doubtful pleasure of seeing his name displayed on the handbills. He was described as a "brilliant schoolboy boxer," and the announcement went on to say that the contest would consist of ten rounds, and that Ben Adams, the proprietor of the booth, would hold the office of referee.

Bob Cherry's bout came in the middle of the proceedings, and he sat with his chums in the front row until the fateful moment arrived.

Harry Wharton & Co. marvelled at Bob's cheery confidence. Most juniors would have showed a certain amount of stage-fright on being brought face to face with such an ordeal, but Bob was as cool as a cucumber. The crowded sea of faces behind, which would have caused the knees of a novice to knock together, had no terrors for him.

The boxing was of a decidedly high standard in the early stages of the entertainment, and James K. Doyle showed to much better advantage on this occasion, knocking out a well-known local youth in the third round, much to the delight of Fisher Tarleton Fish.

Harry Wharton looked serious.

"If Doyle is capable of kicking you, Bob," he said, "and Tom Belcher can lick Doyle, then how on earth are you going to lick Tom Belcher?"

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Bob.

"Don't be funny! Look here, old chap! To be quite candid, I should say that you'll be knocked out in the first round."

"Precious sort of Job's comforter you are!" laughed Bob. "Nobody knows better than myself what a hot handful Tommy is, but to say that I'll chuck up the sponge at the very outset is sheer lunacy."

"We shall see what we shall see," said Johnny Bull smugly.

"And may the affair be on the other foot too!" said Hurree Singh. "Go in and win, my esteemed Cherryful chum!"

Five minutes later one of the attendants beckoned to Bob, who slipped behind the scenes and prepared himself for the fray.

"The next contest," shouted Ben Adams, "is between Tom Belcher, the champion light-weight of this booth—"

"Good old Tom!"

"And Bob Cherry, of Greyfriars School."

"Hooray!"

"Play up, Bob!"

"On the ball!"

At the call of "Time!" the combatants shook hands, and the next moment the great bout began. Bob Cherry undoubtedly possessed the advantage of height and reach, but that was as far as it went. In footwork and science Tom Belcher was immeasurably superior.

Despite this fact, however, the Greyfriars fellow showed surprisingly good form in the first round. He boxed quietly but confidently, as if anticipating a long job of it. Tom Belcher, nimble as a squirrel, forced many openings, but Bob's guard was all there.

"Time!"

The schoolboy and the professional went to their corners, and to be vigorously towelled by their respective seconds.

"The knock-out hasn't come yet," said Vernon-Smith, with a smile.

"No; Bob's in fine fettle!" exclaimed Wharton delightedly. "I overlooked the fact that he's been in strict training."

"But—but he can't beat Tom Belcher!" said Frank Nugent incredulously. "The whole thing's preposterous!"

The second round was tame, both boxers seeming to hold their energy in reserve.

"Back up, there!" cried the crowd impatiently.

In the next round the desire of the spectators was gratified. Bob Cherry went "all out" at his opponent, and once, when he landed with his left on Tom Belcher's

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

NEXT

MONDAY—"THE COLONEL'S CUP"

EVERY MONDAY The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

jaw—the best blow of the evening so far—the multitude fairly rose to him.

"This is great!" said Frank Nugent ecstatically. "Pile in, Bob!"

And Bob Cherry piled in with a vengeance! Tom Belcher had to call upon every ounce of his wonderful skill and resource to avoid those lashing fists, and a grim smile lurked about the corners of his mouth. He realised that he had met a foeman worthy of his steel.

The round ended in Bob Cherry's favour, and Sam Walcott, as he applied the sponge to Tom Belcher's heated face, looked concerned.

"Be sunk you bottle him up, Massa Tom Belcher, sah?" he muttered.

Tom Belcher grinned breathlessly.

"I don't think he'll give much trouble," he said. "The end's already in sight."

It was Tom who was responsible for the next offensive movement. He boxed with consummate skill and daring in the next three rounds, and, although he did not succeed once in flooring his opponent, he was responsible for the lion's share of the fighting.

Round seven was suggestive of fireworks. Bob Cherry was all but whacked, and he summoned up all the energy remaining to him, in the hope of effecting a knock-out. Repeatedly he drove Tom Belcher to the ropes; but Tom was not thin-skinned. He could take any amount of hard punishment, and came up for the eighth time as fresh as a daisy. The Removite, on the other hand, had bellows to mend.

There was a tenseness in the atmosphere as the eighth round began. The Greyfriars contingent looking on marvelled at Bob Cherry's persistently plucky efforts to rout his opponent. They had little dreamed that Bob would still be in the running at that period. Not one of them, even Hurree Singh—who was a confirmed optimist—had given the contest more than three rounds.

"Bob's a brick!" muttered Harry Wharton. "Give him a cheer, you chaps!"

"Hooray!"

The sound rang very pleasantly in Bob Cherry's ears as he parried the shower of blows rained upon him by Tom Belcher. The latter was having pretty much his own way in this round. His right came with a thud against Bob Cherry's ribs, and the junior gasped. Then Tom Belcher, dashing in, got home a well-timed uppercut, which lifted Bob Cherry off his feet and stretched him prone.

Ben Adams began to count. The crowd looked on in breathless excitement.

"One—two—three—"

There was no need for further counting. With a stupendous effort, Bob had struggled to his feet, and he managed to ward off further blows till "Time" was called.

"Last round but one!" said Johnny Bull. "If Bob can stick it out, he's a giddy Trojan!"

Bob Cherry felt dead beat as he stepped up for the ninth round. His second had refreshed him with the cooling sponge, but Bob knew in his heart that such aid was merely artificial. But, whatever happened, he reflected grimly, he must not lose. He had held his own up to the ninth round, and to be knocked out now would be ironical.

"I'll see it through!" he muttered between his set teeth.

Tom Belcher, too, had been feeling the effects of that gruelling tussle, but he was too seasoned a boxer to yield to the overwhelming desire which came upon him to crawl out of the ring and lay himself down to rest. He fought on doggedly, and only by a miracle did Bob Cherry keep his feet.

"Time!"

Bob lurched back to his corner, devoutly thankful that there were only another three minutes to go.

The tenth and last round of that great contest contained more thrills than all the rest put together. Though physically weary of the struggle, Bob Cherry forced himself to keep on keeping on. His head was swimming and his feet were like lead, but he heeded not these things. Tom Belcher came at him again and again.

determination in his boyish, clear-cut face, but Bob repulsed each and every attack, and then, sailing in, he shot out his left.

The blow was a poor one from a scientific standpoint, but it answered its purpose. Tom Belcher, taken completely unawares, received it full in the face, and reeled backwards. Then the Greyfriars junior followed up, and a terrific uppercut sent Tom Belcher spinning.

"Hooray!"

"Bravo, Bob!"

Hundreds of hands clapped, hundreds of feet stamped thunderously upon the floor of the hall, as Bob Cherry stood over his opponent, waiting for him to rise.

Tom Belcher was not whacked yet. He jumped gamely to his feet, and some fierce in-fighting followed. Then the referee rapped out the command, and the great fight was over.

The Assembly Hall was in an uproar.

How had it gone? To whom would the laurels be awarded by the referee? Tom Belcher had proved superior in at least half-a-dozen rounds, but the other six remained to be reckoned with.

Ben Adams broke the news with a smile.

"The result," he announced, "is a draw!"

Tom Belcher gripped his opponent's hand hard.

"A close call," he said breathlessly. "Another round, and my number would have been up. Well played!"

Harry Wharton & Co. simply awarded into the ring, and carried their champion in triumph to the dressing-room. A division of the spoils struck them as being a perfectly fair verdict, and they hero-worshipped Bob Cherry as he had never been hero-worshipped before.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Boxer and Hero!

GREYFRIARS was in a buzz. Bob Cherry of the Remove had, by luck and pluck, boxed Tom Belcher to a draw! The Remove made high revel that night, and the Head, who was as delighted as anybody, allowed the festivities to be carried on till a very late hour.

Vernon-Smith and Lord Mauleverer, the two moneyed men of the Remove, clubbed together, and provided such a spread in the Rag as had seldom or never been seen before. No. 1 Study was an excellent apartment in its way, but it would not accommodate forty fellows, and the Rag served the purpose admirably.

Even Billy Bunter was admitted to the feast, and he experienced the time of his life. After a hearty onslaught upon the cold fowl and the real-and-ham pie, the fat junior was heard to declare that it was topping. When steaming apple-dumplings were served up, he went further, and said that Bob Cherry was as big a hero as a chap who slew a dozen Huns off his own bat. And later, when countless cakes and pastries appeared, he averred that he was in fine form, and that every single chap in the Remove was a ripping sport. The fellows fairly gasped to hear Billy Bunter make such an unusual assertion.

But even the porpoise of the Remove was "whacked" at last. The heftier type of poetry—such as doughnuts—he began to leave seriously alone, and trifled with small cream cakes and appetising fingers. At last, having stowed away sufficient to feed a whole army corps, as Bob Cherry expressed it, Billy Bunter folded his arms across his chest, dropped back in his chair, and sank into a deep and profound slumber.

The midnight chimes had sounded ere the feasters wended their way up to the Remove dormitory, tired but serenely happy. Bob Cherry's achievement was on everybody's lips, and his cup of joy was filled high unto overflowing the next morning, when he received the following letter, bearing a local post-mark:

"Cliff House School, Friaridale.

"My dear Bob,—Well played indeed! You have covered yourself with glory once again, and we are all proud of you. Marjorie and Clara have asked me to include their heartiest congratulations in this letter.

"It will doubtless surprise you to learn that I was

present last evening at the Assembly Hall. Among so many people, you naturally failed to notice me; but I saw the performance right through, and I think you're a brick—a splendid, gilt-edged brick! There!

"I admired you most, I think, in the last few rounds. Your courage was superb, and you stood up to Tom Belcher like a real hero. Between ourselves, I told Marjorie and Clara that you were my hero, and they were awfully snappy. Clara said it was like my cheek to say a thing like that. How jealous of her!

"Well, to come back to the boxing. After it was over, I was almost breathless with suspense. If that referee person had awarded the verdict to Tom Belcher, I believe I should have emulated a sulfrage, and rushed into the ring to slay him! However, I was content with the draw, though I feel, in my heart, that you were the better man.

"But I must draw this outburst of praise to a close, or you will begin to think me forward. I am everlastingly grateful that I was sent to Cliff House, and not to any other girls' school, because I think the Greyfriars boys are such grand sportsmen, and I never tire of watching your football matches and other sports.

"Go on, Bob, and prosper! May your shadow never grow less!

"Your true chum,

"PHYLLIS HOWELL."

Bob Cherry's eyes fairly danced with delight as he perused those sincere lines. He admired Phyllis Howell as he had admired no other girl in the course of his young career. She was a real sport, so boyish in her tendencies, so wonderfully enthusiastic, and such a lover of fair play, that she seemed streets above Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevelyn, though Bob liked them, too. But somehow—though he would not have admitted it for worlds—those two young ladies seemed just a trifle priggish by comparison with the fair Phyllis, and something like a sigh escaped him as he refolded the blue note-paper, with its neat, girlish handwriting, and placed it in the envelope.

"Yes," he reflected, "Phyllis Howell's a gem of a girl, if ever there was one!"

A sudden thump on the back roused Bob Cherry from his reverie. He swung round with a start. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were smiling at him, and their glance turned instantly towards the letter.

"Hallo, you chaps!" said Bob, blushing like a peony.

"Nice sort of day, ain't it?"

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"I'll bet you would prefer that letter to all the fine days that ever were!" he exclaimed. "Oh, Robert, Robert! Flirting in your old age! I'm ashamed of you!"

"Don't be an ass!" said Bob Cherry gruffly, as he made frantic endeavours to conceal his girl chum's missive. "Can't a chap have a letter now and again, without being chipped to death over it?"

"But who's it from?" grinned Frank Nugent.

"A girl!" said Bob desperately. "But you needn't snigger at me, Franky. What about the time when you became infatuated with the beautiful Miss Conchita at the pantomime? Ha, ha, ha!"

The worm had turned with a vengeance, and it was Frank Nugent's turn to colour up. Only a few weeks before—at Christmastide, to be precise—he had lost his heart to a charming panto "star," only to find, eventually, that the lady's age was twenty years or so more than he had imagined!

"Better cry quits," laughed Harry Wharton. "Is the letter from Miss Phyllis, Bob?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. Any crosses at the end?"

"Oh, come off!" growled Bob Cherry. "Here's the letter, if you want to see it!"

Wharton backed away.

"It's all serene," he said. "I won't peer into private correspondence."

"I've got nothing to be ashamed of," said Bob. "You can read it, and so can you, Franky."

The two chums perused the epistle, and congratulated Bob warmly.

(Continued on Page 27, Col. 2.)

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

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The Rubies of Sheba.

By
EDWIN WOOTON

THE FIRST CHAPTERS OF A GREAT NEW SERIAL STORY
OF MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

MR. DELAVILLE, formerly chief cashier at the GREAT SOUTHERN BANK, is under suspicion, owing to the fact that the RUBIES OF SHEBA, gems of immense value, which were placed in the bank's keeping, are missing.

TOM HERWARD, a junior clerk at the bank—to whom, with his sister Dora, Delaville is acting as guardian—determines to sift the matter out to save his guardian from disgrace.

A chart is discovered showing the whereabouts of a treasure, of which the missing rubies originally formed a part.

Tom and his chum, Will Salloway, set out on a ship in charge of Captain Boyton to find the treasure.

After many exciting adventures the captain suddenly turns to the two chums and exclaims:

"Up with you, lads—quick! The worst peril we have yet had to face is to come."

(Now go on with the story.)

The Waterspout.

Tom turned his head. Astern of the brig, and near the hazy horizon, was a cloud unlike any he had ever seen. In colour it was almost black, and in shape resembled a pear with its small end downwards. What may be likened to the stalk of the pear oscillated to and fro, coming lower at each movement, while the entire cloud seemed both to enlarge and come nearer.

On every side the blackness of the night seemed to be enfolded the vessel like sable curtains, and with this there came an awful stillness. Not a movement of the air could be felt; not a ripple of the waters could be heard. Tom shuddered. Dashing billow, shrieking wind, and blinding lightning would be better than this silent menace of terrific Nature.

"It is a waterspout! Lash the wheel. There's no time to trim sail. We must get below."

The words came from Boyton in tones that allowed no discussion; but before Tom could obey the brig began to oscillate, and then to heel over. The wheel was wrenched from his grasp as if by a mighty arm. A mist fell over the vessel that became denser with each passing second. From above, in the midst of the impenetrable blackness, there was heard a sound as of a huge snaker. The knew that the noise was made by the enlarging and lessening of the vacuum at the summit of the waterspout.

And now the brig began to spin round and round on its own axis, like a teetotum. The movement became faster and faster. Tom and Boyton crouched on the deck, and clung to the hatchway combing, itself insecure. As yet the waterspout

proper had not touched the ship. The latter was being upborne by a rapidly-rotating column of sea-water. Over this there hung the dripping, swaying mass of cloud-water. It swung to and fro, and, by good fortune, swept past the vessel.

Now the brig slowed her revolutions. They ceased, to be recommenced a moment later in the opposite direction. She began to move downwards as on a spiral stairway. Again and again, fully a score of times, the brig made the ascent and descent. Then something followed so unusual in character as to be almost incredible. The wind rose suddenly, and flitting the sails of the brig thunderously, lifted her free from the spout, and bore her with the speed of an arrow far out to where the waters were scarcely rippling.

The danger was over!

The Island is Sighted.

The sun rose upon a almost untroubled sea. For many days the atmosphere had been getting drier and warmer. The question of the brig's exact locality was the one thing that mattered. There were passing ships, but Boyton felt and said that he dared not hail them for information. If he told the truth, they would either regard the occupants of the brig as lunatics, or, should they believe the story, would seek for further particulars, and, if they suspected the treasure-hunt, would play the spy, and perhaps forestall the prospectors.

Neither could Boyton take observations, for he had no instruments. All were trusting to their good luck, and resigned to the test of their patience.

"By gum," said the captain, as he leaned idly over the bows about midday, "we look to be getting somewhere! If that's not land yonder, I'll eat my head!"

"Soft tack!" murmured Tom in an aside to Will.

"Seems to be a mere speck," objected Blake, who was standing near.

"To me, sir, it looks like a mast," said Tom, peering through an old telescope he had found in one of the berths.

"Give me the glass," said Boyton. Then, after a minute's silence, he added: "It's comical, more like a lighthouse. Here, we shall get the jumps if we stay gazing at it! Heed her straight for it, Tom. Lash the wheel, and let's get below after some grub for an hour."

This, with the limited service available, meant cooking, laying the table, clearing, and washing up, in addition to the meal itself, so the hour was fully taken up.

Boyton was the first on deck.

"Blake!" he called excitedly.

The American hurried forward.

"What d'you make of it?" demanded Boyton.

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WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

"By Julius Caesar, it's the island itself!" said Blake loudly.

Distance from the brig some ten miles there rose gently from the sea level an almost flat tract of country almost covered near the shore with vegetation. The line of its coast seemed to run for about eight miles. From this point the coast rose into huge cliffs and back from the shore, at a distance set down by Boyton as four miles, there shot up a conical mass, cleft at the summit.

"Yes, it's the island," said Blake again.

"And you know the navigation hereabouts?"

"As a landman may be said to know it. See those rocks off the shore? There are pearl-oysters between the two, and the channel is deep. To the right and left are shoals, hidden at high water. There's a sandspit at that extremity, and we anchored there."

"Where did you find the gems?"

"When we were looking about the rocks for more oysters. One of the divers got it out of a hollow in that snag to the right. We went over all the ground we could, but that was all we found. And a queer-looking object the case was. Once it had been copper, but it was covered with rocky shells. A hole had been knocked in it somehow, and the water had got in. That accounts for the covering of the cylinder that will form."

"And what about the natives—I don't mean the oysters?"

"Kept them at a distance, my dear fellow. We were short-handed. Just ten divers and four white men, and the divers were not to be trusted."

"So, for aught you know to the contrary, there may have been other treasures just there, and found at some time or other by the divers."

"Well," said Blake, "I think we had better here that question threshed out. When we four white men went pearling we had no notion of there being such a treasure. When we had opened the coffer and found the rubies we boxed 'em up, and, after a long search among the rocks, made for civilised parts. Then we started the Byzantine Gem Syndicate, coining the name, because we didn't want anyone to go nosing round our pearling-ground."

"You see, we thought it just possible that we might want to sell that pearling-ground, or to do another search for more gems. There was no difficulty in keeping the divers from going ashore. They had too great a dread of the natives for them to want a nearer acquaintance. The tales they told of 'em would make a man's hair curl!"

"And yet we shall have to go among them, if this venture is to be brought to a successful issue," said Boyton firmly.

"Just so. Now we have a clear knowledge that there were other gems, and that at some time or other, and in some place or other near here, they were either lost or kept, we have something to go on. Still, I advise care—great care."

"Did you ever sail round the island?"

"Yes, once. It's about fourteen miles long and ten broad, but all save this part"—pointing—"is a sheer wall of rock."

"Well, I'm for looking at it before we land."

With this Boyton went to the wharf, and allowed the brig's engine. She came up beautifully under the gentle breeze, running along the coastal line, and getting appreciably nearer, until its every detail was observable.

The cliffs rose as if from the sea itself, without any margin of beach. These cliffs of greyish-brown rock were at their lowest part some three hundred feet in height, and appeared almost smooth, thus affording no hope of their being climbed. One extremity of the island ran out as a spur of rock. Boyton made a detour to avoid possible accidents, and as he rounded the spur almost loomed his grasp of the wharf, for before him, and distant only about half a mile, with her nose jammed between a couple of huge crabs, lay the Nancy.

"Great Scott!" he said.

Will, in uncontrolled excitement, broke into a shout of joy.

"What on earth is that for?" questioned Blake anxiously. "You don't suppose that a ship jammed in there will be seaworthy?"

"That doesn't strike me as the point," returned Will. "We can get all we need from the Nancy—provisions, weapons, tobacco, and the thousand-and-one odds-and-ends that may be useful if we want to make friends with the natives."

"The boy is right," said Captain Boyton.

"You mean to board the Nancy?" questioned Blake.

"Why not? Don't mind speaking, any of you. I'm not an autocrat. We'll look on this as a council of war. Now, Tom, you begin."

"What I advise," returned Tom, "is to board her, see what damage has been done, and if this is not serious to try to get her off, and anchor her after we have sounded for a likely spot. It is very certain that the iceberg has spoilt her chance of floating, and if we could pump her fairly dry and patch her up a bit she might prove useful."

"And you, Will?" said Boyton.

"I'm for boarding her, bringing off what we want now, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414

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

or are likely to want within a week or two, and for so on if we cannot make some of the other things out of reach of the sea."

"And you, Blake?"

"I should have the old tub alone. Let us get ashore, make friends with the natives, and try to find out something about the treasure."

"As I have the casting vote," said Boyton, "I decide that we adopt Will's suggestion, and all that part of yours, Blake, which refers to getting on with the treasure business. We must get in a bit nearer, and anchor. Fortunately, the brig has a small boat."

The brig was brought to, and anchored about one hundred yards from the Nancy.

"Both her fore and aft holds are nearly deck-flush with the water," said Boyton, when the little party found themselves on their old ship. "The only thing that saved her was that she carried no heavy cargo and her saloon watertight door was shut. Well, we don't want whatever is in the holds; the cabins and the berths and the pantry will serve. Previous first; then weapons. Then whatever you like."

Not until the tropical sun was about to descend did Boyton give the word to stop.

On more than one of these many journeys Boyton had brought with him queer-looking bundles, heavy, and in some instances lengthy, which he carefully stowed together on the deck of the brig, after giving very strict orders they were not to be touched. And half a dozen times or more when on the Nancy he had disappeared into his old cabin and shut the door. No one questioned him as to his secrecy, although Tom, for one, thought it strange.

"I'll keep the first watch," he said, when the night had fallen.

Those who were below heard the moving of heavy objects on deck, but made no comment.

Blake, Will, and Tom were so thoroughly tired out by the strain they had undergone that the entire night passed while they slept the heavy sleep of weariness. Tom was the first to awake, and as he roused to himself, and realised that he and the two others had been selfishly resting while Boyton kept guard over their lives, he flushed with shame and ran to the deck.

Then, incredulous of his eyes, he stood still. Before him, with its metal gleaming in the sun, there stood a mounted Maxim gun.

Boyton turned and regarded Tom whimsically.

"Bit of a surprise packet—eh?" he remarked.

Then Tom understood the meaning of these curious packages.

"You see," Boyton explained, "I was not quite sure about this gun being in good order, so I took the watch, knowing you would all sleep until morning, and that I should have time to put the thing together and test it. Well, it works; that is all about it. See, the carriage has been screwed to the deck."

"Splendid!" was Tom's comment.

Not until breakfast was over did Boyton enter on any discussion of the day's work.

"I've been thinking," he said.

The others waited.

"In a naval or military manner," continued the captain, "so in all things pertaining to the water it is only right I should be leader and commander. But shore matters are different. We can't hold a council of war on every occasion when something has to be done. My suggestion is that you three draw lots, and the one who wins shall be regarded as shore leader, and obeyed."

"I yield my right to Tom," said Will.

"And I give my vote for him," said Blake.

"As that is the case I will do my best," said Tom modestly.

"Right-ho!" came from Boyton. "Now, anchor up, and away for the leeward! We'll bring the ship up to a quarter of a mile from the beach. I shall stay on board, and retain Blake as crew. You, Captain Tom, will take your company—that is Will—in the brig's boat, and find out what you can."

"As I don't know a single word of their lingo, that will be soon told," returned Tom.

"You don't like the programme?" said Boyton.

"No, sir, I don't. You said once that you understood something of the Polynesian dialects, and it strikes me these natives will jabber something similar."

"Then Will and Blake must remain on board!"

"I'm quite willing," said Tom's dum.

The anchor was let go in shallow water, and the boat was just at the point of being lowered, when an exclamation from Blake drew the attention of all.

"Look yonder!" said the American.

Following the direction in which Blake was pointing his

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NEXT MONDAY—"THE COLONEL'S CUP"

companions saw a bustling group of figures on the beach, and now from a thick growth of vegetation there emerged others carrying canoes, which they launched. There were about sixteen canoes in all, each holding four men.

"They are making for the brig!" said Will.

"Have you your weapons ready?" demanded Boyton.

His companions replied in the affirmative.

"Good. Now, Tom and Will, you two go into the deck-house, and bring out those blankets and things. When you have done that get in there, barricade the door, open the port, and keep watch. If you see Blake or me in danger, shoot, and for mercy's sake shoot straight! Blake, take charge of this Maxim. You know how to work it as well as I do. My part is that of interpreter and master of the ceremonies. I trust they won't be unpleasant."

The canoes were by now so near the brig that the paddlers could be featurally distinguished.

"A hard-looking lot!" commented Boyton.

He went to the bows, showed his open hands in token of peace, and then held up a gaudy fabric of red and blue.

In the midst of the little fleet was one canoe rather larger than the others, and distinguished from them by some hideously-carved work on its bows. All the savages were nude, save for the customary loin-cloth, and all save one occupant of this large canoe had bare heads. The solitary exception wore upon his head a circlet, which appeared to be made of clay, baked, in the centre of which was an enormous green stone.

As Boyton waved the blanket this personage motioned to the occupants of the other canoes, and they rested on their paddles. Then at a word from him the men in his own canoe shot the frail craft to the brig's side.

Boyton shifted his position, lowered the blanket until the other had received it, and spoke to him in the Samoan dialect.

The island chief, as Boyton surmised him to be, shook his head. Boyton tried other dialects; then, in despair of making himself understood, spoke in Maori.

Instantly a grin of comprehension came upon the other's face. He jabbered back, pointed to the island, tapped his chest, and held out both hands.

"Tom," shouted Boyton, "bring another blanket—and a gaudy one! It is for the queen!"

The order was carried out at once.

The newer gift was received with further grins. Then followed more jabbering, and suddenly, without any preliminary word of warning, the chief pointed to the shore, and promptly pitched one of the paddlers into the water.

"He wants me to go to his home, sweet home with him, and that is by way of making room in his canoe!" said Boyton grimly.

Two seconds later a shriek from the water told that a shark had been busy.

"You won't go, of course," said Tom.

"Yes, I mean to go. I mean, now, all of you? I shan't point, but away to the right is a clump of vegetation, growing right down to the water's edge. If I do not return within twelve hours from now, take the brig further off shore. Blake will remain in charge, and you two boys bring the boat as near to that clump as you can manage. That will be after dark. Have a lantern lighted, and flash it at intervals."

With this, Boyton lightly lowered himself over the side of the brig, and seated himself with seeming unconcern.

"I think he has done a rottenly foolish thing!" commented Tom, when the captain had quitted the brig.

"You let Boyton be!" commented Blake in return. "I didn't make him boss of my ship for nothing. Now let us get the brig under way."

The long day passed, but nothing was seen of the absent captain.

As the short tropical twilight fell Tom and Will lowered the boat, and entered it, taking with them a lantern, whose light was screened by a piece of sailcloth. The two made for the clump, and flashed the light at intervals, as agreed.

Hours had passed, and Will was nodding, when there came from the bushes a sharp "Hist!"

Tom flashed the light.

"Where are you?" came in honest English. Then: "I see! Send the boat right in. That's it! Now show off, and row quietly. We must get on board as soon as possible."

Boyton's Story—A Dangerous Scheme.

"Well?" questioned Blake, when, much to his joy, Boyton again trod the deck of the brig.

"Give me something to eat and drink!" returned the captain. And not another word could be got out of him until, to use his own term, he had taken in enough cargo.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

"Let me begin at the beginning," he said, as he lighted his pipe. "First, as to breed—for a lot depends on that. These fellows talk a sort of Maori patois; not genuine Maori, you understand, such as the aborigines of New Zealand speak, but a language that so nearly resembles Maori—which I know quite well—as to be understandable by me.

"I should say that their ancestors were of the same stock as the old Maoris sprang from. They are brainy, and warlike; also, they are fatalists, and superstitious. They received me right royally, and made a feast in my honour; but, as I am not a cannibal, and they slaughtered the dinner before my eyes, I wasn't taking any. Of course, I had to pitch them a yarn, and I knew it had to be one at the level of their savage intelligence. Guess what I said 'em!"

"See here," said Blake, "we are three to one. Get on with the yarn, or something will happen!"

Boyton laughed.

"Did you see what that chief—his name is Kohunga—had on his head?" he asked.

"Some sort of crown," returned Tom.

"It was made of rough earthenware, but in its centre was a green stone. That stone, my boy, is a genuine emerald, and is worth, I should think, about twenty thousand. Well, that gave me the clue. I pitched a yarn about some ancestors of ours having come in a war canoe, and being wrecked, and the treasures of the ancestral chief lost. I said we had been sent by the present chief to recover the treasures, and make friends with Kohunga.

"All would have gone off splendidly if some beast of a medicine-man, looking like a varnished mummy, hadn't put in: 'If your ancestors perished here by shipwreck, who took the news to your chief? That put me in a hole for a moment, but I replied boldly: 'Our chief medicine-man is very wise, and the devils talk to him, and tell him secrets. How else should I know? There were green stones, and red stones, and blue stones,' I said. 'And the medicine-man's words were that we must fetch them, or a curse would fall on Kohunga for the spirits of our dead ancestors were very angry.' Well, that put me about level.

"But that beast Lokil, the medicine-man yonder, got on to me when the chief's back was turned, and wanted to know whether we had any powerful magic on board. So I told him yes. And then the king insisted on my wedding his daughter—and I a respectable married man with four children! So I told him I must come off to the ship to consult a witch doctor I had on board, who was the man who kept all the magic. That's you, Blake. And, for mercy's sake, don't let that hideous savage girl come nigh me, or I shall have a fit!"

Blake laughed loudly.

"Well," went on Boyton, "then the medicine-man asked sceptically how I could get to the ship unless a canoe took me, and I saw his wicked eyes twinkle. I told him I should fly away at nightfall. I didn't fly, but I managed to sink away, and to-morrow at dawn they shall see me go in full sight from the ship to the beach."

"Have they got beyond that emerald?" asked Blake.

"I don't know. There's a mystery somewhere. The chief spoke of agents beyond the fire having such things. He said these spirits drank in magic, but were invisible. Now I'm going to turn in. Your watch, one of you. Good-night!"

Blake sat silently smoking when Boyton had retired. He knew one or two facts about the savage mind very thoroughly indeed. He knew, for instance, that the only thing a savage respects is effect. He never troubles himself to seek an explanation. The more never troubles himself to seek an explanation. But to master his mind you must show him wonders. Blake knew also that the chances were against the islanders being such total strangers to firearms that the exhibition of their power would impress them.

He rose abruptly, as if acting under some sudden idea, and made for his berth. When giving instructions for the lifting out of the Nancy he had said carelessly that the chandler might include some "games and things" to help pass away the time. He had never unpacked the case—a long, shallow box. This had been brought from the Nancy, and he had stowed it below his sleeping-place.

It was with something approaching to vital interest that he now trawled off the lid.

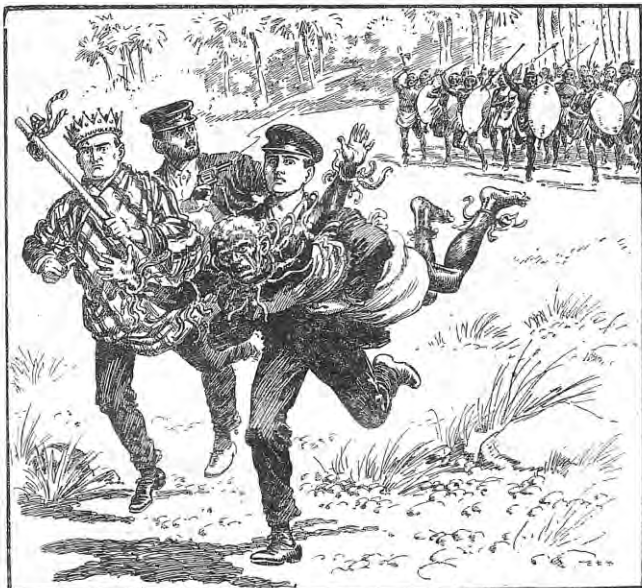
"This ought to fetch 'em!" he commented, surveying the interior.

Then his eyes sparkled, for, beneath the balls and bats and hoops for parlor games, he saw something that promised to solve his problem. It was a printed label, bearing the words "Parlour magic."

Blake pulled out the box and bore it to the cabin.

A magician! He could pose as the wonder-worker of the world. Here was a bottle that would pour out seven different liquids, each with a distinctive colour. Here was an egg that disappeared and gave place to a mouse on wheels. Here

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!



"One—two—three?" said Tom, and with this picked up the hideous Lokil, and made a dash down the shingle, running for his very life. Blake and Boyton followed him, and covered their retreat by sending revolver shots at the shins of the advancing natives. (See page 26.)

was an apple that turned into a ball of string. There were fourteen tricks in all. One of the best things in the box was a brace of handcuffs that really defied any attempt to remove them from the wrists by an unskilled person, but fell apart when touched in a special way.

Tom almost shouted with delight. Will grinned and chortled. The three of them sat up, going through the tricks again and again until they had been thoroughly mastered.

"And now for an impressive and an appropriate costume," said Blake. "Something suitable for a fancy dress ball would be best. Unfortunately I shall have to fall back on my creative power."

"Make up as a Guy Fawkes," suggested Will.

Blake nodded a good-night as he carried off his treasures. On the morning following he made his appearance on deck rolled from the shoulders down in a gaily-striped counterpane, while upon his head he wore a pink paper crown with gilt spangles, taken out of a bonbon.

Boyton gazed at the others speechlessly for two seconds, then he gasped:

"Scissors! He's gone dotty! And what is he caddling?"

"I am the oracle, and the medicine-man, and the fetch-man, and the altogether uncommon and non-garden man, with my infallible wonder-working bottle of mystery, brought from the other side of the moon," said Blake.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

NEXT
MONDAY—**"THE COLONEL'S CUP!"**

"You nearly took away my appetite," Boyton remarked.

"I am just going to take away my own," Blake returned.

Then they all got on to the solid and serious business of breakfast. Every now and again the boys grinned, and Boyton chuckled, but Blake preserved an air of solemnity.

"I shall laugh myself hoarse if you go on shore in that rig," said Tom, and here his laughter became a storm.

Blake's eyes gleamed.

"See here, sonny," he returned, "this may look funny to you, but without any exception it's the most serious thing I ever did. One of us will have to stay on board, and as you're likely to wreck the chance of our succeeding you had better be that one."

"I'm going to stay," said Will. "We have arranged all that, and Tom knows quite well that this is a matter of life and death."

Nothing further was said.

When the boat had been entered Blake stood in the bows, his right hand grasping a broom-handle, to which he had attached the brig's bell. He looked most impressive, and the almost momentary sound of the bell ensured his receiving attention. As the boat neared the beach the latter became thronged with islanders, all evidently in a state of excitement.

Blake was the first to step ashore. He stood motionless as

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marble, his eyes fixed upon vacancy, his left hand holding his magic bottle, while his right grasped the broomstick.

Boyton approached the chief, bowed, told him that the king of all medicine-men was before him, and then, turning to Blake, bowed still more profoundly.

And now, coming slowly and haltingly through the throng, was a man whom Boyton feared ten times more than he did the chief. The new-comer was Lokil. Blake took in his appearance with no seeming to be aware of his existence. Aged—he must have passed his sixtieth year—with heavy face, sunken jaws, toothless gums, and a throat looking as if made of knotted cords, he was in himself hideous; and to add to the horror of it he wore about his neck and arms small dried lizards and snakes strung on ropes of grass.

Blake's brain had been busy. He would flank this man and then make him an ally.

He turned to Boyton.

"Tell the old bird that the mighty magicians beyond all the seas that are or ever shall be have sent him a fetich, and that I will bestow it on him."

With this Blake turned to Tom, told him to hold the broomstick, pulled out a half-crown with a hole in it, to which was attached a brass chain, and held the gift solemnly in his hands.

Boyton made his speech.

"Tell him," said Blake, "that it is right and fitting he should kneel at my feet, but that the mighty magicians have asked me to honour him by allowing him to stand."

Boyton complied.

Blake stepped forward, slipped the brass chain over Lokil's head, bowed, drew back, and spoke to Boyton again.

"Tell him," he said, "that I have here a magic bottle that no one but myself may touch. There are seven devils in this bottle. Tell him that I can loosen any devil I like and make him pour out blue, green, yellow, red, black, white, or brown water. Ask him which colour I shall pour."

Boyton put the question.

"Red," he interpreted in answer.

"Tell him to hold out his hand."

Into the filthy palm of the medicine-man Blake let fall a few drops of bright scarlet fluid.

Lokil nodded, and his baleful eyes rested greedily on the bottle.

"Give Kohunga that cotton shawl with the stars and comets," said Blake.

"And the next thing!" asked Boyton.

"Let us get to business. Suggest a palaver, pow-wow, or whatever you call it. I retire. Captain Tom takes command."

"And time I did," said Tom.

Boyton addressed Kohunga in a set speech. Then, at a sign from the chief, all present seated themselves.

"Well, what am I to talk about?" asked Boyton of Tom.

"Ask him whether he has many green, red, or blue stones. Ask him whether he has ever seen the spirits beyond the fires. Tell him that I wish to see them. If they exist they are, of course, some other tribe. What I want to get at is the truth about these gema. Here, you'd better be left to think out your inquiries."

Boyton plunged into talk. His companions, watching him, saw his face look sceptical, hopeful, comprehending, and then despairing. He continued exchanging words with the chief and the medicine-man for fully half an hour. Then he turned to Tom.

"Upon my word, I believe we've made a fool's voyage," he said. "He—I mean Kohunga—affirms that his is the only green stone he has ever seen. There are a few small blue and red stones in the village that were found on the beach ages and ages ago. They are medicine stones, and belong to Lokil. You may possibly barter something for them."

"Yes," agreed Tom, "and the business had better be done now, if it's to be done at all. That old bird Lokil is jealous, and I don't trust him."

Boyton addressed some words to the medicine-man, who in turn spoke to one of the islanders. The man ran off, returning after some time with a basket, carried in front of him on a bamboo, upon which he bestowed real or assumed looks of awe.

Lokil opened the basket, and produced several gems, all more or less sea-worn. Tom looked at them attentively.

"Found on the beach, all of them, I'll lay a wager," he said.

To cut this part of our history short, Tom succeeded in effecting a profitable deal, giving seven shillings and a two halfpenny for some worth a respectable fortune.

Then again Boyton broke into talk.

"Look here," he said presently, "one thing is certain, we don't stand to gain much by fooling about here. I've got a lot to say, and I think it will be best to say it on board."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 414.

Just now I overheard a remark of that old sinner with the snakes. He said that you and I would make nice, long pigs, and that the devils in the bottle would obey him if Blake had his head cut off."

"Can you run, captain?" asked Tom.

"Yes, I am fit as ever I was."

"And you, Mr. Blake?"

The other returned a grave bow.

"Then command all this crew to retire for a hundred yards or so, while Blake does his magic with Lokil. Make them get away from the beach, and then prepare to make a bolt."

"What's the idea?"

"You'll see soon enough."

Boyton stood up, made his speech. Blake, fully understanding that he was required to be impressive, drew a circle on the ground with his broomstick, and imperiously motioned Lokil to stand with himself in its centre.

"One—two—three!" said Tom, and with this picked up the hideous Lokil, and made a dash down the shingle, running for his very life, and covered by Blake and Boyton, who every other second or so sent a revolver-shot at the elms of the advancing islanders.

How Tom half-threw his burden into the boat and scrambled in, gripping Lokil so that the medicine-man was helpless—how Boyton shoved off, lost an oar, and sculled furiously for the brig—how Will, by some good chance, saw the drama that was being enacted, and, despite his being alone and a landman, managed to bring the little ship nearer the boat, and how, finally, the three white men and their guest arrived on board, are things to be imagined, not described in words.

Boyton swung round the yards, rushed to the wheel, and got the brig under way, heading for the open sea. The pursuit had ceased. Possibly the islanders were not sorry to lose Lokil.

"And now," said Blake, "perhaps you'll kindly explain matters."

"Bring your paraphernalia on deck, sir, and bluff this old mummy into believing you are someone of importance. You've got to dazzle him. I'll tell you why when it's over."

Poor Lokil! If he did not think much of the bottle, his eyes widened when he saw Blake produce an orange from an empty cup, and saw the other mysteries that Blake had purchased. And when he heard a bodiko thing sing a song and whistle and make a speech, his knees shook, for all this was magic indeed, and presently he grovelled on the deck.

"Now," said Tom, "tell him there's nothing to fear. In return for the magic you've shown him he must give us the truth about those people beyond the fires."

Boyton, of course, did the talking.

"I'm hanged if I can make the old fellow out," he said presently. "According to his account, there is a river running from the sea on the other side of the island, and losing itself in that mountain. He says the spirits live in the land where this river goes, and that it passes through fire."

Tom took his telescope and looked intently at the distant peak.

"Upon my word, I think there's something in the yarn!" he said. "Faintly, but still unmistakably, I can detect smoke coming from that peak. Ask him if he will guide us to the river."

Boyton complied. Lokil put his trembling, skinny hands together and cowered, shaking his head the while, and uttering a stream of words.

"He says that not an islander dare go within sight of the river; that it is tapu," said Boyton.

"Ah," commented Tom, "that will do! Tell him to signal one canoe, not more, and we'll put him on board, and he shall depart in safety."

No sooner had Lokil heard this than he sprang to the bows, waved his arms, and went through a series of gesticulations which seemed meaningless. That their purport was very plain to the islanders the setting out of a single canoe soon proved. There were three paddlers only, and they brought the craft to within a few yards of the brig; but further they would not come, until Lokil, enraged by the thought of being left in the power of the white magicians, threatened the natives with unnumbered horrors.

As the canoe was paddled off, Tom pointed to the distant spur near which the Nancy lay.

"It is your right to command at sea," he said, addressing Boyton; "but I have to get to the mouth of that creek-river somehow, and I want you to take me there."

And these few words were to bring into the lives of the adventurers experiences stranger than had fallen to the lot of any living.

(Another long instalment of this grand serial next Monday. Order your copy early.)

WATCH THE "BOYS' FRIEND" FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF MODERN TIMES!

MY READERS' PAGE

OUR
COMPANION
PAPERS: "THE
BOYS' FRIEND," id.,
Every Monday, "THE
GEM" LIBRARY, id.,
Every Wednesday, "THE
BOYS' FRIEND" 3d,
COMPLETE LIBRARY,
"THE PENNY POPU-
LAR," id., Every Fri-
day, "CHUCKLES,"
Price 1d., Every
Saturday.

The Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums, at home or abroad, and is only too willing to give his best advice to them if they are in difficulty or in trouble. . . . Whom to write to: Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

For Next Monday:

"THE COLONEL'S
CUP"

By Frank Richards.

Next Monday's grand, long, complete story of the chums of Greyfriars is considerably enhanced by the introduction of two old favourites—Colonel Wharton and Major Cherry. The former has a great surprise in store for the Removites, but refuses to divulge the nature of it, beyond saying that a box will be sent to the juniors after his return to the Front. That box passes through many hands, and has many strange adventures, before it ultimately reaches its destination; and then Harry Wharton & Co. are delighted to find that it contains a magnificent silver trophy, to be set up for competition among the various Forms at Greyfriars. The excitement concerning

"THE COLONEL'S CUP"

is intense, and next week's splendid story will be universally proclaimed "a winner all the way!"

A "MAGNET" READER'S BRAVERY!

C. M., of Reading, very kindly sends me an extract from the local newspaper concerning a gallant deed performed by H. S. Lambden, a staunch reader of the "Magnet" Library. Here are the details:

"A seventeen-year-old lad named Henry Steiner Lambden effected a very plucky rescue from the River Kennet at about eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning. Lambden is engaged in the workshops of the Reading Gas Company, and was pursuing his duties when a boy named Russell, aged seven years, of Kennet Side, fell into the water. Mr. Lloyd, who is also employed in the workshops, seeing what had happened, rushed out of the building and procured a ladder, with the intention of throwing it out into the water. In the meantime Lambden, divesting himself of his shoes, dived into the river from the retaining wall at the back of the workshops. By this time the boy was in mid-stream, and, with a very strong current running, he was being rapidly carried to the pool near the weir.

"Just before he got to the corner of the island which leads into this portion of the river, Lambden succeeded in seizing him by the collar, and both were ultimately landed by a workman at the pumping station. The boy Russell was in an unconscious condition, and only Lambden's prompt action and courageous conduct—the water at the spot being very deep—saved the boy's life.

"Lambden learnt to swim about six months before he left school, soon after which he rescued a lad who was in difficulties in the swimming-baths at Reading. Mr. Douglas H. Hoops, engineer and manager to the Reading Gas Company, has written to the Royal Humane Society, placing the details of Lambden's courageous act before them.

I am sure every Magnetite will join with me in heartily congratulating Master Lambden on his supremely plucky action. I am much obliged to C. M. for forwarding me the interesting details.

YET ANOTHER HERO!

The Fleetway House—the home of the companion papers—has sent many a hero to the Front, and our Roll of Honour is a big one. A few weeks ago I commented upon the plucky action of Private F. G. Chaffoner, who gallantly won the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Now comes news of fresh glory attained by a member of our staff—Second-Lieutenant W. T. Williams.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 414.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE COLONEL'S CUP"

When war broke out he volunteered for active service, and joined the Artists' Rifles. He went to France in the following December, and obtained his commission in June, being gazetted to the 2nd Battalion of the Buffs.

Soon after this event he was made a machine-gun officer. His crowning achievement, for which he has received the Military Cross, occurred during the great battle of Loos, last September. He was in charge of a small bombing party.

(Continued on next page.)



BOB CHERRY'S CHALLENGE!

(Continued from page 20.)

"What a stunning letter!" said Nugent. "Anyway, you deserve it, old scout, after your exhibition last night. My word! I wish I could box like you, and find a few nice girls chucking bouquets at me. Life would be worth living then."

"Tell you what," said Bob. "As we're in funds, let's invite the girls over to tea. They'll be awfully lucked."

"Good egg!"

"Perhaps Tom Belcher can pop over as well," suggested Wharton. "I'll bike over and ask him after lessons. He's a real white man, is Tom."

Mr. Quelch had great news for the Removites that morning. In commemoration of Bob Cherry's boxing-bout, the Head graciously consented to award the school a half-holiday. Tom Belcher duly put in an appearance, and the great Coker, who fondly imagined he knew all that there was to be known about boxing, and taking courage from the fact that Bob Cherry had stood up to the youthful marvel for ten rounds, challenged Tom Belcher to a scrap in the gym. Quite a crowd of fellows turned up, and the affair ended most disastrously for Coker. He survived two rounds only, and tumbled up on his back, gazing at whole solar systems. Horace Coker possessed tremendous slogging powers, but they had availed him nothing against the scientific tactics of his opponent; and even Coker was forced to admit that Bob Cherry was a real Trojan in the ring to have been able to stand a draw against such a wizard.

In due course, Marjorie, Clara, and Phyllis arrived, and another bumper repast was held—this time in No. 1 Study. Billy Bunter nobly performed the office of chef, and everybody enjoyed themselves to the full. But perhaps the most thrilling moment for Bob Cherry was when he felt the warm pressure of Phyllis Howell's hand as they parted in the dusky Close. Anyway, he seemed particularly elated for quite a long time afterwards.

The hearts of the Famous Five were light as air as they retraced their steps into the building. Thanks to Tom Belcher, the feud with Gerald Loder had been brought to a successful issue; and Bob Cherry, the sunniest and best-natured fellow at Greyfriars, had covered himself with glory in the boxing-ring against an opponent whose name and reputation were household words throughout the country; and the greatest good-humour prevailed in the Remove Form as the result of Bob Cherry's Challenge.

THE END.

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and for nearly eighteen hours he and his bombers worked unceasingly, hurling two thousand bombs at the enemy. The Germans responded with five times that number. It rained nearly all the while, and the damp fuses had to be lit from cigarettes.

Though wounded, heroic Williams refused to leave his post, and it was mainly due to his pluck that the trench was finally held. I learn that he has now been sent to the Near East, where I hope the best of luck will attend him. It is splendid to feel that one has been intimately associated with men of his type.

NOT KNOWN!

A Peckham chum of mine has written to tell me that he sent his younger brother to the newsagent's for a copy of the "Greyfriars Herald." Some time later the youngster returned with a very plum face, and minus the book.

"Sold out?" inquired the elder brother.
"No," was the faltering reply. "The newsagent chap says he's never heard of the 'Grandfather's Herald'!"

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

William Wilkins, 3, Arthur Street, St. Philip's Marsh, Bristol, is desirous of forming a league for "Magnet" readers in his town.

Stoker William Burchell, 19 Moss, H.M.S. Warrior, care of G.P.O., London, would be extremely grateful for a few copies of the "Boys' Friend" Threepenny Library.

H. C. Grover, 62, The Mall, Southgate, London, N., is anxious to form a "Magnet" League in his district.

Petherton United Football Club require home and away fixtures. Average age, 15.—Apply, Thomas Bull, 7, Culford Grove, Southgate Road, London, N.

Percy G. L. (Emhouse) would like a Frank Richards threepenny Look every week. So would a good many more Maginites, I expect, but we don't want Mr. Frank Richards to develop brain-fever, and pass his declining days in a bath chair.

"Disgraced American"—As I have said many times before, Fisher T. Fish must not be accepted as being a typical American. I am surprised that you should take offence in the matter.

Machine-Gunner Doherty (Cambridge).—Your best plan would be to write a short story at first—say, about four thousand words. Then, if you submit it to me, I shall be pleased to give you my opinion of it, and to advise you as to the future.

S. W. G. S.—Thank you very much for your splendid letter of appreciation.

A. R. L. (Kennington).—The Remove and Lower Fourth are one and the same.

John S. (Glasgow).—Glad you enjoyed my little gift.

W. H. H. (Lavender Hill).—Many thanks for a most interesting letter!

W. Woods (Wimbledon).—Your complimentary letter concerning "School and Sport" has been handed to Mr. Richards, who wishes to thank you most cordially for your kind tribute.

Harry Connolly (Manchester).—See reply to W. Woods, printed above.

W. Gay and Leadie Bailey (Camberwell).—Thanks for your cheery communication. Phyllis Howell is fifteen years of age.

Alfred T. (Cheltenham).—I will try and do as you suggest, but Mr. Frank Richards is already a very much overworked gentleman.

D. H. (Bottle).—I think there are quite enough funny jokes in the "Greyfriars Herald" without introducing a storyette page.

"Diana" (Colchester).—By this time you have doubtless seen the result of the Tuck-Jumper Competition No. 1.

"A New Reader" (Boston).—Very pleased to hear how keenly you enjoy "School and Sport."

A. L. W. (Scunthorpe).—If your mother thinks you read too much you should knock it off a little, even if it means giving up the companion papers. Your mother is only acting in your own interests. Best wishes!

E. H. R. Gilbert (Grays).—The definite publishing date of "Tom Merry's Weekly" has not yet been decided upon.

"Two Loyal Girl Chums."—Thank you for your letter. Squiff hails from New South Wales.

C. Patterson (Reading).—Many thanks for your splendid efforts to promote the success of the "Greyfriars Herald" in the popular biscuit-town!

F. A. (London).—Sorry, but our halfpenny issues are long since out of print.

The President, Roppel "Magnet" League.—Very many thanks for your kind letter!

"A Loyal Northamptonian."—Many thanks for your appreciative comments concerning our stories.

"An Irish Colleen" (Westcliff-on-Sea).—Sorry to hear of your indisposition, from which I hope you are now fully recovered. The character you mention will doubtless be heard of again in the near future.

"Scold" (Huddersfield).—It's a curious thing, but even some of our tracing serials by world-famous authors have failed to convince the small handful of schoolmasters who persist in regarding 'serial' story books as trash. We once had a stunning serial story by R. S. Warren Bell, formerly editor of the "Captain," and followed it up with a story by Clive R. Fenn, son of G. Manville Fenn, but the prejudice still remained, and it would remain, I expect, even if I persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Pope to write a serial. It's the way of the world, I suppose.

C. A. Williams (London, S.W.).—The Remove football eleven is always subject to alteration. Sometimes Squiff plays, and sometimes he doesn't. Anyway, your grievance is immaterial. Glad you liked the Christmas Double Number supplement.

E. S. C. (Blackpool).—Very many thanks for your letter and loyalty.

"The Terrible Two" (Glam).—I admire you for your staunch support of Blackpool, but guess what would have happened had Mr. Francis Richards allowed Jimmy Silver & Co. to win Lieutenant Howell's Cup in "School and Sport." The Maginites and Gemites would never let me hear the end of it.

Alfred T. (East Ham).—Dickie Nugent is a member of the Third Form. I am unable to advise you concerning the other matter you mention.

Arthur Williams (Cardiff).—Glad you considered "School and Sport" was hot stuff. I cannot say definitely when the next threepenny book story by Frank Richards will appear.

Hettie H. (Leeds).—The persons and places mentioned in your letter are entirely fictitious.

H. Jones (Birmingham).—A very good suggestion, but I don't think I could put it into practice until after the war.

"Two Loyal Readers" (Bathurst).—You must remember that a little exaggeration is necessary for the sake of effect. Without exaggeration some of the stories wouldn't be readable.

D. Torrance (Hove).—Many thanks for your kind suggestion.

James C. (Stamford Hill).—Thank you very much for your splendid letter extolling the "Greyfriars Herald."

L. Barnes (Birkdale).—I am much indebted to you for your loyal promise of support.

Durham Miner.—I am unable to divulge the name of the author in question.

David M. (Manchester).—For your continued loyalty to my papers, many thanks!

"Bugs"—Ferters Locke is the Healf's godson.

Gerald W. (Huddersfield).—The fact that a good many of the cards in the "Magnet" and "Gem" are named Gerald need not worry you. It is merely coincidental.

Albert S. V. (Dulwich).—I have been so very busy of late that I find it impossible to write you a personal letter. Wilkey's gift was an impersonator was born in the year 1891.

"A Loyal 'Un' (Wimbledon).—A very nice letter, "Loyal 'Un." Write to me again, there's a good sport.

J. R. Shelley (Abbey Wood).—Very many thanks for your entertaining letter. I would refer you to my comments on Phyllis Howell in last week's Chat. Best wishes!

"Brocher" (Frasburgh).—"Greyfriars Herald" contributions are of no specified length. Anything from 500 to 5,000 words will answer the purpose.

M. C. A. (Birmingham).—Yes, I receive scores and scores of letters daily from enthusiastic girl chums, and am glad to number you among the latter. I will carefully consider your kind suggestion.

C. J. M. B. (Gloucester).—Harry Wharton and Tom Merry would be a very good match in a boxing bout. I cannot say with certainty who would bag the honours. It would be a great scrap, anyway.

F. Lewis (London, S.E.).—See reply to G. J. M. B., printed above.

Your Editor



F. MARRIOTT,
Newton Heath, Manchester.



ARCHIE MURRAY,
Winnipeg, Canada.



W. J. NISCOX,
Pitsea, Essex.



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GEORGE DANDO,
Barton Hill, Bristol.



CHARLES E. ROBERTS,
Peterborough.



A NEW READER. G. R. MASON. D. B. WHYTE.
Three chums from Edinburgh, Scotland.



H. E. ALTENBOROUGH,
Winnipeg, Canada.

"GREYFRIARS HERALD" ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.



I have to acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of letters from the following readers in connection with our bright little companion paper, the "Greyfriars Herald":

Anderson, Harold (Port Talbot).

"A Loyal Girl Reader."

Allcock, H. (Derby).

Adlor, H. (Cheetham).

"A Reader."

"A Loyal Reader" (Romsey).

Barke, E.

Brackenborough, Harry.

Betts, Horace (Bristol).

Beet, Jack (Harrow).

Biss, Edward (Shepherd's Bush).

Buck, Charles (Mitcham).

Barrow, S. (York).

Buswell, Keith (Southsea).

Bourlet, S. (Clapton).

Boyle, John (Liverpool).

Boughton, W. (Cardiff).

Botfield, T. (Hendon).

Biss, Ernest H. A. (Shepherd's Bush).

Crampton, Philip (Manchester).

Callahan, D. (Stepney).

Cameron, E. (Inverness).

Charles, James (Bury).

Cussy, Lawrence (Manchester).

Craven, Colin W. (Sheffield).

Crichton, George (Urmston).

Cawton, Katherine (Wath-on-Deane).

Drainwater, J. H. (Kentish Town).

Dolman, Victor (Chippenhams).

Dean, Maude (Croydon).

Dawson, Robert (Yorkshire).

Evans, Reginald (Ashton-on-Mersey).

Edwards, H. F. (Manchester).

Evans, Walter (Dover).

Fletcher, E. N.

Finlay, T. H.

Forster, Thomas (Sunderland).

Grundy, Charles (Stoke Newington).

Gibbs, E. (Stafford).

Gould, Robert (Southampton).

Guinness, G. (Woodford Green).

Hunt, H. A. (Birmingham).

Holmes, H. (Hanwell).

Holdom, Joe (Portsmouth).

Hutchinson, Lewis (Sunderland).

Howard, J. C. (Bedford).

Hodson, Norman (Green Mount).

Hodson, Wilfred H. (Green Mount).

Higginson, Norman.

Holt, Sidney A. (East Finchley).

Harvey, Charles (Wallasey).

J. E. B. (Bow).

J. E. V. (Salford).

Jones, David (Burton-on-Trent).

Jackson, T. (Hull).

Jones, W. V. (Merthyr).

London, Spencer S. (Ryde).

Langshaw, Ralph (Liverpool).

Lambourne, Frank (Blackpool).

McKibbin, James (Belfast).

Mackey, William (Canning Town).

Meson, David (Edinburgh).

Meaker, J. (Blackpool).

Messer, John (Edinburgh).

Maceers, Sidney E. (Barking).

Miller, Mabel (Chester).

Morling, Gerald (Lincoln).

Mackrell, G. (Romsey).

Marshall, W. L. (Pendleton).

McEachran, Charles D. (Edinburgh).

Morris, John (Grimsby).

May, Charles E. A. (Newcastle-on-Tyne).

"New Reader" (Longton).

Newton, Albert (Camden Town).

N. J. C. (Southampton).

Norman, Isaac (Glasgow).

Press, C. J. (Clapham Park).

Pankhurst, Charles A. (Finchley).

Perry, W. (Peckham).

Partridge, P. (Clacton-on-Sea).

Prestage, W. (Battersea).

Paddison, Norman (South Wales).

Roberts, Awen (Llanelli).

Roberts, W. (Southsea).

Ryland, C. B. (Scarborough).

Rosex, H. A. (Kingston-on-Thames).

Rigden, Geo. (Lymington).

Read, Ethel (Sheffield).

Reighley, W. Lloyd (Halifax).

Roberts, Chas. (Birmingham).

Riley, C. (Manchester).

R. R. (Aberdeen).

Symons, L. (Cathcart).

Simmonds, H. (Brighton).

Saywood, J. (Islington).

Sissons, J. (Manchester).

Smith, C. H. (Dudley).

Shear, E. (Llandough).

Saul, E. K. (Wandsworth).

Smith, W. (Guildford).

Shelwell, William (Liverpool).

Soar, Reginald M. (Rotherham).

Sentter, Chas. H. (Basingstoke).

Taper, Mark (London).

Taylor, S. E. (Edgeley).

Thorn, W. J. (South Shields).

Thorn, Ernest (Newport).

Thomas, Priscilla (Leicester).

Voke, R. J. (Southsea).

Williams, Arthur G. (Bristol).

W. J. H. (Smethwick).

Watkiss, J. C. (Stoke-on-Trent).

Whitlock, John (Pimlico).

Woodcock, Walter (East Croydon).

West, Harry (East Finchley).

Wilkes, F. L. (Walstanton).

W. H. (Peckham).

Wilshaw, Florrie (Manchester).