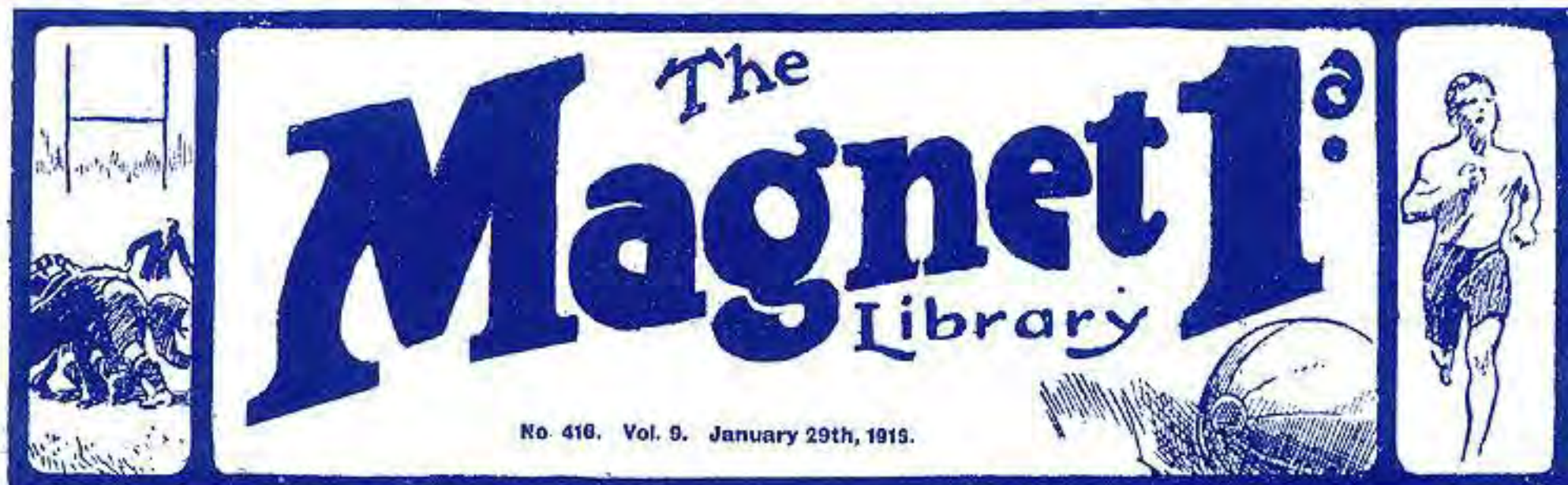


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No. 416. Vol. 9. January 29th, 1919.



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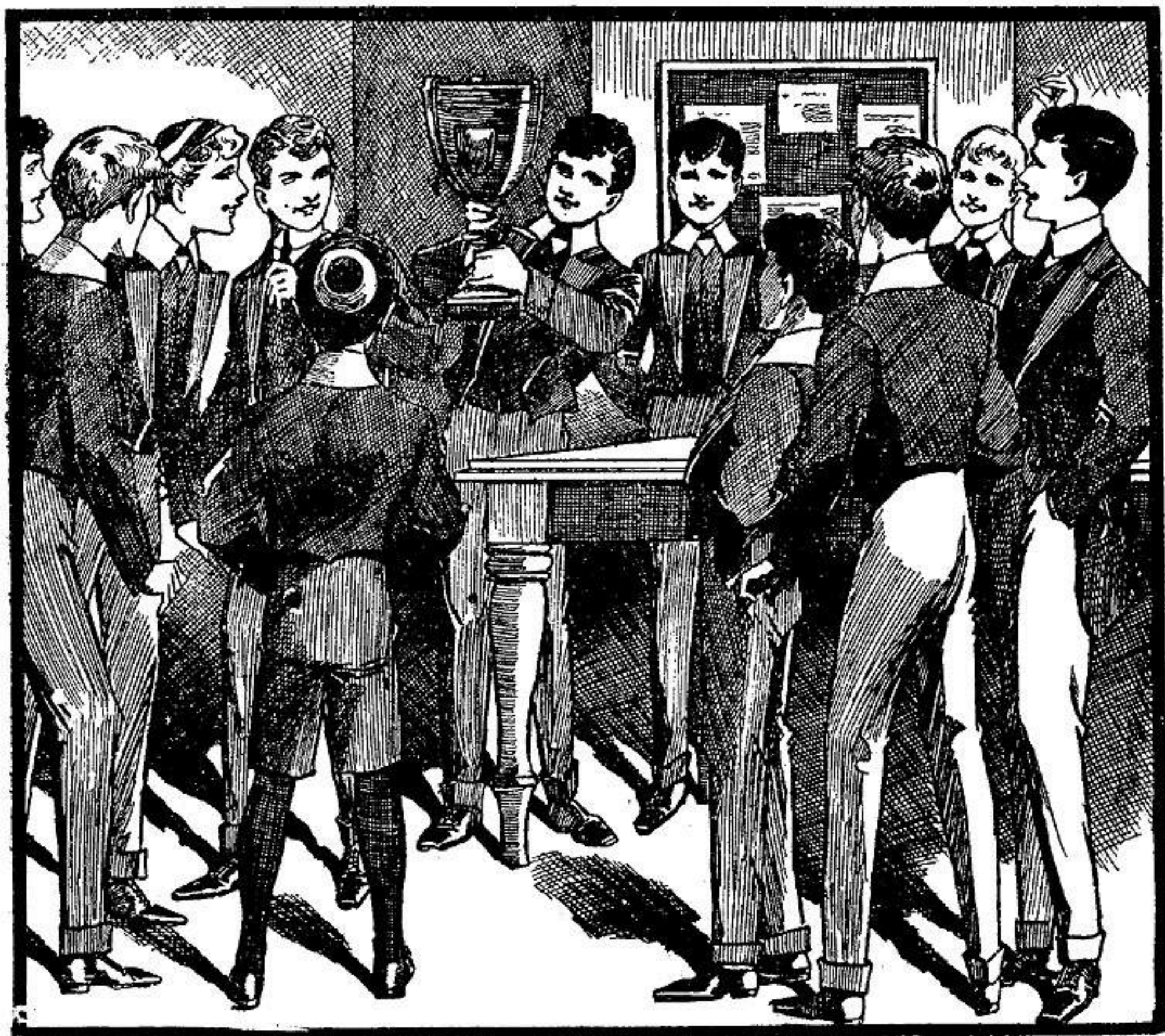


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obliged if you will
hand this book,
when finished with,
to a friend. . .

FOUGHT FOR AND WON!

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

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Johnny Bull opened a box under the table, and there was a general exclamation of astonishment as he handed up a tall, handsome silver cup. "By gad!" ejaculated Temple. "That's a toppin' cup!" (See Chapter 2.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Stormy Meeting!

CHEEKY fag!" said Hobson of the Shell, with a sniff.

"Awf'ly cheeky fag, by Jove!" said Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth.

"Calling a junior meeting—a Remove fag!" continued

Hobson, with rising wrath and indignation. "What's Greyfriars coming to?"

"Echo answers what?" concurred Temple.

Hobson of the Shell and Temple of the Fourth had stopped before the notice-board in the School Hall. A good many fellows had collected before the board, to read the latest notice pinned thereon.

It was a surprising notice, and was written by Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars. But Harry Wharton might have been captain of the School, instead of captain of the Remove, by the way the notice was worded.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Hobson of the Shell sniffed with indignation, and that Temple of the Fourth echoed his sniff.

For the paper ran:

"IMPORTANT NOTICE.

"A meeting will be held in the Rag at six o'clock precisely. All junior forms are requested to attend without fail. An important announcement will be made, closely concerning the Shell, the Fourth, the Remove, and the Third. It is expected that all footballing members of the four junior Forms will be present.

"Signed, HARRY WHARTON."

"Catch me going to a meeting called by a Remove kid!" growled Hobson. "Not unless I go to give him a thick ear!"

"Well, that's not a bad idea," remarked Temple. "I'll go and give him one to match."

"But what the dickens is the meeting about?" exclaimed Bolsover major of the Remove.

"Must be about footer," said Tom Brown. "Only footballing members of the junior forms wanted. That don't include you, Temple. Your performances on the footer ground ain't exactly what we should call football, in the Remove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, here's Wharton!" exclaimed Hobson. "We'll jolly well make him explain what he means by this cheek."

Harry Wharton came along the passage with Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent. There was a shout from the crowd before the notice-board.

"Hold on!"

"What does this mean?"

"What's this meeting about?"

Wharton paused.

"Footer!" he replied.

"What do you mean by calling a junior meeting?" roared Hobson.

"I mean to get the meeting together, of course," said the captain of the Remove in a tone of surprise. "What else should I call it for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you think the Shell will come to a meeting called by a Remove fag?" demanded the captain of the Shell witheringly.

"All the worse for them if they don't," said Wharton cheerfully. "They'll be left out of it."

"Out of what?"

"It!"

"What's the little game?" demanded Temple.

"Footer!"

"Fathead! I mean what are you calling a footer meeting for?" shouted Temple.

"I've already explained that to Hobby, but I don't mind explaining over again," said Wharton resignedly. "I mean to get a meeting together by calling it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Wharton—"

"Sorry, no time!"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on cheerily, leaving the Fourth-Formers and Shell fellows frowning and the Removites grinning.

Hobson snorted.

"I'll jolly well go!" he exclaimed. "I'll take a crowd of the Shell with me and mob the meeting. We'll show that cheeky fag whether he can call lower-school meetings or not."

"And I'll come along with the Fourth!" grinned Temple. "We'll mop up the Rag with the cheeky little beasts."

And with those benevolent intentions Hobson and Temple walked off, to call their comrades together.

Wharton and Nugent and Bob Cherry sauntered into the Rag. A crowd of Remove fellows followed them there, asking questions. Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 416.

Ram Singh were already in the room. All the Famous Five were evidently in the secret, whatever it was. A shower of questions poured upon them. The notice on the board had made the juniors very curious.

"We want to know what that meeting's about!" shouted Bolsover major.

Wharton looked at his watch.

"It's about due!" he replied.

"Oh, don't be funny."

"What's the blessed mystery about?" demanded Bulstrode.

"About the meeting," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Listen to the funny asses!" hooted Bolsover major.

"Keep all that for the 'Herald,' and talk sense, if you can."

"It's some blessed rot, of course," said Skinner.

"Well, you'd think it rot, of course," agreed Wharton.

"You're not interested in footer."

It was close upon six now, and more fellows were coming into the Rag. Tubb and Paget and Bolsover minor of the Third came in with a horde of fags. Evidently they had seen the notice on the board. Tubb & Co. were looking pleased with themselves. The fags of the Third did not often enjoy the distinction of being called to junior football meetings.

"Here we are!" announced Tubb.

"What's the little game?" asked Bolsover minor.

"What's it all about, Percy?"

This question was addressed to his major.

Bolsover major snorted emphatically.

"That's a blessed mystery!" he replied. "These silly asses have got something up their silly sleeve."

"Well, if it's footer, we're on," said Tubb. "We've always said that we could play the Remove's head off, and we say it again."

"Hear, hear!" said the heroes of the Third with one voice.

There was a tramping of feet as a crowd of Shell fellows poured in, with Hobson and Hoskins at their head. The Shell looked ripe for mischief. They had not come to attend the meeting in an orderly spirit. Some of them had knotted their handkerchiefs, in anticipation of a row. Temple, Dabney & Co. followed them in. Six o'clock boomed out from the clock-tower.

Harry Wharton mounted upon a chair.

"Gentlemen—"

"Yah!" shouted the Shell and the Fourth with one voice.

"Order!" shouted Bob Cherry, rapping on the table with a cricket-stump. Silence for the chair! Order!"

"Rats!"

"Go home!"

Hobson of the Shell jumped on a chair in his turn.

"Gentlemen!" he roared.

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen!" shrieked Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen," bellowed Hobson, while the gentlemen roared with laughter, "this meeting has been called by a cheeky fag in the Lower Fourth—"

"Gentlemen—"

"And I hereby put the resolution to the meeting, that the Remove fags are a set of cheeky little beggars, who ought to be turned out on their necks!"

"Hurrah!"

"Passed nem. con.," chuckled Temple.

"Turn 'em out!"

"Gentlemen," roared Wharton, "this meeting has been called—"

"Rush 'em!"

"Turn 'em out!"

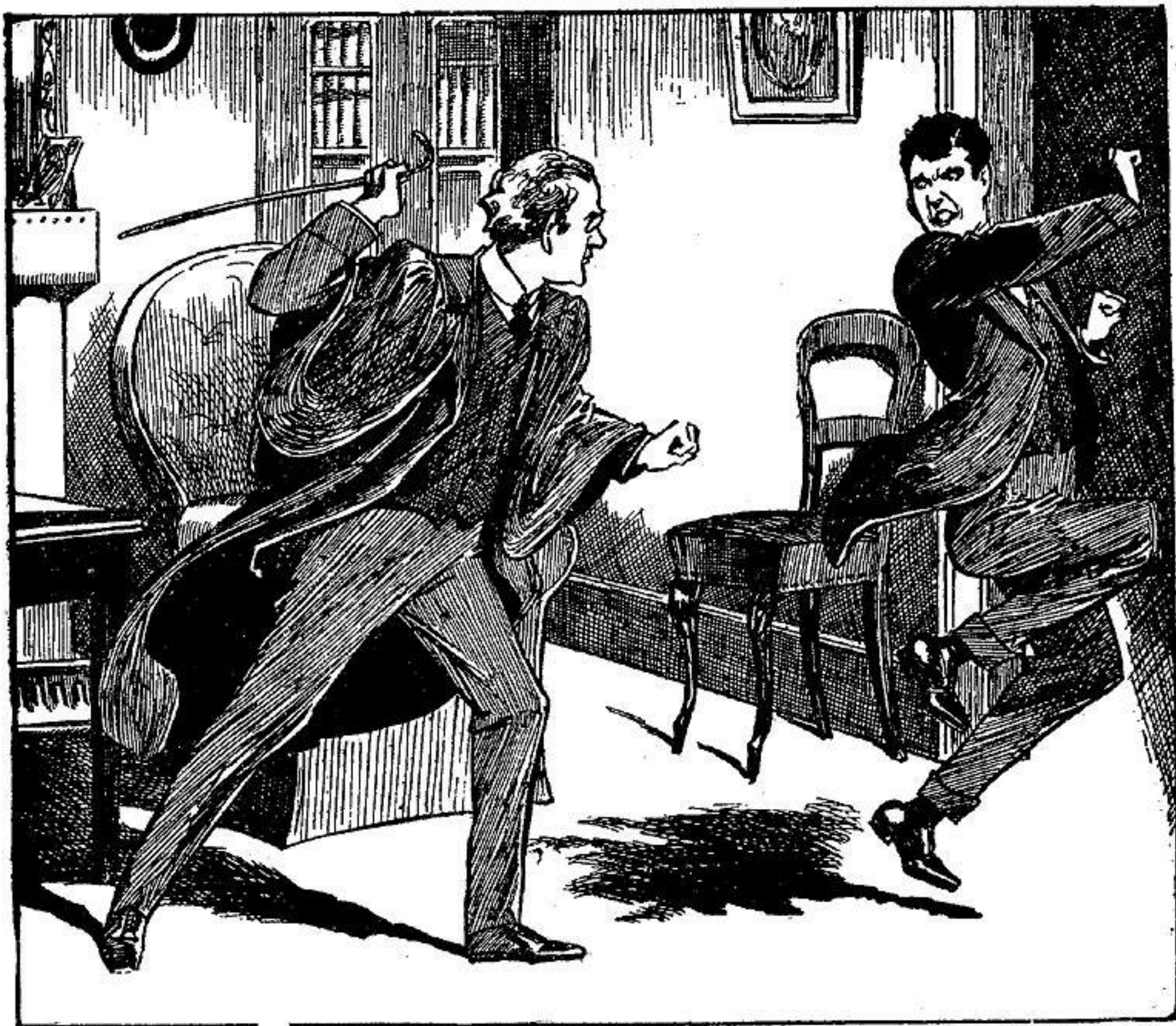
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Back up, Remove!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Kick out those cheeky fags!"

"Order!"

There was a rush of the Fourth-Formers and the Shell. The Removites rallied at once round their captain, and Tubb & Co. of the Third backed them up. In a moment more the meeting had resolved itself into a wild and whirling scramble. Fists and twisted handkerchiefs did great execution. In the midst of the uproar, the door of the Rag was flung open, and Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell, stepped into the room.



Mr. Hacker jumped up, and seized a cane from the table. Fifth-Formers, as a rule, were not caned, and certainly not by the master of the Shell; but caned Horace Coker would have been, then and there, by the infuriated Mr. Hacker, if he had not dodged out of the study with record swiftness. (See Chapter 10.)

THE SECOND CHAPTER. The Cup Competition!

"BOYS!"

Mr. Hacker's voice penetrated the din. The conflict ceased, excepting for a few pairs of combatants who were rolling on the floor.

"Oh, my hat! It's Hacker!" murmured Hobson.

"Order!" mumbled Bob Cherry.

Mr. Hacker surveyed the crowd of juniors with a frowning brow. Mr. Hacker was a stern-featured and severe-tempered gentleman, and he did not approve in the least of Form rows and rags. The playful manners and customs of the Greyfriars juniors were regarded by him as horseplay, if not hooliganism.

"Boys!" he thundered.

"Ye-es, sir!" stammered Hobson.

"What is this unseemly disturbance about?"

The juniors blinked at each other. Hobson dabbed his handkerchief on his nose, which had come into violent contact with Harry Wharton's knuckles.

"Juniors," resumed Mr. Hacker, "are allowed to hold meetings in this apartment on the distinct understanding that order is kept."

"Ahem!"

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

"Hobson, as the eldest boy present, you are more responsible than anyone else for this state of affairs!"

"I—I—" stammered Hobson.

"If you please, sir—" began Temple.

"Silence! This disturbance is disgraceful! Hobson, you will take two hundred lines! I shall report Temple and Wharton to their Form-masters. If there is any further disturbance in this room, I shall request the Head to close it to juniors."

And with that crushing statement Mr. Hacker stalked out of the Rag, with his gown rustling behind him.

Hobson shook his fist at the door when it was closed. Mr. Hacker was not popular in his Form.

"Isn't that just like the beast?" growled Hobson. "Didn't give us a chance to explain that we were only keeping these fags in order."

"Capper will give me lines!" grunted Temple. "This is what comes of trying to keep the fags in their place!"

"You silly fatheads!" said Wharton wrathfully. "I shall get lines from Quelch, too! Why couldn't you keep order?"

"Rats!"

"Yah!"

Wharton mounted on his chair again.

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

"Gentlemen——"

"My hat! He's beginning again!" exclaimed the exasperated Hobson. "Look here! This meeting is at an end!"

"Fathead, it's only beginning!"

"We'll jolly well——"

"Cheese it, Hobby!" exclaimed Hoskins. "Hacker will be listening for a row! We don't want the Head brought down on us!"

"We're not going to allow this fag meeting!" said Hobson obstinately. "There's a limit, ain't there? These blessed cheeky fags——"

"Order!"

"If you want a thick ear, Bob Cherry——"

"Silence! Rap! Rap! Order!"

"You silly duffers!" shouted Wharton. "Why can't you hear what the meeting's all about before you begin to rag! It's an important matter——"

"Bow-wow!"

"Concerning the four junior Forms——"

"Rats!"

"Booh!"

"Shut up!"

"Knock him off that chair!"

"Trot out the cup, Johnny!" said Wharton hastily, as there were very visible signs of further trouble.

"Right-ho!"

Johnny Bull opened a box under the table, and there was a general exclamation of astonishment as he handed up a tall, handsome silver cup—evidently a football-cup.

"What the merry dickens——" exclaimed Hobson, in amazement.

"By gad!" ejaculated Temple. "That's a toppin cup! Where on earth did you kids get that cup?"

Johnny Bull set the silver cup on the table, and the juniors crowded round to examine it. There were exclamations of great admiration on all sides. It was certainly a very handsome and expensive cup; as handsome a trophy as any within the walls of Greyfriars.

"Gentlemen——" recommenced Wharton victoriously. The sight of the cup had quelled the storm. Every fellow there was too curious to know what it meant to think of interrupting the speaker now.

"Go ahead!" said Hobson.

"Gentlemen, this meeting has been called to announce a new football competition in the Lower School. Colonel Wharton has presented this handsome cup, to be competed for by the junior elevens of Greyfriars—the Shell, Remove, Fourth, and Third Forms."

"My hat!"

"Bravo!"

"Good old sport!"

"Well, my only chapeau!" exclaimed Cecil Reginald Temple. "What a ripping wheeze! What an old sport! That cup must have cost him a pretty penny!"

"Colonel Wharton sent us this cup while on leave from the Front," continued Harry Wharton. "It was sent in a box; and some silly asses, under the impression that it was a box of tuck, tried to raid it!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Temple.

He was the leader of the "silly asses" in question.

"Some of the Highcliffe bounders got it away from them," resumed Wharton. "They thought it was a box of tuck, too. We licked the Highcliffe rotters——"

"Bravo!"

"And got it back. It turned out to be a footer-cup presented by the colonel, to be competed for by the junior Forms of Greyfriars."

"Why the dickens couldn't you tell me so?" demanded Hobson indignantly.

"Did you give me a chance, you fathead?"

"Well, it's a jolly good wheeze. We'll have that cup for the Shell," said Hobson confidently.

"I rather fancy it will come to the Fourth," smiled Temple. "We're on to this, I can tell you. That cup would look ripping on the bookcase in my study!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney heartily.

"Not likely!" snorted Tubb of the Third. "That cup's coming to the Third! We're after that cup!"

Order had been completely restored now. The junior meeting was in the best of humours.

"Gentlemen, the ties will be played as soon as possible

on half-holidays which are not already booked up for other fixtures," continued Wharton. "There will be two rounds, as there are four teams to compete, and the draw for the first round will take place here and now."

"Hurrah!"

"That is, of course, if the various Forms decide to enter the competition."

"Not much doubt about that!" grinned Hoskins.

"We're after that cup!"

"What-ho!"

"The conditions are that the cup be played for in regular ties; in the event of a draw, the tie to be re-played at the earliest opportunity. The cup will remain in the permanent possession of the winning team, who will not put it up again for competition unless they choose to do so. The captains of the various Forms are requested to step forward to take part in the draw."

"Go it, Hobby!"

"Go it, Temple!"

"Go it, Tubb!"

Wharton descended from the chair. There was not a sign of "ragging" in the Rag now. All was good humour.

There was a chuckle as Tubb of the Third came forward, strutting a little, to take his part in the draw. It was pretty certain that whosoever the cup went to, it would not go to the Third. But Tubb evidently had high hopes of bagging the trophy.

"Let's hope we'll be drawn against the Third!" grinned Dabney. "That'll make us sure of the first round, anyway!"

"Don't you be so jolly sure!" snorted Tubb. "I don't think much of your footer in the Fourth!"

"It won't make much difference, anyway," remarked Hobson. "The cup's bound to come to the Shell."

"Bow-wow!"

"Order!" rapped out Wharton. "We're ready for the draw."

The slips were placed in a hat, and the draw proceeded for the first round of the competition for the Colonel's Cup. Tubb looked a little blue as he drew with the Remove. He knew that he would have had more chance against the Fourth.

"We'll give you a tussle, anyhow," he remarked.

"And we'll give you one, Hobby," said Temple.

Hobson grinned.

"I'll get a corner ready in my study for that cup," he remarked.

"Gentlemen, if agreeable to all parties, the first ties will be played on Saturday afternoon, and the final on the following Wednesday."

"Done!"

And the meeting, which had begun so stormily, broke up in high good-humour on all sides.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The First Round!

GREYFRIARS was a footballing school; and most of the fellows were keen devotees of the great game. Every Form had its eleven, even the fags of the Second. Dicky Nugent, who was called the captain of the Second Form, was decidedly indignant that the Second were not included in the competition for the Colonel's Cup. Dicky argued that the Second had a chance, at least, of beating the Third, though even Nugent minor admitted that he couldn't have expected to survive to the final. But the Second were not in it. The Fifth-Form eleven, or the great Greyfriars First, could doubtless have walked off with the cup; but it was a junior competition, and they were not in it.

After the announcement of the Colonel's Cup competition, there was greater keenness than ever displayed by the juniors on the football-field.

The four teams were anxious to get themselves into the finest form possible. Tubb & Co. nourished a wild hope of bagging the cup, if favoured by luck. They meant to do their very best, anyway. The Remove had no doubt about the first round, but they knew that in the final tie there would be a tussle.

"We shall beat the Third, and the Shell will beat the Fourth," Harry Wharton remarked in No. 1 Study. "The final will be between us and the Shell. And we shall have to pile in for all we're worth."

"We've beaten the Shell before," remarked Squiff.

"Not so often as they've beaten us."

"Well, no, but—"

"They're almost a senior Form," said Harry. "They have the advantage of age and weight, and they're not bad footballers, either; miles ahead of Temple & Co., at least. I think our passing is a bit more scientific than theirs—"

"Hear, hear!"

"And they can't beat our pace. But— Well, it will be a tussle. But we've got to win; we can't let the Shell bag the cup."

"No jolly fear!"

"I'm going over the team, and I may have to make a change or two. If a fellow is shifted, he'll have to take it in good part."

"Ahem!"

The football committee looked rather doubtful. As footer captain, it was Wharton's duty to put the best possible team in the field to win the cup. But the prospect of being dropped was not agreeable to anybody.

"We'll have Bulstrode in goal," said Wharton thoughtfully. "He is really a bit more reliable than Hazeldene, in an important match like this. We can't do better than Johnny Bull and Tom Brown at back."

"Good!" said Johnny Bull heartily. And Tom Brown smiled and nodded.

"Half-backs, Mark Linley, Peter Todd, and Bob Cherry—"

"Good again!"

"Forwards, Inky and Nugent and Squiff and Smithy and myself. Squiff is a bit better than Penfold at inside-left."

"A little," grinned Sampson Quincy Ifley Field. "I admit it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But in case of any fellow getting crooked, I'm going to keep Pen and Hazel and Morgan and Ogilvy hard at it," said Wharton. "We can't afford to run any risks. And we're going to stick to practice like—like the German Fleet to a canal."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows"—Billy Bunter's fat face and big glasses glimmered in at the door—"if you're settling about the footer eleven—"

"We've settled it, fatty."

"You're putting me in?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" growled Billy Bunter. "We ought to have that cup, you know. Its money value—"

"Cheese it!"

"Look here, Wharton, if you're thinking of sticking that cup on a shelf, I want it understood at once that I object," said Bunter warmly. "My idea is to win it, and sell it at once, and whack out the proceeds. But, of course, the first thing is to win it, and for that you require the very best players you can get. So I ask you again—and I want a plain answer, mind—are you putting me in?"

"No," grinned Bob Cherry. "We're putting you out."

And he did; and William George Bunter departed in a great state of indignation. The football committee proceeded with their deliberations unassisted by the Owl of the Remove.

After that, hard practice was the order of the day. The weather was a little trying, but even a drizzle of rain did not keep the junior footballers off the field. They collected a record amount of mud, but that was only a detail. By the time Saturday came round, Harry Wharton was quite satisfied with the form of his team.

Saturday proved a wild and windy day, with gusts of rain on the wind from the sea. But early in the afternoon the four teams turned up for the first round.

The first eleven were playing away that afternoon, and Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, had given permission to Hobson to use the senior side. The Shell and Fourth-Form elevens proceeded to Big Side, both of them looking extremely confident.

Cecil Reginald Temple, as a rule, did not "work" at footer, having a peculiar belief that "swank" was what

EVERY
MONDAY

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ONE
PENNY.

was chiefly needed. But on this occasion he had done his best with his team, and the Fourth-Formers were in unusually good fettle for the tussle with the Shell.

Tubb & Co. did not look quite confident when they came down to face the Remove. They had been assiduous at practice, too; but the Remove were formidable opponents. Potter of the Fifth was referee in the match, and he grinned as the valiant fags came on.

It fell to Tubb to kick off. Wingate minor, who was centre-forward in the fag team, sent the ball rolling. Then the game began—a game that rapidly became like a very severe nightmare to the fags of the Third.

They did their best. But their best was not of much use against the mighty men of the Remove.

In the first half, three goals were taken by the Remove, two falling to Wharton, and one to Vernon-Smith. The Third had not scored. Only once had they got through, and Bulstrode in goal had easily defeated their attempts to put the leather in.

"Better luck in the second half," said Bolsover minor cheerily.

Tubb gasped.

"Pile in," he said; "pile in for all you're worth. That cup's worth having, you know. Grooooh!"

Potter blew the whistle, and the ball was kicked off again. In the second half, the fags received a still more severe grueling.

The Remove were miles above their weight; but Tubb & Co. stuck it out manfully. Luck befriended them at last. Johnny Bull went over in a charge, and when he rose he was limping. He had to limp off the field, with a bad bruise on his ankle, the result of an accidental kick.

The Remove finished a man short.

Tubb & Co. made the best of their chance, and the absence of the back gave them an opportunity. To their huge delight, they got through, and scored with a shot that caught Bulstrode napping.

The Third Form fags round the field yelled themselves hoarse.

"Goal! Goal! Goal!"

"Done it, anyway!" gasped Tubb.

"Hurrah! Goal! Goal! Goal!"

The Third Form had broken their duck. But fortune did not smile on them again. Two more goals came to the Remove; one of them being kicked by Bob Cherry from the half-way line.

The match ended with the Remove five goals to one—a very handsome margin. Tubb & Co. were gasping when they came off.

Harry Wharton clapped Tubb on the shoulder.

"Jolly good!" he said. "You couldn't quite expect to pull it off, kid, but you've done jolly well."

"Grooooh!" said Tubb.

"First round to us!" grinned Bob Cherry. "The mighty men of the Third have fallen. I wonder how the giants of the Fourth are getting on."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove footballers put on their coats and mufflers, and walked over to Big Side. The Shell-Fourth match was nearly at an end. The score stood at three for the Shell, against nil for Temple & Co.

"Looks rather like a win for the Shell," Squiff remarked.

"It does—it do!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Poor old Temple's on his last legs! He wants his second wind—or his third."

The whistle went as Hobson put the ball in again. The Shell fellows came off, grinning, winners by four goals to nil.

"We've had rather bad luck, don't you know," Temple remarked, as he passed the smiling Removites. "I fancy if that was played over again, the result would be a bit different."

"You mean it will be five to nil instead of four to nil?" queried Bob Cherry.

"Rats!" said Temple.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it's between us," said Hobson of the Shell to

Harry Wharton. "Look out for the licking of your lives next Wednesday!"

"Get ready to be wiped off the face of the earth!" said Wharton cheerily.

And the footballers went in, the Shell and the Remove, at least, satisfied with the results of the tie, and quite confident of the result on the following Wednesday.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. For Old Times' Sake!

COKER of the Fifth came along the Shell passage after lessons on Monday, and stopped at Hobson's door.

Once upon a time Horace Coker had shared that study with Hobson. But Coker had got his pass into the Fifth, and Hobson hadn't. They had been chums in the Shell. But that was all over when Coker went into the Fifth. Hobson had been willing to keep on the old terms, but Coker, always a lofty youth, had become amazingly more lofty in the senior Form. He was, in fact, as Hobson said with utter disgust, more Fifth-Formy than any other silly ass in the Fifth.

There were strained relations between the former friends after that. Coker had been heard to allude to Hobson as a cheeky fag who didn't know his place. Hobson generally alluded to the great Horace as "that idiot Coker." There had been a few "scraps" also, owing to differences of opinion.

It was, therefore, a remarkable thing for the great Coker to visit Hobson's study in the Shell passage—a very remarkable thing indeed.

It would not have been so remarkable if Coker had visited it with hostile intentions. But the expression on Coker's rugged face showed that his intentions weren't hostile. He had his very best smile on, and he tapped

politely at the door before entering—politeness which he seldom wasted on juniors.

Hobson and Hoskins were in the study.

They stared at Coker. Hoskins made a movement of his hand towards a ruler, in evident anticipation of trouble.

But Coker's manner was affability itself.

"Hallo, old scout!" he said.

"Eh! What?" said Hobson.

"Jolly old study, this!" remarked Coker. "We had some good times here, Hobby, when I was a kid in the Shell!"

Hobson frowned. He did not like to hear the Shell alluded to as "kids."

"You weren't a kid," he said; "you were older than I. And you'd be in the Shell still if your Aunt Judy hadn't come and ragged the Head, and got you your remove!"

"Don't be a silly ass, Hobby!" said Coker, some of his affability vanishing.

"My dear man, all the school knows it," said the captain of the Shell calmly. He did not know why Coker had come to the study; but now he was there, he meant to let him hear plain facts. "Bunter of the Remove says he saw your aunt chasing the Head round his study with an umbrella——"

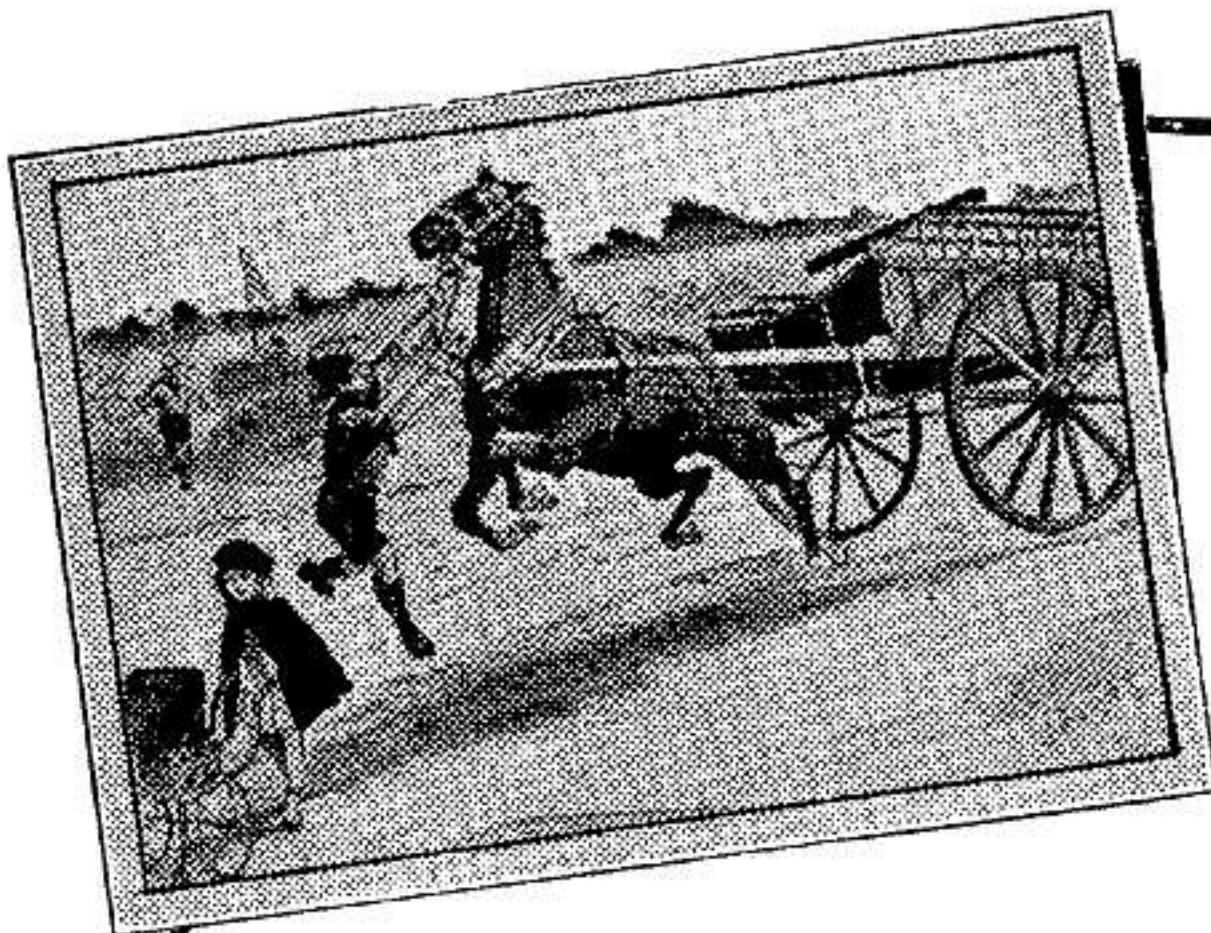
"He didn't—she didn't!" roared Coker.

"According to Bunter, he was at the keyhole, and saw it all," said Hobson calmly. "The story goes that Aunt Judy got his head in chancery, and wouldn't cheese it till he promised to put you in the Fifth."

"You know it's all rot, you fathead!"

"How should I know?" said Hobson argumentatively. "You did get into the Fifth, didn't you? Well, if Aunt Judy didn't rag the Head into it, why did he put you into the Fifth?"

"I passed over your head, Hobson, on my own merits." Hobson shook his head.



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"That will do for 'Punch' or 'Chuckles,'" he said. "It won't do for me."

"Look here——"

"Not that I wasn't jolly glad to get you into the Fifth, however you got there," went on Hobson candidly.

"I am sorry for the Fifth, of course——"

"You burbling chump——"

"But I felt it only fair that the Fifth should have you for a bit, considering how long we'd stood you in the Shell, you know."

"You—you—you——" Coker stuttered.

Hobson rose to his feet, and pushed back his cuffs. Horace Coker was purple, and it looked as if assault and battery was imminent.

But the Fifth-Former controlled himself with a tremendous effort, much to the surprise of the chums of the Shell.

"I didn't come here to quarrel with you, Hobson," gasped Coker.

"Suit yourself," said Hobson cheerily; "I don't mind. If it's the pleasure of a little conversation you want, I'm your man. All I complain of is that when you went you didn't take Hacker with you. You spoiled Hacker's temper for good by the way you used to construe, and now we get the benefit of it."

"Blow Hacker!" growled Coker. "I remember, Hacker was always a Tartar, and I was jolly glad to get with Mr. Prout instead. Hacker never was much of a hand at classics—he found a lot of faults with my Latin."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I remember the time he went for you with the pointer," chuckled Hoskins. "You construed 'Arma virumque cano' into 'The man's arms to the dog.' Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hobson.

Again assault and battery seemed imminent, and Hobson and Hoskins wondered why it didn't come off. The two of them were more than a match even for the burly Coker, with his celebrated four-point-seven punch, and they were quite prepared to "sling" the Fifth-Former out of the study, if necessary. Coker never counted his foes, so it was not funk that held him back. Apparently he had some deep and secret reason for not taking the offensive.

He shoved his hands into his pockets, and waited till the chums of the Shell ceased from cackling.

"Well, are you finished?" he asked at last.

"I don't know," said Hobson thoughtfully. "I never see you without wanting to laugh, you see. I suppose it's your face that does it!"

"I came here for a little talk," said Coker.

"Well, we're having a little talk, ain't we?"

"We used to get on pretty well in this study," said Coker.

"Well, you were always a bit of a bounder," said Hobson. "But we got on all right when we kept you in order. We had to bump your silly head into the coal-locker sometimes."

"We were really pals," said Coker. "I didn't really want to drop you when I went into the Fifth."

"You didn't—I dropped you!" said Hobson.

"You couldn't expect us to stand you, with your Fifth-Formy ways," remarked Hoskins.

Coker nearly choked.

"Of course, it's impossible for a senior to pal with juniors—mere fags," he said. "But I intended to take some notice of you."

"Many thanks!" said Hobson.

"Not at all. I am quite willing to notice you, and protect you, and all that," said Coker. "But you would be cheeky——"

"Oh, come off!" urged Hobson.

"But what I wanted to say is, why shouldn't we be on friendly terms, though you're still a kid in the Shell?" argued Coker.

"Not so much of your 'kid in the Shell'!" growled Hobson. "The Shell is practically a senior Form!"

"Oh, rot!"

"You used to say it was, anyway, when you were in it."

"I dare say I said a lot of silly things when I was a fag," said Coker. "You drop all those fag ideas when you become a senior. However, to come to the point. I'm quite willing to be friends."

Hobson and Hoskins regarded Coker with astonishment.

"The giddy olive-branch!" ejaculated Hobson.

"Well, yes. Why not?"

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"I—I don't know why not," said Hobson. "But what in thunder are you driving at? What's the little game?"

Coker coughed, and the two Shell fellows watched him curiously. That the great Horace had some axe to grind they felt convinced.

"The fact is," said Coker, "I want to do you a good turn, for the sake of old times."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"F'rinstance, you know how I play footer——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at now?" roared Coker.

"The way you play footer. Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker took his hands out of his pockets, and it really looked as if the assault and battery were coming at last. But still Horace restrained himself.

"You know I'm not in the First Eleven, owing to Wingate's fatheadedness," he said. "And Blundell leaves me out of the Fifth-Form team, partly owing to stupidity, and partly, I am afraid, to jealousy. At the same time, there are very few fellows in Greyfriars who play footer as I do."

"None at all!" chuckled Hobson.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And so it happens," pursued Coker, unheeding. "that, though I'm a first-class player, I'm disengaged on Wednesday. For the sake of old times, and to help you kids in a tough match, I'm willing to play for the Shell."

"Oh!" gasped Hobson and Hoskins together.

The cat was out of the bag now.

"That's it," said Coker, with a nod. "I know what you're thinking—it's a bit infra dig for a Fifth-Former to play in a Shell eleven——"

"Nunno; that wasn't exactly what I was thinking," gurgled Hobson.

"Whether you think so or not, it's so," said Coker. "But I don't care. I'm willing to offer you my services. That Colonel's Cup is worth bagging. With my assistance, you're certain of it. There's no rule in the competition to keep you from playing a Fifth-Former if you like. The Remove team wouldn't raise any objection to your playing me."

"They jolly well wouldn't," grinned Hobson. "They'd jump for joy. But we're not giving them that cup."

"I make only one condition," added Coker.

"Oh, there's a condition," gasped Hobson.

"Yes; I owe that to my own position. I must captain the Shell team. You will recognise at once that a fellow of my standing could not play under the orders of a fag."

"Oh, my only Aunt Jemima!"

"I make no other conditions. The cup, when won by my aid, will belong to the Shell," said Coker magnanimously. "I make no claim upon the cup whatever. My object is simply to do you kids a good turn."

"When won—by your aid!" murmured Hobson.

"Well, what's your answer?" asked Coker.

"Oh, you're too funny to live," said Hobson, wiping his eyes. "Run away and play marbles, Coker. That's your game—not footer. I wouldn't be found dead in a team you played in. But I'll tell you what. If you can get Wharton to play you for the Remove, we won't raise any objection."

"No fear!" said Hoskins promptly. "Try it, Coker, with our blessing!"

"I could hardly play for those fags," said Coker. "It's a bit of a come-down for me to play for the Shell. It's for the sake of old times, you know. Now, you'd better take my offer before I withdraw it, Hobson."

"Bow-wow!"

"Do you mean to say that you refuse?" exclaimed Coker.

"Do we refuse, Hosky?" chuckled Hobson.

"Do we?" grinned Hoskins. "I rather think we does—a little bit."

Horace Coker pushed back his cuffs.

"I don't allow fags to cheek me," he remarked. "I've made you a kind offer, and I don't allow base ingratitude. Are you accepting that offer?"

"Ha, ha! No."

"Then look out!"

It was the assault and battery at last. It came like a whirlwind. Horace Coker was fed up; his great patience

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was exhausted, and he went for Hobson and Hoskins together like a hurricane.

"Yaroooh!" roared Hobson. "Kick him out."

"Yow-ow! Outside, you rotter!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Three struggling forms went through the study doorway into the passage—Horace Coker, fighting valiantly, with Hobson and Hoskins clinging to him like cats. And in the passage the battle raged.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Hacker is Wrathful!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Is it a dog-fight?"

"What the merry thunder—"

"It's Coker. Come on and see Coker!"

"Coker's going it again."

There was a rush of fellows from all sides. Shell fellows came out of their studies, and Fourth-Formers and Removites crowded along the passage. A thick crowd gathered, highly excited and interested.

The battle was raging, as Hurree Singh put it, terrifically. Horace Coker was a hard nut to crack. Hobson and Hoskins had their hands full, and even when Stewart of the Shell came to their aid, Coker was still going strong. The Shell fellows were determined to hurl the intrusive Coker forth from the passage. Coker was not only determined not to go, but he was determined to bestow a record licking upon all three of them, and he was prepared to "mop up" the whole Shell passage if necessary.

"Go it, Coker!" sang out Harry Wharton. "Go it, Hobby! Pile in, Hoskins!"

"Hurrah! Hobby's down!"

"Yaroooh!"

"Buck up, Hobby!" roared Bob Cherry. "You're not licked yet. Hang on to his ears."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump!

"Bravo! Coker's down! Sit on his head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Horace Coker was down at last, and the three Shell fellows sprawled over him. They were all looking the worse for wear.

But they had Coker now. Stewart and Hobson grasped his ankles, and yanked him along the passage on his back. Hoskins had a strong grip on his hair, and helped by shoving. Coker was going at last, but he was still resisting valorously.

"Make way—make way for Coker!" sang out Bob Cherry.

"Cave!" yelled Squiff from the end of the passage.

"Look out, Hobby; here's Hacker!" exclaimed Bob.

"Oh, dear!"

The Shell fellows let go Coker as if he had suddenly become red-hot. Mr. Hacker strode frowning upon the scene.

"What is this?" he exclaimed. "Coker——"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Are you hurt, Coker?"

"Yurrrrgggh!"

"Hobson, what does this mean?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!"

"Nothing, sir!" thundered Mr. Hacker. "Hobson, I have had very serious fault to find with you of late. You seem to be perpetually mixed up in scenes of hooliganism. You were assaulting Coker, a senior boy."

"N-n-not exactly, sir."

"What were you doing, then?"

"Only t-t-turning him out, sir."

"Groo-hoo-wooh!" mumbled Coker, sitting up dazedly.

"I'll scalp 'em. I'll slaughter 'em! I'll——"

"Silence, Coker!"

"Groooogh!"

"There has been too much of this," said Mr. Hacker angrily. "Hobson, you seem to have forgotten all sense of order and discipline. You are continually engaged in quarrels with Coker, who used to be your study-mate."

"I—I——"

"Why did you come here, Coker?"

"I came to make those cheeky young rascals a

friendly offer," roared Coker. "I'll slaughter 'em—I'll——"

"That will do, Coker. Hobson, I am ashamed of you."

"But, sir—but——"

"Enough! You will take five hundred lines, Hobson. And listen to me," said Mr. Hacker impressively. "The next time I find you engaged in a quarrel with Coker, Hobson, I shall detain you for four half-holidays, and shall report Coker to Mr. Prout and demand the same punishment for him. Take warning!"

"Ye-e-es, sir," stammered Hobson.

"Now let this cease. Coker, kindly go to your own study, and do not enter the Shell passage again unless you have business there."

"Grooooh!"

Mr. Hacker swept away, and Coker shook his fist at Hobson & Co. and tottered after him. Even Coker had had enough scrapping.

"Five hundred lines!" howled Hobson when Mr. Hacker was gone. "And all for slinging that cheeky idiot out of our study."

"Hard lines," said Wharton, sympathetically.

"We—we did make rather a row," gasped Hoskins.

"Hacker was in a rare bate."

"Blow Hacker!" growled Hobson discontentedly. "Five hundred lines, by gum! And detention if there's another row with Coker! How can a fellow help having rows with that idiot Coker, I'd like to know?"

"Echo answers how?" grinned Bob Cherry.

Hobson stamped back into his study. He had not even had the satisfaction of finishing "chucking" Horace Coker out of the Shell passage. He had cause for discontent.

The Removites departed, chuckling. When the Famous Five returned to their tea in No. 1 Study, they found, to their surprise, a dishevelled and breathless figure there. It was Coker of the Fifth.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob.

"I came here to speak to you," gasped Coker. "You'd hardly believe it, but that row was simply because I'd offered to play for Hobson, and help him win the Colonel's Cup, for the sake of old times."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't cackle at me, you cheeky fags. I've made up my mind what I'm going to do. Hobson's going to be punished for his cheek. I'm going to play for the Remove in the cup-tie, and bar him out from any chance of getting the cup!" announced Coker.

"Are you, by gum?" said Harry Wharton. "What about barring us from any chance of getting the cup?"

"You can put me down on your list, Wharton. I'm best at centre-forward, so I'll take your place."

"Thanks awfully; but we want the cup."

"That's just what I'm offering you, you young ass—a dead certainty of it. I suppose you'll be glad to get a first-class player in your fag eleven. Hobson won't raise objections."

"I dare say he wouldn't," chuckled Wharton, "but the Remove would, you can bet your hat! Nothing doing, Coker!"

"If I have any cheek from you, Wharton——"

"Are you pining to be thrown out of another study?" grinned Nugent. "Hasn't Hobby given you enough?"

"Look here——"

"Good-bye!"

Coker glared at the Famous Five; but he was not feeling in condition to tackle five sturdy juniors at once. He snorted and stalked out of the study, and slammed the door after him with a terrific slam. The Famous Five chuckled and sat down to tea. In spite of his remarkable powers as a player, and his really unique style of football, the great Coker simply hadn't an earthly chance of playing in the final tie for the Colonel's Cup.

ANSWERS



Tramp, tramp, tramp! Three struggling forms went through the study doorway into the passage—Horace Coker, fighting valiantly, with Hobson and Hoskins clinging to him like cats. (See Chapter 4.)

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

One Satisfied!

N. G.!" growled Johnny Bull. Morning lessons were over on Tuesday, and the chums of the Remove had gone down to Little Side to punt the ball about till dinner-time. Johnny Bull was still feeling the effects of the kick he had received on Saturday on his unfortunate ankle. There was still a big swelling, and the joint was very stiff. He limped and grunted, and grunted and limped, and finally declared that it was no good.

"You'll have to leave me out to-morrow, Wharton," he said. "Luckily, you've got several backs to choose from."

"I think Morgan will fill the bill all right," said Harry. "He's been sticking it, too, in case he's wanted. He'd better practise with the team to-day. Your blessed ankle won't pull round for a day or two!"

"Not likely, blow it!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "Here's Bolsover, and his highness looks wrathful."

Bolsover major marched up to the chums of the Remove with a frowning brow.

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

"I've got a bone to pick with you, Wharton!" he exclaimed.

"Go ahead!" said the captain of the Remove tersely. "Bull isn't any good for the match to-morrow. I watched him hopping about yesterday. You must be a silly ass to think of playing him for the cup."

"Well?"

"Well, my advice is, put in another full-back," said Bolsover major. "You ought to know it without being told, you being footer captain; but if you don't know it, I'll point it out to you—see?"

"I see."

"The sooner you fix it the better, so that the new man can practise with the team to-day."

Wharton smiled.

"It's awfully good of you to give me instructions like this, Bolsover. Naturally, I shouldn't be likely to think of a thing like this for myself."

"Well, you're going to put another man in, I suppose?"

"Exactly. Since you've given me such good advice I should be ungrateful not to act upon it."

The Removites grinned, and Bolsover scowled. As Wharton had decided what to do already, Bolsover major's advice was a little superfluous.

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"I suppose I needn't tell you that I'm a jolly good back?" said Bolsover.

"No need to tell me," agreed Wharton. "I've got eyes in my head, and I know just what you can do."

"I'm the biggest chap in the Remove, and you want a big chap at back. There isn't a fellow in the Shell who could charge me over, either."

"Quite so."

"And there isn't a Shell chap who could stand up against my charge," said Bolsover. "I'd make skittles of 'em!"

"True."

"Then you'll put me in?"

"Sorry! The fact is, you're rather too fond of making skittles of chaps on the other side," said Wharton. "You're not always particular enough about a charge being a fair charge. The last time I played you—against the Fourth, a couple of weeks ago—you got a penalty against us."

"That was because the referee was down on me because I told him I'd punch his head after the match," said Bolsover.

"The rules of soccer, my son, don't include telling the referee you'll punch his head after the match. Chap who plays footer is supposed to know the rules, and to know how to keep his temper."

"Look here, if you're making excuses for leaving me out—"

"No need for me to make excuses. I'd like to put you in, but I'm not risking a penalty in the match for the cup," said Wharton decidedly. "You'd be useful if you could keep your temper, but the footer field isn't the proper place for bullying smaller chaps than yourself. That's all!"

"That isn't all!" roared Bolsover angrily. "I tell you—"

"Bow-wow!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went after the ball, and Bolsover snorted and walked away. When the chums of the Remove came off the field, Billy Bunter rolled up to them and caught Wharton by the sleeve.

"I say, Harry, old man—"

"Scat!"

"I hear that Bull is standing out to-morrow—"

"Yes, fatty!"

"Then you want a new back," said Bunter. "I'm pretty nearly as good at back as I am at centre-forward—there's not much difference, in fact."

"None at all, so far as I can see," said Harry, laughing. "You are just as good for the back line as for the front line—and good for nothing at either."

"Oh, really, Wharton! I'm offering you my services, and I make only one condition," said Bunter impressively, "that is—"

"Let's hear the condish," grinned Bob Cherry.

"The condition is that the cup, when won, is immediately sold, and the proceeds divided in cash among the winning team. I'm willing to undertake the sale."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, Harry, old fellow—don't walk away while I'm talking to you, you beast! I tell you—Leggo my neck, Bob Cherry, or I'll mop up the quad with you—yoop!"

Billy Bunter sat down, and the Co. walked on, laughing. Before they reached the School House Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, scudded across to intercept them.

"I guess you're the galoot I want to see," he remarked, planting himself before Harry Wharton.

"Well, take a good look, and buzz off!"

"I guess I've heard that Bull is out of the team—"

"Oh, dear!"

"And I guess, sir, that you can't do better than put in a real good player like me," said Fisher T. Fish. "Now's your chance, sir, to get your team right away up to top notch. I calculate I'm after that cup!"

"Oh, run away and play!" said Wharton. "Is every blessed duffer in the Form going to ask me for Johnny's place? Buzz off!"

"But I calculate—"

"Oh, scat!"

"I guess— Oh, Jerusalem!"

Fisher T. Fish was reduced to a sitting posture, and the chums of the Remove went into the House, leaving him gasping and blinking. The footballers were rubbing down in the dormitory, when Morgan of the Remove came in. Morgan had a very determined expression on his face.

"I hear that Bull's crocked——" he began.

"Another of 'em!" grinned Bob.

"Isn't Bull crocked for the match, look you?" roared Morgan.

"Yes, fathead!"

"Then you'll want another back."

"We've got one."

"You've selected a man already, have you?"

"Yes," said Wharton cheerily, "so there's nothing more to be said."

Morgan snorted.

"There's a jolly lot more to be said!" he exclaimed wrathfully. "I didn't mind standing out for Bull—that was all right. But if Bull's out, I ought to go in—all the fellows say so!"

"Well, it's a free country," remarked Wharton; "all the fellows can say what they like."

"I think it's rotten!"

"Eh? What's rotten?"

"Selecting some silly duffer in Bull's place!" roared Morgan. "I think it's rotten, and I say it's rotten—so there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle, you silly asses, but I say it's rotten! I don't think much of you as a footer captain, Harry Wharton!"

"Sorry!"

"There ought to be a new election!" exclaimed the exasperated Morgan. "I suppose you've put in Hazeldene, though he isn't any good, except in goal?"

"It isn't Hazel."

"Some other silly duffer, then, I suppose?"

"Exactly," said Wharton, with a nod. "A silly duffer, just as you say."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Morgan glared at the hilarious footballers wrathfully.

"So that's a thing to cackle about, is it, when Wharton admits that he's put a silly duffer in the eleven to fight for the cup?" he exclaimed. "Well, I'm going to tell the chap what I think of him, anyway. What's his name?"

"David Morgan."

Morgan jumped.

"Eh—me?"

"Yes."

"Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co., delighted by the extraordinary expression on Morgan's face.

"Oh!" stammered Morgan. "Me! Oh, I—I see!"

"A silly duffer, just as you said," remarked Wharton. "But if you think the place ought to be given to somebody else, I'm quite willing to consider your views. Whom would you suggest?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Morgan grinned.

"All serene!" he said. "It's all right. I didn't know you had so much sense, you know. Come to think of it, I'm willing to admit you're about as good a footer captain as we could get in the Remove."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Morgan marched off to tell his friends the good news, leaving the chums of the Remove chuckling. Morgan, at least, was convinced that the Remove captain had shown wonderful perspicacity in the selection of the new back. Half a dozen other fellows were convinced that he had shown an almost incredible fatheadedness. Which was one of the pleasures of being a football skipper.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Day of the Match!

WEDNESDAY dawned bright and clear and cold—an ideal day for football. The weather was propitious, and the junior footballers looked forward eagerly to the afternoon and the great match.

Harry Wharton was quite satisfied with his team. Morgan filled the place of Johnny Bull excellently, as Johnny fully admitted; and the Form eleven was at the high-water mark of fitness. Although the Shell eleven were older and heavier, and were known to be in good form, the Removites had every anticipation of beating them, though they admitted that it would be a tough game.

Hobson & Co. were quite confident. Hobson had worked his men like niggers, as some of them grumbled, to keep them up to the mark. Hobson himself was a first-class player and a skilful skipper, and the Remove's most dangerous opponent. He played centre-half in the Shell eleven. Hobson had already arranged where the Colonel's Cup was to stand in his study—after the victory. He had also decided what he was going to say in reply when the Head presented the cup—a few modest words, claiming the credit rather for his team than for himself. The cup, certainly, was not yet won.

Hobson was thinking so much about the cup that morning, and what the Head would say to him, and what he would say to the Head, that his thoughts wandered from his lessons, and he was in hot water several times with Mr. Hacker. Mr. Hacker had not the slightest interest in footer—and had, indeed, not heard of the great junior competition for the Colonel's Cup. Mr. Hacker's tastes did not lie in the direction of outdoor games at all. He looked upon the great game of football as he might have looked upon the game of marbles or hop-scotch; and when he thought about it at all, it was to condemn it as likely to take a fellow's thoughts from his Form work.

Hobson was so absent-minded that morning that the master of the Shell was down on him several times; but a threat of detention for the afternoon made Hobby pull himself together, terrified. Detention for that afternoon would have knocked on the head completely the glorious prospect of bagging the Colonel's Cup. The rosy prospects of the Shell would have faded away like a beautiful dream if they had been deprived of their energetic captain.

Hobson was very assiduous for the rest of the morning, and he escaped Mr. Hacker's wrath, and breathed more freely when he was outside the Form-room.

"Hacker was ratty this morning," he remarked to Hoskins. "The duffer never makes allowances for a chap. How the thunder was I to worry my brain about the war with Carthage when I was thinking of the Colonel's Cup—what!"

"Blow the war with Carthage, blow Livy, and blow Hacker!" said Hoskins heartily. "Let's buzz the ball about a bit before dinner, and get the taste of Titus Livius out of our mouths!"

"Good egg!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were punting the ball about in the clear, cold sunshine, and looking very fit and cheery. Hobson and his men piled in, and Coker of the Fifth came down to look on, with his chums Potter and Greene. Potter was going to referee the cup match that afternoon. Coker's valuable services were not required, even as referee.

Coker was thoughtful and frowning.

He was annoyed.

There was a senior Form match fixed for the afternoon on Big Side, the Fifth playing the Sixth. Coker was not wanted.

Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, had laughed when he offered his services. Coker frequently offered his services, and Blundell always persisted in laughing when he did so. Blundell's idea was that Coker was joking; and it was quite useless for Coker to explain that he wasn't joking—Blundell persisted that he must be.

For a great footballer like Coker to be unoccupied that afternoon, while two matches were going on, was decidedly unpleasant.

Even the junior teams had declined the honour of playing the great man of the Fifth. That was the unkindest cut of all.

Coker had been ready to extend the olive-branch to Hobson, and back up the Shell team with all his great powers. And Hobson had refused his offer with the blackest ingratitude.

It was natural that Coker should be annoyed.

"They call that football!" he remarked disparagingly, as he looked at the juniors' practice.

"Well, it ain't so bad, for juniors!" said Greene.

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EVERY
MONDAY

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ONE
PENNY.

"Lot you know about footer!" said Coker.

Greene looked annoyed.

"Well, I'm in the Form team this afternoon for the Fifth, anyway!" he said tartly.

"That just proves what I say," replied Coker. "Blundell puts you in, and leaves me out."

"Well, he's left me out, too," said Potter pacifically.

"That's right enough," said Coker. "Your footer isn't what I should call quite up to the mark, Potter."

"Oh, isn't it?" grunted Potter.

"No, it isn't. When we were practising yesterday, you didn't get a single pass that I sent you."

"That's because you pass like a silly idiot, old chap."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Coker. "The fact is I'm idle this afternoon—footer going on all round, and a player like me standing looking on. It's sickening. Even that cad Hobson won't put me in the Shell team."

"He doesn't know what he's missing," remarked Greene, closing one eye at Potter.

Coker nodded.

"That's it," he said. "He hasn't sense enough to know. I was willing to help him win the cup, for the sake of old times—or, rather, to win the cup for him, for that's what it would amount to. But he refused."

"Yes, I heard him refusing," remarked Potter. "It could have been heard all over Greyfriars, I think."

"Of course, I licked him for his cheek. But I've been thinking," said Coker. "I licked Hobson, and may have knocked a little sense into him. I don't believe in bearing malice after licking a chap."

"Quite so!" grinned Potter. His own impression was that Coker had had most of the licking.

"I think I'll put it to him again," said Coker. "After all, he used to be rather pally with me when I was in the Shell—"

"Before your Aunt Judy—"

"Oh, cheese it! I'll give the cheeky young bounder another chance!" said Coker. "It would be only the right thing, I think."

"H'm!"

"I should think he would jump at the offer," argued Coker.

"Or at you!" said Greene.

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

Coker stalked away, and Potter and Greene grinned. They found an inexhaustible source of hilarity in Horace Coker's amazing belief that he could play footer.

Horace Coker waited outside the School House for the juniors to come in. He meant to put it very plainly to Hobson. And he had resolved that if he had any more cheek from the Shell fellow he would give him a record licking, to teach him who was who and what was what. A refusal to accept his services in the match would, of course, be regarded as "cheek" by the great Coker.

"Hold on a minute, Hobby!" said Coker, as the captain of the Shell came along with Hoskins and Stewart.

"Sorry, I've got to change before dinner," said Hobson, pushing by. Coker caught him by the shoulder.

"I want to speak to you, Hobby. Hold on, I tell you."

"No time for jaw. Leggo!"

"About the cup match this afternoon—"

"Ye gods! He's beginning again!" groaned Hobson.

"I'm still willing to play."

"Didn't I make it plain enough the other day?" demanded Hobson. "A chap couldn't do more than kick you out of his study, could he? What plainer answer do you want than that?"

"You cheeky young rascal—"

"Let go, you idiot!"

Instead of letting go, Coker tightened his grasp on Hobson's shoulder. His wrath was rising fast.

"I tell you, Hobson—"

"Will you let go, you silly ass?" shouted Hobson, exasperated.

"No, I won't! I—"

"Bump him over!" said Hobson.

The three Shell fellows grasped Coker, and sat him down on the steps. Then they would have passed into the House, but Coker was not to be so easily dealt with. He jumped up again like a jack-in-the-box, and fairly leaped at Hobson.

"Now, then——"
 "Hands off, you fool——"
 "I'll jolly well——"
 "Oh, my hat! I'll——"

Hobson's temper had risen, too, and he returned grasp for grasp, and punch for punch. The struggling combatants lost their footing on the steps, and rolled over, still hammering furiously. Coker was reckless, and Hobson had quite forgotten that his Form-master's study overlooked the steps. He was reminded of it suddenly.

There was a crash as Mr. Hacker's window was thrown up, and the master of the Shell put his head out, his brows contracted in an angry frown.

"Hobson!"
 "Cave!" muttered Hoskins.
 But it was too late!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER. A Bolt from the Blue!

"HOBSON!"
 Mr. Hacker's voice was like thunder. Hobson dragged himself away from Coker, and jumped up, red and flustered, and muddy.
 "Yes, sir!" he gasped.
 "You are fighting with Coker again!" thundered Mr. Hacker.
 "I—I——"
 "Oh, I'll scalp him!" gasped Coker, scrambling up.
 "A cheeky rat in the Shell—handling me! I'll——"
 "Stand back, Coker!" shouted Mr. Hacker from his window.

"Look here, sir——"
 "Silence! Hobson, I have already warned you what would happen if you engaged in fresh disturbances of this kind! Now I find you fighting on the steps of the School House! The Head himself might have come out while you were engaged in such a scene of hooliganism! Are you not ashamed of yourself?"
 "I—I—I——" stammered Hobson.
 "Hobson, you are detained for four half-holidays! Coker, I shall report your conduct to Mr. Prout, and request the same punishment for you!"
 "Oh, my hat!"
 "Oh, crumbs!"
 Slam!

Mr. Hacker's window closed violently before the dismayed Hobson could reply to him. Coker glared at the captain of the Shell.

"You cheeky young ass, you see——"
 "Oh, shut up, you silly fool!" groaned Hobson. "It's done now! You've mucked up the cup match for me, you thundering idiot! Oh, dear!"

Coker's expression changed a little. He was not a bad fellow at heart, though he was, as the juniors said, too Cokerish.

"My hat!" he said, with a whistle. "That's bad! You'll be detained this afternoon!"

"Yes!" groaned Hobson.
 "I'm sorry! But, after all, it's your own fault! If you'd had sense enough——"

"Oh, don't talk to me!" said Hobson miserably. "You silly idiot, you've mucked up the match now, as bad as if you'd played in it!"

And Hobson went into the House in a state of utter dejection.

Hoskins and Stewart delayed a minute or two, to tell Coker what they thought of him, and then followed their chum in, equally dejected.

Coker snorted, and walked away. He was sorry for Hobby's misfortune, but he regarded it as being Hobby's own fault. Why hadn't the silly ass been more sensible?

The dinner-bell rang ten minutes later, and Harry Wharton met Hobson on the way to the dining-room. The utter dejection in the Shell captain's face struck Wharton at once, and he stopped.

"Anything the matter, Hobson?" he asked.
 "Everything!" said Hobson.
 "Some of your men crooked?"
 "No."

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"Then what is it?"

"You're going to bag the cup, that's all!" growled Hobson.

"Well, we were going to bag it anyway!" said Wharton. "But what's happened?"

"That's happened, and you owe it to Coker!"

"Coker? Is he going to play for you, then?"

Hobson grinned, in spite of his dejection.

"No, not so bad as that. But I'm detained. That fool Coker picked a row with me right under Hacker's nose! You heard what he said when we were ragging the other day? Detained for four half-holidays! I wouldn't mind the other three so much, but this afternoon——"

"What rotten luck!"

"The rottenness is terrific!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is hard cheese for the esteemed Hobson, but the Shell can play withoutfully."

"They can play without me, but they can't win without me!" said Hobson. "You'll have a tussle, Wharton, but you'll get the cup!"

Wharton knitted his brows.

"We want the cup, but we don't want a walk-over for it!" he said. "We want to beat the Shell fair and square, at the top of their form."

"You couldn't do it!"

"We could, and would!" said Wharton warmly. "Look here, something will have to be done! If we win the cup now, you Shell bounders will always be saying it was because Hacker detained you!"

"Well, that will be the reason, won't it?"

"No, it won't!"

"The won'tfulness is great!"

"We should beat the Shell, Hobby or no Hobby!" said Bob Cherry. "But, look here, Hobson, you've got to play! Put it nicely to Hacker, and explain to him that it's an awfully important match, and he may let you off."

"You don't know Hacker!"

"The postponefulness would be the proper caper!" suggested Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Wharton frowned again. The idea of postponing the final tie was not welcome, after the Remove team had trained themselves up to the last pitch for it.

"N.G.!" said Hobson. "I'm detained for four half-holidays. That books up this week and next week. After that we've got no dates open."

"Not till right up to the end of the season!" assented Wharton. "We can't put off our regular fixtures!"

"And the Shell can't, either!"

Bob Cherry rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"It's a rotten fix!" he said. "We don't want to win the cup hands down, without a struggle."

"You'll have a struggle anyway!" growled Hoskins. "We shall beat you, I expect; only without Hobby it won't be a dead cert!"

"The dead-certfulness was not terrific in any case, my esteemed fatheaded Hoskins!" murmured Hurree Singh.

"Of course the cup was practically ours!" said Hobson. "It's only your kids' conceit made you think you had a chance. But you've got a chance now, and no mistake about it! It wouldn't be so bad if anybody but the skipper was left out of our team! But——"

The bell had ceased to ring now, and the juniors had to go in to dinner. Hobson had a poor appetite at dinner that day.

He had calculated upon winning the cup as an absolute certainty. His absolute certainty was fairly knocked on the head now.

It was all Coker's fault, but it was no use going for Coker. If Coker had been ragged black and blue, that would not have mended matters. Mr. Hacker, unfortunately, could not be ragged.

Hobson, perhaps, had a somewhat exaggerated opinion of his own importance in the Shell eleven. There were several fellows willing to take his place, and convinced of their ability to do so.

But there was no doubt that Hobson was the best footballer in the Shell, and that a change in the team at the last moment—and that change the skipper—would place the Shell at a great disadvantage.

Hobson gave the match up for lost, and most of the fellows had some doubts about it now, at least.

It was cruel hard luck, and the unfortunate Hobson's face might have softened the heart of the most Hunnish of Huns. But Mr. Hacker did not even notice it. Hobson came into the dining-room looking as if he were going to a funeral.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

N.G.!

"PUT it to Hacker!"

"Try it, anyway."

"Can't make matters worse, Hobby."

Such was the advice of the Shell fellows, consulting in Hobson's study on the subject of the calamity.

Hobson looked in the depths of the blues. He knew his Form-master well enough, and he felt that any appeal to Mr. Hacker would be quite useless. But he was willing to try even a forlorn hope. As Stewart remarked, it couldn't make matters worse.

"You see, Hacker don't know anything about footer," said Hobson. "So far as he thinks about it at all, he dislikes it. He's told me to go into the Form-room at two. I've got to go. If I ask him to let me off, he'll shut me up before I've said two words. You know he's jawed us sometimes about letting footer interfere with our work, the duffer! You didn't do your lines the other day, Jones, because you were at footer practice, and he gave you five minutes' jaw about it."

"I know he did, the ass!" growled Jones major.

"Still, it won't hurt to try," urged Hoskins. "He may listen to you. Explain that it's a match for a cup."

"It won't be any good; but I'll try," said Hobson rising.

The captain of the Shell proceeded to Mr. Hacker's study without much hope in his breast. He found Mr. Hacker seated in his armchair, with the window of the study tightly closed. Mr. Hacker did not believe in fresh air or in exercise—one of the reasons why he suffered from indigestion, which had a decidedly ill effect upon his temper. After a meal was a most unfortunate moment for tackling Mr. Hacker; but Hobson had no choice about that. The red glow of indigestion in Mr. Hacker's nose was a danger-signal, which the captain of the Shell was forced to disregard.

"What is it—what is it?" snapped Mr. Hacker. "You are interrupting me, Hobson. What is it, pray?"

It was not a favourable beginning. But Hobson plunged desperately into the appeal he had come to make.

"About my detention this afternoon, sir——"

Mr. Hacker looked at the study clock.

"You will go into the Form-room at two, Hobson, as I have already told you. You will remain till five, and you will occupy the time in writing out the second book of Titus Livius. Your performances in the Form-room this morning show that a closer acquaintance with that work on your part is highly desirable."

"Yes, sir; but—but——"

"I have spoken to Mr. Prout on the subject of Coker. Coker has also been detained," said Mr. Hacker. "You may go, Hobson."

"I—I wished to ask you, sir, if—if you could let me off this afternoon, because—because——"

Mr. Hacker raised his eyebrows.

"Most decidedly not, Hobson!"

"There's a very important footer match this afternoon, sir——"

"What?"

"A—a match for a cup, sir; very important to us," stammered the discouraged Hobson.

Mr. Hacker's lip curled sarcastically.

"More important than the discipline of the school and the study of Titus Livius?" he asked.

"Nunno, sir!" Hobson did not venture to state his exact thoughts on that subject. "I—I don't mean that, sir, of course. But—but if you would let my detention begin on Saturday instead of to-day——"

"I have certainly no intention of doing anything of the kind, Hobson. I warned you most explicitly what to expect if you engaged in further fighting with Coker."

"But, sir, I—I wasn't——"

"I do not say that you are more to blame than Coker, Hobson. You have both been punished in exactly the same way."

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"But Coker isn't playing, sir, and—and the Shell want me on the footer field——"

"You should have thought of that, Hobson, before you engaged in a disgraceful disturbance under my very window," said Mr. Hacker acidly. "But while we are on the subject of football, I will speak a few words of warning. I have noticed a tendency in my Form to give too much attention to this somewhat nonsensical game. I do not approve of it. I fear that it interferes with their work to some extent. This I cannot allow. I approve of my boys taking a proper amount of outdoor exercise; but this fervid devotion to one particular game is carried to an excess I am far from approving of. I should rather recommend the use of dumb-bells and Indian clubs."

Hobson stood dumb. What was he to say to a man who seriously recommended him dumb-bells and Indian clubs instead of footer? Mr. Hacker, quite unconscious of the fact that he was causing the junior to doubt his sanity, ran on:

"Such exercises are beneficial, and do not cause excitement and this spirit of competition and rivalry. I trust you will reflect upon my advice, Hobson, which is offered you with a regard to your best interests. You may go."

"But, sir, this afternoon——"

"The matter is now closed, Hobson."

"It's a silver cup, sir——"

Mr. Hacker made an angry gesture.

"If you do not wish to be detained for the rest of the term, Hobson, I recommend you to leave my study at once."

Hobson turned to the door. He looked so utterly downcast and dejected that Mr. Hacker called to him.

"Hobson!"

The Shell fellow turned back with a throb of hope.

"Yes, sir!"

"I am sorry, Hobson, to see that this causes you so much disappointment——"

"Yes, sir," said Hobson eagerly. "You see, it's a cup-tie, sir——"

"Exactly. I see—and what I see is, what a very strong hold this absurd game has upon you," said Mr. Hacker severely. "For your own good, Hobson, you must learn not to be carried away by this fanatical devotion to what is, after all, a childish game. Your detention this afternoon will be in the nature of a beneficial discipline. Kindly attempt to regard it in that light, Hobson. You may go, my boy."

Hobson went.

He closed Mr. Hacker's door, and then sparred at it furiously, as a symbol of the repayment he would like to make for Mr. Hacker's kind advice.

His chums were waiting for him at the end of the passage.

"Well?" said half a dozen voices.

"No go! Nothing but a lecture!" he groaned. "It's all U P. The Remove kids are going to have that cup."

"Dash it all, we'll give them a bit of a tussle," said Jones major.

"Do!" said Hobson.

"It means a bit of a scrap without Hobby," said Stewart. "If the Remove do bag the cup, we shall know that they didn't bag it on their form, anyway. Accidents will happen!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What luck?" asked Bob Cherry, as the Famous Five came along to learn the result of Hobson's appeal.

"None!"

"Suppose I try?" asked Harry Wharton.

"It wouldn't be any good," said Hobson dispiritedly. Hacker wouldn't be likely to listen to a Remove fag when he wouldn't listen to me."

"You never know, he might. No harm in trying," said Hoskins eagerly. "As our opponent in the match, it would look sporting, and it might have some effect on Hacker."

"Lot anything sporting would appeal to him!" growled Hobson. "But you can try if you like, Wharton; it won't do any harm."

Wharton nodded, and went down the passage to the Shell-master's study. He tapped very respectfully, and a somewhat irritated voice bade him come in. Mr. Hacker

laid down his book, and his nose glowed as he looked at Wharton.

"What do you want?"

"I'm sorry to interrupt you, sir——"

"Yes, yes; please come to the point."

"It's about Hobson, sir——"

"What do you mean?"

"We're playing against the Shell this afternoon, sir. If Hobson don't play, we shall beat them easily. If you would be so kind, sir, as to let Hobson off for this afternoon——"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker. "I do not think I have in all my career heard of such impertinence! I am not likely to change a decision at the request of a junior in the Lower Fourth Form, I presume. Leave my study at once, Wharton!"

There was nothing more to be said. Harry Wharton left the study, and Mr. Hacker, with an irritable grunt, resumed his book. He felt that it was hard that he could not have his rare hours of relaxation in peace and undisturbed. Mr. Hacker was far from wishing to be hard or unjust. He was doing his strict duty, as he understood it. The junior football match he regarded as a matter to which it would be folly to attach the slightest importance. It was not, perhaps, of the tremendous importance it appeared to the juniors. But in that matter the juniors and the Form-master were not likely to see eye to eye.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Does His Best!

"THE rottenfulness is terrific!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh made that statement, and the Co. nodded a moody assent. There was no doubt that the position was decidedly rotten.

Some fellows might have felt pleased at having their most formidable opponent removed in the final tie for a cup. But the Remove footballers did not feel like that.

They wanted the cup, certainly. But they wanted to win it on their merits, not by an accidental advantage.

Besides, there was another consideration, which weighed with the Remove fellows. If they beat the Shell eleven minus Hobson, the Shell fellows would not regard it as a proper win. True, the winners would receive the cup. But the Shell would always maintain that they would have won the cup but for the accidental circumstance which had deprived them of their skipper at the eleventh hour.

That prospect did not please the Remove at all. They wanted to beat the Shell fair and square, and they believed that they could do it. They did not want to snatch a victory; and they did not want Hobson & Co. to hold the opinion that the Colonel's Cup would have been theirs but for an accident.

"We should beat them, anyway, I believe," Harry Wharton remarked. "But the Shell will never admit that, of course. And, of course, with Hobson out of the team, it will be much easier for us—just what we don't want."

"But what's to be done?" asked Bob Cherry. "We can't very well postpone the match, and if the Shell play, they'll have to play without Hobson."

Wharton knitted his brows.

"There seems no moving Hacker," he said. "He simply doesn't understand. He shut me up fast enough. I wonder if Coker——" He paused.

"Coker was to blame for the row with Hobby," remarked Nugent.

"That's what I mean. If Coker went to Hacker and told him so, Hacker would surely not punish Hobby for what he couldn't help."

"H'm! But would Coker?"

"Well, Coker's a silly idiot and a howling duffer; but he's rather a sport, you know. Let's put it to him."

"Might as well try," assented Bob.

"And the sooner the quicker," said Harry. "I'll run and see Coker, and see if there's anything doing."

"Good! Buck up!"

Harry Wharton repaired to Coker's study. The great

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As Mr. Hacker came down the steps, Ogilvy kicked the ball with a tremendous kick, and it flew straight at the master of the Shell. Biff! Bump! (See Chapter 12.)

Horace was not there; but Wharton found him in the quadrangle. Coker gave him a genial nod as he came up, somewhat to Wharton's surprise.

"You want to see me, young 'un?" said Coker.

"Yes; I've been looking for you," replied Wharton, glad to find the great man of the Fifth in a good humour.

"Right!" said Coker. "I'm on!"

"I was going to ask you——"

"That's all right," said Coker, interrupting him. "I understand—and I'm on. It's a bit of a come-down for a Fifth-Former, but I don't mind—not a bit."

"You're awfully good," said Wharton.

"Not at all. I'm always willing to give you fags a helping hand," said Coker graciously. "When do you begin?"

"Eh! Not till it's settled about Hobson."

"Hobson! What about Hobson?"

"Isn't that what we're talking about?" exclaimed

Wharton, in astonishment. "You're going to Hacker——"

"Eh! What the dickens am I to go to Hacker for?"

"About getting Hobson off."

"What the dickens are you driving at?" asked Coker.

"I'm not talking about Hobson. Hang Hobson!"

"Look here, Coker——"

"You came to me to ask me to play in your eleven," said Coker. "Well, I agree. Never mind Hobson now."

Wharton realised that there had been a misunderstanding.

"That isn't what I came to you for, Coker."

"Oh, isn't it?" exclaimed Coker, his geniality dropping away at once. "Then what the dickens do you want, you cheeky fag?"

"It's about Hobson——"

"Blow Hobson!" said Coker, turning on his heel. The great Horace was evidently in a state of high dudgeon.

"Hold on!" said Wharton. "Coker, old man, we're appealing to you as a good sportsman."

Coker paused. He was touched on a weak spot. He prided himself upon being a sportsman; as indeed he was, according to his lights.

"You see, you picked a row with Hobby, and caused old Hacker to fall foul of him——"

"Hobson was cheeky, you mean, and I licked him," said Coker, frowning.

Wharton coughed. It was necessary to be diplomatic with the great Coker.

"Well, put it how you like," he said. "Hacker has detained Hobby because he was fighting with you on the steps of the House——"

"It wasn't a fight," said Coker. "I don't fight with juniors. It was a licking."

"Ahem! Exactly. Well, Hacker has detained Hobby because you were licking him. That's rather hard——added to the licking——ahem!——don't you think so?"

"Serve him right for being a cheeky fag."

"H'm! Perhaps so. But if you went to Hacker and told him you started it—I mean, explained that you were licking Hobson—he might let Hobby off. It would be only sporting, Coker."

Coker hesitated. His lofty dignity had been affronted. But he was a good-natured fellow in the main, and at last he nodded.

"I'll do my best," he said. "Mind, Hobson doesn't deserve it at my hands. He's a cheeky fag. But, as a senior, I can overlook that; his cheek is really beneath my notice. I'll do my best for the impudent little beast!"

"You're awfully good, Coker, old son!"

"Not so much of your 'Coker, old son,'" said the great Horace. "I don't allow that from kids in the Lower Fourth."

Coker walked into the House, leaving Wharton smiling. He proceeded directly to the study of the master of the Shell. He gave his heavy knock at the door, and the irritable voice of the Form-master snapped "Come in!"

Coker entered with his heavy tread.

"What do you want, Coker? You are detained, I understand," snapped Mr. Hacker.

"Yes, sir, owing to your report to my Form-master," said Coker. "But Mr. Prout would let me off if I were playing in a football-match. He's just."

Mr. Hacker's face was a study as Coker made that statement.

"As it happens, I'm not playing," went on Coker. "So I shall not ask Mr. Prout to defer my detention till Saturday. If I did ask him for a good reason, he would do it, I know that."

"Kindly leave my study, Coker!" gasped Mr. Hacker.

"I haven't said what I came here to say yet, sir," said Coker, in surprise. "It's about young Hobson."

"I have no desire to hear any remarks from you on the subject of a boy in my Form. Mind your own business, boy!"

"But this is my business, sir," explained Coker. "You have detained young Hobson because I was licking him. When I explain that I licked him——"

"I do not desire to hear your explanations, Coker!" shouted Mr. Hacker. "I desire you to leave my study."

"But in common fair play, sir, you ought——"

"Coker!"

"I must really point out to you, sir, that it's hardly fair to detain young Hobson under the circumstances. I——"

"Hardly fair!" stuttered Mr. Hacker. "You—you dare to say this to me, Coker? Are you aware that you are speaking to a Form-master?"

"Certainly, sir! I thought that if I pointed out to you that it wasn't quite the game to detain young Hobson——"

"Leave my study!"

"But I haven't finished yet, sir. I assure you, sir, that under the circumstances—an important football-match—Mr. Prout would let me off."

"What Mr. Prout would or would not do does not concern me, Coker," said Mr. Hacker, in a gasping voice.

"I decline to hear another word from you. You are an insolent boy! Go!"

"Well, sir, I think a Form-master ought to be just,"

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said Coker, in a judicial sort of way. "If you're not just, sir, how can the fellows respect you as they ought?"

Mr. Hacker did not reply to that question. His voice failed him. He jumped up, and seized a cane from the table. Fifth-Formers, as a rule, were not caned, and certainly not by the master of the Shell. But caned Horace Coker would have been, then and there, by the infuriated Mr. Hacker, if he had not dodged out of the study with record swiftness.

The cane just missed him as he fled. Mr. Hacker slammed the door.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Coker, in astonishment, as he went down the passage. "The man must be dotty. What on earth did he get his rag out like that for, I wonder? I'm jolly glad he's not my Form-master any longer."

"What luck, Coker?"

Wharton had informed Hobson & Co. of Coker's generous resolve to do his best. A crowd of the Remove and the Shell were waiting for Coker to report. A dozen voices asked the question at once.

"No good," said Coker, with a shrug of his broad shoulders. "I've done my best for you, Hobson, in spite of your confounded cheek. I pointed out to Hacker that he was unjust——"

"You whatted?" yelled Hobson.

"And explained that his Form couldn't possibly respect him if he wasn't just——"

"Oh, dear!" groaned Wharton.

"Oh, you ass!" gasped Hobson. "Oh, you frabjous ass!"

"Well, if that's what you fags call gratitude——" began Coker, in disgust.

"You burbling idiot!" hooted Hoskins. "You've spoiled it all. Hacker will be wild enough to detain Hobby whole terms now."

"I did my best——"

"And a beautiful best it was!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Serve us right for thinking that the silly chump could open his silly mouth without putting his silly foot in it."

"Well, of all the ungrateful little beasts——" said Coker hotly. Words failed the indignant Horace. He gave a snort of angry disdain, and stalked away to the Fifth-Form room—to his detention.

"The game's up!" said Hobson. "It's past time I was in the Form-room. You fellows do the best you can without me."

"Look here," said Stewart. "Why not hook it? Hacker mayn't notice whether you're in the Form-room or not——"

"Good idea!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Chance it, and hook it, Hobby——"

"Shush!" exclaimed Wharton.

Mr. Hacker was coming down the passage.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER. In Durance Vile!

THE master of the Shell stopped, and regarded the group of juniors with a severe glance. It was evident that he had overheard Bob's remark.

"Hobson, it is past the time for your detention."

"Yes, sir!" muttered Hobson. "Just going, sir!"

"I have just heard a remark," said Mr. Hacker icily. "It appears, Hobson, that you have an idea of going out in spite of your detention."

"I—I didn't say——"

"Quite so; it was this Lower Fourth boy who suggested it," said Mr. Hacker, with a glance of strong disfavour at Bob Cherry. "I shall mention the matter to your Form-master, Cherry, when he comes in."

"Thank you, sir!" said Bob demurely.

Mr. Hacker's eyes glittered for a moment.

"I trust, Hobson, that you had no intention of adopting this lawless proposal," continued the master of the Shell. "In order to place you out of the reach of temptation, however, you will remain in your study instead of in the Form-room. I shall lock the door and take away the key."

"Oh!" said Hobson.

"At five o'clock," resumed Mr. Hacker, "I shall come and release you. Follow me, Hobson."

Mr. Hacker swept away towards the Shell passage, and the dispirited Hobson followed at his heels.

Mr. Hacker ushered Hobson into his study. The Shell fellow went in without a word. He could not speak. If he had uttered anything at that moment, it would not have been anything sufficiently respectful for his Form-master to hear.

"I shall expect a certain amount of work done when I release you at five o'clock, Hobson," said Mr. Hacker; and he quitted the study. The door closed, the key turned in the lock, and the unhappy Hobson heard his Form-master withdraw the key and stalk away.

All hope of "hooking" it was at an end. Hobson shook his fist hopelessly at the door, and threw himself into a chair. He was not in the mood to work.

The juniors went out into the quadrangle, with feelings almost too deep for words. The day of the cup-tie, which had opened so cheerily, had clouded over—for them. The match would have to be played without Hobson; and they could not help thinking of him, shut up in his study, and moping dismally instead of spurring on his men on the footer-field.

"Isn't it rotten?" growled Hoskins. "I shall scrag Hacker some day—the silly ass. I suppose we'd better get on."

"Nearly time for kick-off," said Nugent.

Wharton set his lips.

"We're not going to play without Hobson if we can help it. It won't be a satisfactory win for us."

"It won't be a win at all for you," growled Hoskins. "Anyway, we can't postpone the match."

"I'm not thinking of that. Hobby ought to play——"

"You kids ought to be glad he's out of it, for that matter," said Jones major. "It gives you a jolly good chance."

"Well, we're not glad, and we don't want a chance of that sort—we want Hobson to play."

"It can't be did."

"I don't know. Hacker's locked him in his study," said Wharton. "Hacker isn't likely to stir out of his own study this afternoon—he's always mugging indoors. He won't see what goes on on the footer-ground. He never goes near it. Suppose Hobson could come——"

"But he can't!" said Hoskins irritably. "He's locked in, and Hacker's got the key."

"I know. But suppose he could come, Hacker wouldn't be likely to spot him there. He mightn't even know that Hobby had played at all; he never knows anything about the footer."

"The Head presents the cup to the winner," said Stewart. "Hobby would take the cup, and then——"

"If the Shell won, you mean. But even so, Hobby could slip away, and Hoskins could take the cup on behalf of the Shell. He's vice-captain."

"That's so," agreed Hoskins. "But Hobby's locked in, I tell you, and he can't crawl out through a keyhole."

"Where there's a will there's a way. There's a window to Hobby's study," said Wharton quietly.

"Oh! But——"

"If Hobby has the nerve to chance it, we might get him out."

"Phew!"

"A drop of thirty feet," said Stewart, shrugging his shoulders, "and the ivy wouldn't hold a fag, let alone Hobby."

"It's no go, Harry," said Nugent, shaking his head.

"Look here, you fellows all agree that Hobby's got to play if it can be worked!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes, of course. But——"

"Well, if Hobby's got the grit to chance it with Hacker, I think it can be worked."

"How?" demanded a dozen voices.

"Let's get round and see Hobby, and speak to him."

The juniors moved round the School House. Hobson's study window looked out towards the old chapel, and was, fortunately, on a different side from his Form-master's window. The juniors gathered under Hobson's window, and Wharton tossed up a pebble to the glass. Clink!

Hobson, buried in gloomy thought in his room, started as the clink came on the glass at his window.

Clink! It was another pebble.

Hobson ran to the window and threw up the sash.

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MONDAY,

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ONE
PENNY.

There was a buzz from the group of juniors thirty feet below, as he put out his head.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry.

"Time you fellows were beginning, isn't it?" said Hobson.

"Are you game to hook it?" called out Harry Wharton.

"Hook it! How? I'm not a blessed bird!"

"Suppose we get a rope to you?"

Hobson whistled.

"Where's Hacker?" he asked.

"He's all right," said Hoskins. "He's in his study, mugging over a book. He won't stir till the bell goes for tea."

"But how are you going to get a rope up here?" asked Hobson, his eyes glistening.

"Are you game, Hobby?"

"Of course I'm game, fathead!"

"Then we'll get a rope to you somehow," said Wharton determinedly. "Have you got a string you can let down for it?"

"I've got some string, but not thirty feet of it, ass," replied Hobson. "If you can't think of anything better than that——"

"I'm going to," said Wharton coolly. "Keep your temper, and keep your pecker up. Where there's a will there's a way."

"The willfulness is terrific, but the wayfulness is not great," remarked Hurree Singh, with a shake of the head.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Cave!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

There were heavy footsteps round the corner of the building, and Mr. Hacker came striding into view. Hoskins and Stewart and Jones major disappeared round the next corner like lightning. They had no desire to meet their Form-master just then. They were gone before Mr. Hacker came fairly into sight.

Mr. Hacker glanced at the Removites, and glanced up at Hobson at the window. His brow was very stern.

"I heard shouting here," he exclaimed. "I see that my suspicion was well founded. You are communicating with a boy under detention, Wharton."

Wharton was silent. There was no denying it. He had taken it for granted that Mr. Hacker was safe in his study. Evidently the master of the Shell was a little more watchful than his dutiful Form had supposed.

"You are aware that this is against the rules, Wharton!" said Mr. Hacker angrily. "I shall report this to Mr. Quelch!"

"Very well, sir," said Wharton meekly. He was more relieved than anything else. It was clear that, though Mr. Hacker had heard the juniors calling up to Hobson, he had not heard their words, and did not know that a scheme was afoot to rescue the captain of the Shell.

"And what did you say to Hobson?" demanded Mr. Hacker.

"I—I just told him to keep his temper, and to keep his pecker up, sir," said Wharton.

"I thought I heard something to that effect," said Mr. Hacker. "Such advice was good, but it does not alter the fact that you are disregarding a rule of the school, Wharton. Kindly leave this place at once, and do not attempt to hold any further communication with Hobson!"

The Removites walked away. Mr. Hacker glanced up again at the window of Hobson's study.

"Hobson!" he called out.

"Yes, sir?" said Hobson, between his teeth.

"You will remember that you are expected to work during your detention! If you fail to do so, you will receive a heavy imposition!"

"Very well, sir."

"Now close your window, and do not open it again, Hobson!"

Slam!

Mr. Hacker walked away, satisfied. He felt that he could dispose himself comfortably in his study for the afternoon now, with the knowledge that the recalcitrant Hobson was busily engaged upon the classics, untroubled by communications from foolishly sympathetic juniors.

But Harry Wharton & Co. were not beaten yet.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

To the Rescue!

HOBSON of the Shell, in his study, was simply raging.

Gladly he would have run the risk of Mr. Hacker's wrath by appearing on the footer field, in spite of his detention, if he could have got there. Hobby was quite "game."

But the sudden hope that had risen in his breast had died again. A rope from the window was a risky expedient, but Hobson did not lack nerve. But it was knocked on the head now.

It was more than probable that Mr. Hacker would stroll again to see whether the detained junior was talking from his window, instead of slogging at his detention task. That expedient had to be abandoned.

And Hobson could think of no other. He tramped to and fro in his study, raging.

Several times there was a clicking and clinking at the door, and he knew that his chums were there, trying various keys on the lock. But there was no key to fit the lock—it was a forlorn hope. And the experiments with the lock several times ended in a sudden scampering of feet as there was an alarm.

Wharton's voice had whispered through the keyhole to Hobby to "keep his pecker up!" The chums of the Remove were evidently still on the warpath; but Hobson had no hope. He tramped round the study, kicking the chairs occasionally, and making remarks about Mr. Hacker which would have made that gentleman's hair stand on end if he could have heard them. Fortunately, he did not.

"Silly ass!" murmured Hobson ungratefully when Wharton was gone. "The game's up! Why don't they get on with the match, the duffers?"

Hobson of the Shell was not in a grateful mood.

Tap, tap, tap!

The Shell fellow started, and ceased his savage tramping. He looked round. The tapping did not come from the door, and for the moment Hobson could not imagine where it came from.

Tap, tap, tap!

"My hat!" ejaculated Hobson.

The tapping was above his head. He looked up. Taking a cricket-stump from the cupboard, he stepped on the table, and tapped on the ceiling in answer.

"Tap, tap, tap!" went Hobson, and "tap, tap, tap!" came back from above.

To speak through the ceiling to the unknown person in the room above was impossible. Hobson reflected a moment, and then went to the window and opened it quietly, and stared upward. Over his room was a small attic, with a little dormer window. The dormer window was well back on the slope of the roof, and out of Hobson's sight, but his voice could reach it easily.

"Hallo!" he called out cautiously.

"Hallo!" came back the voice of Harry Wharton.

"What's the game?"

"I'm in the attic over your room——"

"I know that. I heard you tapping."

"I've got a rope up here. If I let it down over the edge of the roof, can you catch it at the window?"

"Oh!" said Hobson.

"Then you can pull it in, and tie the end to your table, and slide down into the quad, if you're game."

"I'm game enough!" growled Hobson. "But what about Hacker? He may come nosing round the corner again any minute!"

"I know that."

"Then what's the blessed good?" exclaimed Hobson irritably. "Pretty ass I should look hanging on the rope if Hacker came up and spotted me!"

"Some of us are looking after Hacker," came back the voice of the unseen junior above. "If he comes out he's going to be stopped."

"Eh? How?"

"Ogilvy and Micky Desmond are on the watch. If Hacker comes out they're going to buzz a footer at

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him—by accident, of course—a muddy footer. That will keep him busy while you get clear."

Hobson burst into a chuckle.

"My hat! What a wheeze! They'll get licked!"

"They're chancing that. It's all in the game. It won't take you long to get clear, once you start."

"But if Hacker sees the rope hanging from the window——"

"He won't. I've got a long rope; we've joined up all the blessed rope we could get hold of. You will tie the ends and loop it, and slide down it double. When you're on the ground you untie the knot, and pull the rope down after you."

"Good egg! I'm game. Buzz away with the rope. And tell Hoskins to have my footer things ready on Little Side!"

"Hoskins has done that already."

"Good!"

A few minutes later a rope came slinging over the gutter above Hobson's head. He caught it as it swung past his window.

"I've got it!" he called out.

"Right-ho!"

Hobson pulled in the rope, length after length. It was a thick rope, and knotted at intervals to make descent easier. In a couple of minutes it was coiled at the Shell fellow's feet.

"Got it in, Hobby?"

"Yes."

"Shut your window, then! Don't get out till you hear me whistle! I'll give the signal when Hacker's safe in his study!"

"Right!"

Hobson closed his window.

Harry Wharton hurried down from the attic, and joined his chums, who were waiting for him in the quadrangle. Micky Desmond and Ogilvy were with them, the latter with a footer under his arm. They were prepared to devote themselves for the good of the cause.

"Hacker's still in his study," said Bob Cherry. "I've just past his window. He's reading."

"Good!" said Wharton. "Then I'll whistle to Hobby. You chaps are ready with that ball?"

"Sure, we're ready!" said Micky Desmond. "We'll keep Hacker busy, if he comes out, the spalpeen! All serene!"

"Rely on us!" said Ogilvy. "If we get a licking, we can stand it! If it's lines, you fellows whack them out with us!"

"Done!"

Wharton hurried away round the School House, to give the signal to Hobson of the Shell. All was going well for the young rascals.

Meanwhile, Hobson had rapidly made his preparations. The rope, which was amply long enough for the purpose, was firmly knotted at the ends, making a long loop of it, which was passed round the table. For additional security, Hobson passed it also round the bar in the grate. Then he stood ready at the window, waiting for the signal from the captain of the Remove.

A whistle from below reached his ears.

He pushed up the sash quickly, and the rope slithered out. Doubled, it easily reached the ground. Hobson clambered out of the window without losing a second, and paused on the sill to close down the sash behind him within a couple of inches of the rope.

Then, grasping the double rope with both hands, and taking great care to keep the two ropes together in his grasp, he lowered himself, hand below hand.

Harry Wharton glanced up, and, having seen him starting, turned back to the corner of the House, whence he could keep watch on the steps of the School House.

A few minutes would be enough for Hobson to get clear, but if Mr. Hacker should come out——

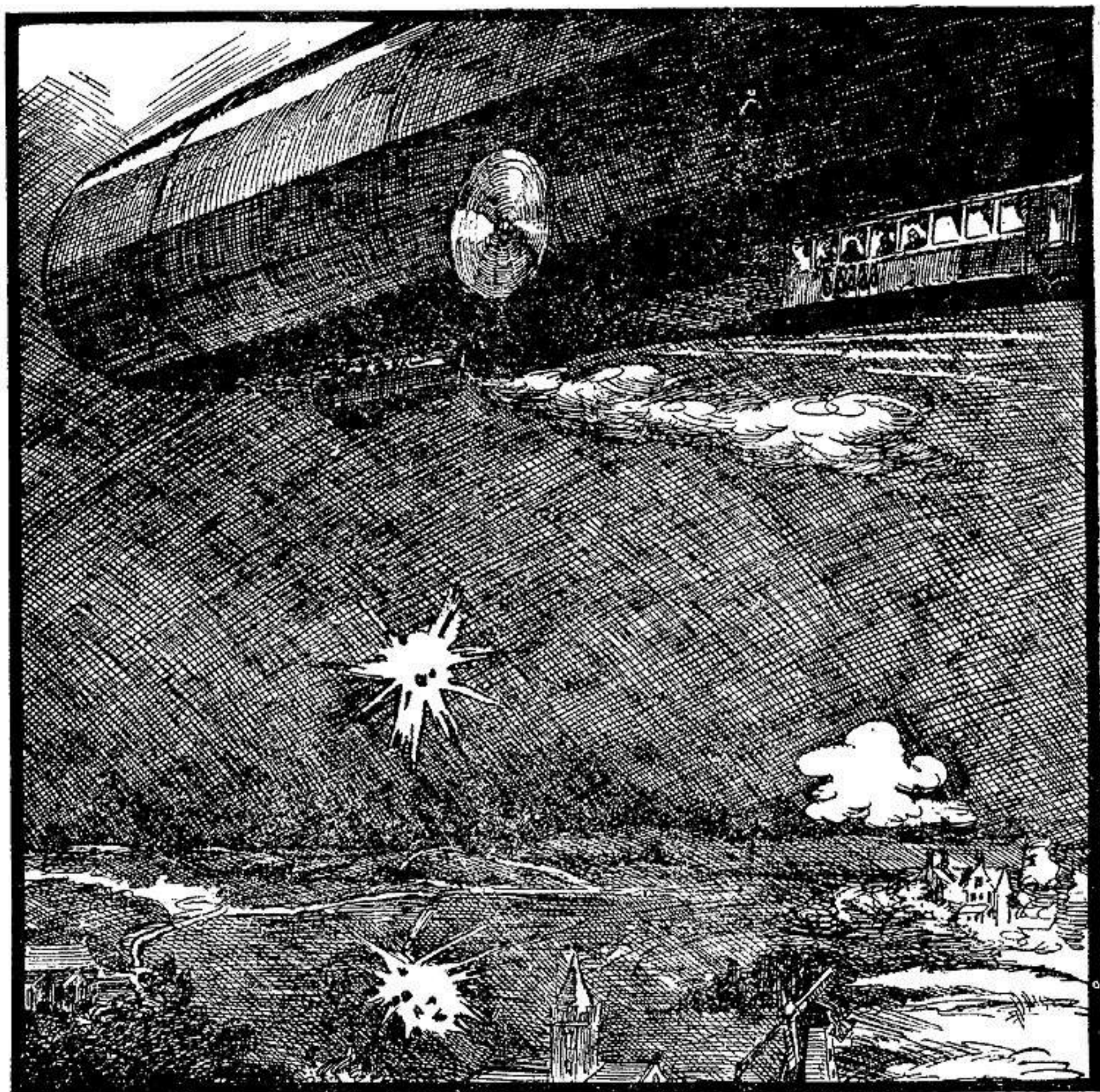
Wharton heard an ejaculation behind him.

"Done it, by gum!"

Hobson was on the ground.

"Buck up with the rope!" called out Wharton.

"You bet!"



Huns love the darkness because their deeds are evil; and in the above picture our artist shows a monster "Zepp" hurling down bombs upon a peaceful Essex hamlet. Note the proximity of the church, which it is necessary to hit in order for the commander to be decorated with the Iron Cross!

With hurried fingers Hobson proceeded to untie the big knot that held the two ends of the rope together. Wharton watched the School House steps. His heart thumped as a figure in cap and gown appeared there.

It was Mr. Hacker!

Whether he was suspicious that the juniors were in communication with the detained Shell fellow again, or whether he was strolling out to take the air—there he was!

Wharton's eyes turned anxiously upon Ogilvy and Desmond. They were punting the footer about idly. But they had their eyes open. As Mr. Hacker came down the steps Ogilvy kicked the ball with a tremendous kick, and it flew straight at Mr. Hacker.

Biff! Bump!

With a loud yell, the master of the Shell sat down on the steps. The footer had smitten him fairly on the chest with a terrific smite.

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Final!

"S ORRY, sir!"

"Howly mother av Moses, what an awfu accident!"

"Oh, sir, are you hurt?"

"Plaze, sir, let me help you up!"

"Grooogh!" spluttered Mr. Hacker. "Ah! Oh! Yah! Bless my soul! What—what—what— Oh! Ah!"

The two juniors, looking alarmed and concerned—they felt a little alarmed, as a matter of fact—hurried to raise up the Form-master. Mr. Hacker staggered up with their assistance.

His face was purple with anger, and he was gasping for breath.

"Ogilvy! Desmond! You—you—you—you young rascals! How dare you!"

"Shure, sir, we were punting the footer—"

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

"Accidents will happen, sir," said Ogilvy meekly.

"How dare you play with a football so close to the door of the House!" shouted Mr. Hacker. "You might have caused me injury. You might have injured the Head himself if he had come out."

"Oh, sir!"

That dreadful possibility did not trouble the juniors, as the ball had been intended specially for Mr. Hacker. Fortunately, the Form-master did not know that.

"This is—is infamous!" stuttered Mr. Hacker. "Look at my gown—smothered with mud! I have received a very painful shock."

"Shure, sir, we——"

"Don't answer me, Desmond. There is no excuse whatever for your conduct. It was reckless in the extreme. Follow me!"

"Yis, sorr!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Hacker swept away to Mr. Quelch's study, followed by the two culprits. They exchanged a furtive grin as they followed him. They had succeeded in their object—of making Mr. Hacker waste time while Hobson of the Shell got clear. Now they had to face the music.

Mr. Hacker marched them into the Remove-master's study, and Mr. Quelch turned somewhat irritably from his typewriter. He listened patiently, however, while the enraged Hacker acquainted him with the almost unspeakable delinquency of the two Removites. He gave Ogilvy and Desmond a stern look.

"Such carelessness is unpardonable," he said. "I am sorry this has occurred, Mr. Hacker. Come here, Ogilvy and Desmond, and hold out your hands!"

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

"Ow! Ow!"

"Wow-wow!"

"Now go," said Mr. Quelch severely, "and if you venture to play football near the House again, you will be very severely punished!"

The unfortunate juniors quitted the study, squeezing their hands hard. Mr. Hacker, somewhat consoled, went to his room to change his gown.

"Oh, tare and 'ounds!" groaned Micky Desmond, as they came out into the quadrangle. "Oh, crikey! My hands!"

"Oh, my paws!" groaned Ogilvy.

"Good for you!" said Bob Cherry, in delight. "You did the trick a treat!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"It was worth a licking!" said Bob encouragingly.

"Was it?" mumbled Ogilvy. "You haven't had the licking, you ass! Wow-ow-ow!"

Whether it was worth the licking or not—a matter about which both the unfortunate victims felt a little doubtful now—the trick had succeeded.

Hobson of the Shell had unfastened the rope-ends, and pulled the rope down from his window. He tossed it to Wharton, and scudded away. Wharton hurried to the woodshed with the rope, and Nugent minor of the Second Form undertook to smuggle it to the attic in a bag.

Then Wharton sauntered down to the football field in a contented frame of mind. In spite of Mr. Hacker and all his works, the cup-tie was to be played out as arranged.

The match started half an hour later than the arranged time, that was all.

The Senior Form match on Big Side was already in progress, and a crowd had gathered to watch it; but there was a goodly collection of juniors on Little Side to watch the cup-tie. Nearly all the Remove and the Shell were there—Ogilvy and Micky Desmond still rubbing their hands. Temple, Dabney & Co. favoured the senior match with their notice.

Hobson came out of the dressing-room in his football clobber, grinning. His team, who were ready, greeted him with a buzz of satisfaction.

"All serene, old chap!" grinned Hoskins.

"Right as rain!" said Stewart. "We're going to have the cup, after all—if only Hacker don't trot down to the ground and see you playing!"

Hobson shook his head.

"Not likely. He never comes near the footer ground. Pass the word along not to mention my name loud, that's all."

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"We've given them the tip," grinned Jones major.

"And you'll take the cup from the Head, after the match, Hosky," said Hobson. "I shall get back into my room, for Hacker to find me there at five. You'll take the cup in the name of the Shell."

"Leave it to me!" said Hoskins.

There was a chuckle from the Remove footballers as they heard that arrangement made. It was a judicious arrangement—if the Shell won. But the firm opinion of the Removites was that Hoskins would not be put to the trouble of receiving the Colonel's Cup from the hands of Dr. Locke. Harry Wharton would do that—if the Remove had the success they anticipated.

The two skippers tossed for choice of ends. Potter of the Fifth, who was referee, stared rather curiously at Hobson. He knew that the captain of the Shell was supposed to be under detention. But Potter was a sportsman, and it was no business of his, anyway. He made no remark. Coker of the Fifth, however, who had strolled down to look on with a disdainful eye, felt called upon to make a remark.

"How did you get here, Hobson?" he called out.

"Walked," said Hobson cheerily.

"I mean, ain't you detained, after all?"

"Doesn't seem like it, does it, Coker?"

"If you've broken your detention, Hobson——"

"Bow-wow!"

"Look here, I'm not so sure that I can allow this kind of thing in a fag!" said Coker, very seriously.

"Have they made you a prefect this afternoon, by any chance?" asked Hobson sarcastically. "If they have, you'd better report me. If they haven't, you can go and eat coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker shook his head portentously, evidently not quite satisfied. But the juniors did not bother about Coker. Leaving the great Horace to his reflections, they gave all their attention to the cup-tie.

Potter blew the whistle, and the ball rolled, and the great match commenced, watched with keen eagerness by a throng of juniors.

While the first half was in progress, Mr. Hacker came out of the School House, walked round the building, and looked up at Hobson's window. The window was closed, excepting for a few inches at the bottom. There was no sign of Hobson at the window, and no sign of any junior near the house. Mr. Hacker was a somewhat suspicious gentleman, but he was satisfied now. The juniors had evidently taken his warning, and ceased to communicate with the detained Hobson, and Hobson himself was doubtless grinding away at Titus Livius.

Without even a glance towards the football-ground—he was not in the slightest degree interested in football—Mr. Hacker returned to his study. Hobson of the Shell was safe for the match—though whether the match was to result in the winning of the Colonel's Cup, as he confidently expected, was another matter.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

To the Victors the Spoils!

"GOAL!"

"Well kicked!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

It was first blood to the Remove.

For half an hour the match had been in progress—a hard and gruelling game—and neither side had broken its duck. Luck favoured the Remove at last, and the ball went in from Harry Wharton's foot.

The Removites cheered loudly.

Johnny Bull, who had limped down with his damaged ankle to see the cup won, roared loudest of all. Morgan was filling his place admirably, and even Bolsover major had to admit that he could not have improved upon the Welsh junior. The Remove defence was sound, and the attack was sweeping. More than once the Shell forwards had swept on the Remove goal, only to be beaten back. But the Remove attack had got home at last, and the Removites roared:

"Goal! Goal! Goal!"

"Looks like our cup!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"I guess it might have been made a dead cert,"

grumbled Fisher T. Fish, discontentedly. "But if a skipper will leave out his best man—"

"That's just what Wharton's done!" agreed Billy Bunter. "And, mind you, I offered several times!"

"You, you mugwump!" said Fish disdainfully. "I guess I was speaking of myself. I could have shown some footer, I guess!"

"Why, you Yankee ass——"

"You fat clam!"

"Go it, Remove!" roared Johnny Bull. "On the ball!"

"Play up, Shell!"

"Look out in goal! Wake up, Bulstrode!"

"Well saved! Bravo!"

The Shell were attacking hotly. Hobson was in great form. In spite of their initial success, the Remove realised that they had a struggle before them. The attack looked dangerous, but Bulstrode fisted out the ball, and Mark Linley drove it to Morgan, who cleared with a kick to midfield. The game swept on again towards the Shell goal.

But back again it came, fast and furious.

The Removites round the ground watched the attack with anxious eyes, while the Shell crowd cheered on their champions. Harder and faster, till Hobson sent the ball to Stewart, who planted it in the net with a shot that gave Bulstrode no chance. Then the Shell roared:

"Goal! Goal!"

Potter blew the whistle.

The first half was over—goal to goal.

Breathing hard, the junior footballers retired for a much-needed rest. Both sides were still in great spirits, and very confident. The result was still very doubtful, as a matter of fact. The Shell had the advantage of age and weight, but the Remove team worked in wonderful combination; they had a good skipper, and they obeyed him with clock-like precision. The Shell were somewhat inclined to kick-and-rush tactics, while the Remove played a more scientific game. The Colonel's Cup still hung in the balance.

The wind had been against the Remove in the first half, but the change of ends brought them relief. The wind was freshening, too, and in so even a match the smallest advantage counted.

The Shell attacked hotly from the whistle, but they could not get through the Remove defence. But the Remove attacks were bottled up before they could materialise. The second half wore away, with plenty of exciting play, amid loud cheers, but with no definite result.

Glances were turning now on the clock-tower over the trees.

The hard-fought match for the Colonel's cup looked like ending in that most unsatisfactory of results—a draw.

"Five minutes to go!" muttered Johnny Bull anxiously. "Oh, play up, you beggars! Get going, for goodness' sake!"

Which was a little unreasonable, for the Remove were doing their best, and their best was very good indeed. But the Shell were also doing their best, and their best was very good.

Minute followed minute. The game was buzzing before the Remove goal, till Morgan sent the leather past the half-way line with a powerful kick. It was the last chance for the Remove, and Wharton called on his men for the final effort. They swept down on the enemy's goal, with as beautiful an exhibition of passing as any footballer could have desired to see.

"Two minutes!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Fisher T. Fish snorted.

"I guess it's a draw! Now, if Wharton had only had the boss-sense to play a galoot about my size——"

"Oh, I say, you fellows, I really think Wharton ought to be ragged for leaving me out——"

"Shut up, you blithering cuckoos!" roared Johnny Bull ferociously. "On the ball, you beggars! Pass—pass, can't you! Look out, Bob! Don't let it go into touch, you fathead!"

Bob Cherry was not listening.

The ball came whizzing out to the left wing. Potter was looking at his watch with a hasty glance. The Remove forwards were tangled with the vigorous defenders—a full-back was rushing past them to deal with Bob—and the ball looked as if it would escape the

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

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MONDAY

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ONE
PENNY.

Remove left-half and go into touch. And there was half a minute or less to go!

Then Bob Cherry rose to the occasion!

The ball stopped at his foot, just within the line. It stopped for only the fraction of a second, and then it rose from a mighty kick. The Shell full-back felt the wind of it as it whizzed past his ear, and that shot from the touch-line beat the Shell goalie hands down. Before he knew what was happening the leather was over his shoulder and in the net.

The Remove simply shrieked.

"Goal! Goal! Goal!"

"Oh, my hat! Goal!"

Pheep! went the whistle.

The Removites roared. And even the Shell, like the Tuscans of old, could scarce forbear a cheer.

Wharton rushed up to the half-back and thumped him on the shoulder.

"Good old Bob! Bravo! You've done it!"

"You needn't break my back if I have!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Let up, you duffers!"

"Goal! Goal!"

"Hurray!"

"Well, my only hat!" ejaculated Hobson. "They've done it—those kids! Beaten the Shell—us!—by the holy poker! Oh, crumbs!"

"Hurray!"

"What a giddy fluke!" said Hoskins.

"Fluke be blowed!" said Hobson at once. "It was one of the neatest goals I've ever seen. Congratulations, you kids! You've bagged the cup!"

"Hurray!"

The Remove had won the Colonel's Cup!

The roar on Little Side was, as Hurree Jamsai Ram Singh justly declared, terrific.

They had won the cup, after playing the Shell, who were at the top of their form. Hobson, in spite of detention, had led his men—but not to victory. As the Remove gleefully declared, it had been near a draw, but it had never been near a Shell win! And the cup—the Colonel's Cup—was safely bagged!

Hobson, disappointed as he was, generously congratulated the winners. Then he disappeared from the excited crowd. A quarter of an hour later, in Etons again, Hobson slid down the rope from the attic into his study window, and Ogilvy pulled up the rope into the attic when he landed. As five o'clock struck, Mr. Hacker unlocked Hobson's door and came in. Hobson of the Shell was seated at his study table, sedately writing out Titus Livius. He rose respectfully as the Form-master entered.

Mr. Hacker did not seem quite satisfied with the amount of work Hobson had done during his detention. Certainly it was not much to show for a whole afternoon. Hobson had been otherwise engaged, but he did not intend to let Mr. Hacker discover that fact.

"You appear to have wasted your time, Hobson!" said Mr. Hacker.

"I'm sorry you think so, sir," said Hobson demurely. "I feel as if I've been pretty hard at work this afternoon."

"You have very little to show for it, Hobson. However, let it pass. Your detention is over, and you may go."

"Thank you, sir."

And Hobson went. He was in time to witness the presentation of the cup in the Big Hall of Greyfriars, where Harry Wharton, in the name of the Remove, received the trophy from the hands of Dr. Locke.

A few days later Colonel Wharton, in the trenches in Flanders, received a letter from his nephew, and chuckled over the thrilling description of the great and victorious struggle for the Colonel's Cup, so gamely Fought For and Won!

THE END.

(Do not miss "FOES OF THE SIXTH!" next Thursday's grand story of the chums of Greyfriars, by FRANK RICHARDS.)

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



The Rubies of Sheba.

- - By - -

EDWIN WOOTON

**A GRAND INSTALMENT 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 Sallowby, set out on a ship in charge of Captain Boyton to find the treasure.

They reach the island where the treasure is hidden, and decide to run their ship up a river leading to the treasure-trove.

The river leads them into an underground world, which is inhabited by a strange race of people, and the chums are eventually brought before Pontius, the king of the tribe.

(Now go on with the story.)

Our Friends Learn Much.

The chamber in which the adventurers found themselves was one used for prisoners of State, and furnished in a rude way with some regard to comfort. In one part was a huge couch formed of piles of woven stuffs. An unglazed and heavily-barred window served to let in a sufficiency of air. The walls were covered with hieroglyphics in the Egyptian style.

"Well," said Boyton, when the door had been shut for the second time, "what do you make of it?"

"Three friends, one enemy, and one who may prove to be enemy or friend," answered Blake.

Tom nodded.

"Yes," he returned. "Tra, Boreus, and Tra's wife may be reckoned as on our side. That ass Pontius is the enemy, and I guess your estimate of Menathon is about correct."

Boyton was sitting in a posture of dejection.

"Cheer up!" said Tom. "We're a long way from dead yet."

"That may be," returned the sailor. "Also we're a jolly long way from London."

"What angers me," put in Will, "is the asinine way in which the king shuts his eyes to obvious facts. Why, the different styles of armour and weapons and architecture prove that the old legend is correct."

"Don't see it," returned Tom. "They prove it to us, for we can compare what we see with what we know the Egyptians, the Romans, and others possessed. But he can't; and the priests have got into such a hopeless muddle with fact

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and myth that Pontius can be forgiven for thinking it is all tommy-rot."

"Doubtless we shall learn more before we're much older," said Boyton bitterly.

An exclamation came from Tom as the door opened, and there waddled in the dwarf whose caustic gibing had roused the anger of Menathon.

When within the chamber he closed the door and nodded his great head.

"Greeting!" he said. But his voice now had in it a very different tone. It was pathetic, almost like that of a child who is asking for help.

"Greeting!" returned the adventurers.

Patho looked from one to another earnestly.

"There were sharp ears in the king's presence chamber," he said, "and what passed between you and Pontius was brought to me. Why lied ye to him?"

"We did not lie; we spoke but truth," Tom returned.

Patho sighed.

"I have come with peace in my heart," he said. "Let me sit here at your feet while you speak of these strange things once again. Tell me all. It shall never be revealed by me. I am no traitor."

And then in that strange chamber the voice of one man and then of another spoke of many things—the races of the Upper World, their history and their creeds, what science had done, and how the life of the Upper World was lived.

"Then Kairon is right!" exclaimed the dwarf when the talk had ceased.

"And who is Kairon?" Tom asked.

"A priest in the City of Memphis. He is said to believe only in Christus, but he sacrifices to half a score of gods. Boreus wedded his daughter, Berenice. I believe Boreus is one of Kairon's converts."

"And how much does Kairon know?" asked Tom.

"I cannot tell. He has said that once he wandered far into the solitude, and came near the vortex of waters, for he was thinking, and he found a rotted old chest of wood, and in the chest layers of things, like skins without hair, fastened together, and upon each of these layers strange marks. Then it was borne in upon him that he had seen other such marks on things that we have; and he knew the marks to be what he called 'letters,' and he read what they meant. And he said that our ancestral tradition is true, and that our forefathers fell back into their first beliefs, and so gave rise to a jumble of error and truth. Oh, he is a wise man!"

"We may meet this Kairon later," said Tom. "Just now I would like you to say whether there is a way from here to the Upper World that one may travel in safety."

"Of that I know nothing, nor does any man, or the

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road would have been travelled. Stay, there is a legend, only a legend, mind you, that a fugitive from justice hid for days, and when he perforce came back for food, he babbled to his captors of having found a rocky path high above the vortex, and of having followed it until brought up by a gap too great to be leaped."

"And how did he pass the vortex?" asked Tom quietly. "He told some tale of a tree having fallen from the side of the great opening until its further end rested on the ground, so forming a bridge. And they say the tree was swept away by the waters. It may be true."

"Yes," said Tom drily, "it may; but it would have to be a jolly firm tree that would tempt me to pass that vortex at the base of the cataract, or whatever you call it."

Then he spoke of their experience within the passage.

"But that agrees with the legend," said Patho excitedly. "The man spoke of heat and vapours and blackened walls. However that may be, I can tell you something of the land in which you are. It goes for scores of leagues, until the vault comes down to meet the ground. In another part great hills rise to meet the vault. And in one place there is a very strange hill, smooth, as if polished, and at its summit, which no man can reach, there is a mystic natural light—I mean, one not made by man. It is little more than a faint glimmer."

"One of Menathon's dodges, I guess," Blake said contemptuously.

The sentence had been spoken in English, so it conveyed nothing to Patho.

"Then," went on the dwarf, "there is a narrow, ascending, tortuous passage between two hills. It is called the Pass, and in it are reptiles. On the further side is a land inhabited by strange peoples. It is said that when the rebels fled they found a way thither."

The prospects regarding escape were not very brilliant.

"And what becomes of the river?" ventured Blake.

Boyton put the query to Patho.

"There's no mystery in that," returned the dwarf. "It pours into the earth's interior. But I must be getting back to act the part of buffoon that Pontius may laugh. Ere I go I would whisper to you that Memphis is seething with discontent. Kairon has protested against the slothful selfishness of Pontius. If you meet Kairon it will be in his own city, where he is so popular that Pontius dare not touch him. Yet I sometimes think that Pontius is not all bad. Perhaps he is nauseated with all the falsehood offered him as truth. Poor Pontius!"

And so, with his great head swaying, the dwarf shambled his way from the chamber.

Scarcely later than the dying into silence of the dwarf's receding steps there rang out the increasingly loud tones that told of another visitor. This time the door was flung wide, after the fashion of one who desires neither privacy nor ceremony. It was Boreus who stood before the adventurers—Boreus, having on his face a most discontented scowl.

"By all the deaf and dumb gods in the temple," he said, "I like not my mission; but when Pontius commands I have to obey. You are to be told that a Council of State has been held, and that a great festival has been decreed in honour of these same gods. At this festival you will be asked to display your wonderful powers—to swim under the water, to fly in the air, and to do a lot of other things that you can't do. The king's will has been spoken. Now let us talk as friends. Where got you that symbol upon your breast?"

The man pointed to Tom, who immediately told the simple facts.

Boreus smote his thigh.

"My father-in-law was right, then," he said. "But silence, young sir! If Pontius gets to hear of it, he will but swear Kairon has made and given you the thing. However, I want to help you, for you are in great danger. Menathon believes in you, and must have jumped to conclusions pretty

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ONE
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quickly, for it was he who told the king to prove you. If you succeed, Menathon will exploit you as godlets. If you fail, Pontius will kill you. If they make you into a godlet, they'll pump you full of a plaster that hardens into stone; then they'll gild your faces, and set you in a row to be worshipped."

Tom stamped one foot angrily.

"Tell the king we are neither gods nor spirits," he said. "Tell the people this. As for the wonders—man alive!—we can't do them when we have not the things with which they are done. Yet we are not quite helpless, or without proof. The ship in which we came is lying in the waters near the vortex. Have its contents brought hither, and we may satisfy you, and even the king, on some points."

"I will see what can be done," Boreus answered.

He spoke as carelessly as if his words concerned something quite commonplace. As a fact; he was keeping an open mind regarding the adventurers. At one moment he was inclined to believe them, and in the next to discredit their words.

The night came, and the little party were shown to sleeping-quarters. Here, too, they were together. They had been fed substantially on fruits of many kinds. They slept soundly, and in the morning were given another meal. The day passed without any news from the outside.

Although the words "night" and "day" have been used, it must be clearly understood that those two were not distinguished by any natural difference. Here there was no setting of a sun to mark the day's close. Tra told them that the lights were dimmed at a fixed hour, and were kept so for eight hours, and that this period was called the "time of sleep."

It was near the coming of this sleep time that Boreus again entered the adventurers' presence. He flung himself on a couch of fabrics, and discharged his news at once.

"Your ship has been raised," he said. "We can do these things quite easily with pulleys and ropes. Well, it has drained dry; but it hasn't moved Pontius by a hair. He swears that you brought it from some outlandish part of his realm. However, I have placed a guard over it, and I have permission to take you to it to-morrow at waking-time. Then you will have to say what is to be done with the contents."

"Between ourselves, Pontius would seize them, but he saw one or two, and to me it was evident he didn't know their use. He wants to save his pride by leading you to explain matters. That may give you a chance. I told him that you couldn't work wonders without the magic things to work them with. Oh, don't argue! I don't know what is true, and what is not. You must just prove what you can, and get him to swallow the rest with his eyes shut. A good sleep to you all!"

The good-natured soldier strode off. He was at the prison on the following morning with the flooding out of the light.

"We will go by land," he said. "It is a shorter passage than by the river, and there are fewer of those gentle pests about. By the way, we saw one dead, with its eyes shot out, near a splintered tree."

"I killed it," said Tom quietly.

"Well, hurry now, and help to get your possessions packed. They can be brought into the courtyard here, and will dry quickly."

This minor expedition had little worth recording. It may be said, however, that when the cargo was investigated, our friends found two dozen rifles, and about six thousand cartridges in watertight cases. Also, they came across a complete instalment for field telegraphy, a field telephone, and a case of fireworks.

The things were brought to the courtyard of the prison, carefully dried, and, with certain exceptions, handed over to the care of Tra, the gaoler.

What Occurred at the Festival.

An amphitheatre, circular in shape, and from wall to wall fully a mile in diameter, the wall of the amphitheatre a hundred feet in height. At opposite sides of the structure the continuity of the wall was cut by two gaps, so that the entire structure was in two halves, separated by a space of some thirty feet on each side; these gaps splendidly bordered with ornamental pillars in alabaster and jasper.

In the centre of the circle, a smaller circle, about half a mile in diameter, the space between the centre circle and outer wall filled with terrace on terrace of walks and packed seats, places for refreshment, and even with booths for the purchase of what might appeal to the holiday-makers; such was the great amphitheatre.

Against the margin of the centre circle were the places reserved for the court. Here Pontius had his throne, and by it was that of his consort.

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NEXT
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"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

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On the opposite side of the theatre the priests had their place. At the third hour of the waking day—to use a term common in the land—Boreus, resplendent in armour of gold, and at the head of a company of his guards, came to a halt before the great doors of the prison; a trumpeter rang out a blast, the doors were thrown wide, and the captain of the guard found himself in a few seconds exchanging greetings with the adventurers.

"Pontius sends salutations of goodwill!" he said. "He desires the strangers who have come to his land to regard him as their host. They will accompany his captain of the guard to the great amphitheatre; and he trusts that the events of the day may bring pleasure—at least, to some."

"There, that's the message!" said Boreus, after a breath. "And I would to the gods I had never had it entrusted me. For it means mischief, my friends. When Pontius is sweet, he is up to some very big mischief. However, you'll have to go."

From the moment of their quitting the prison the companions noted that the atmosphere seemed filled with a peculiar murmur and hum. It grew more intense as the amphitheatre was neared. The light had been made stronger. Pennons were everywhere. Throngs were passing on foot. Carriages there were none, but a kind of sedan-chair was in general use by those able to engage one.

At the great entry to the structure Boreus halted the guard save four men. These seized the packages that the companions had entrusted to them. Then, Boreus acting as guide, our friends passed to where seats awaited them close to the Royal throne.

Suddenly a blare of trumpets rang out; then, after loud shoutings, came Pontius and his queen.

The king took his seat. From the moment of his entry there was that in his smooth smile and quiet manner that Tom interpreted as a danger-signal. When the plaudits had subsided the monarch rose.

"Most venerated priests of all the gods past, present, and to come," he began suavely, "and you, my everyday working and fighting subjects, we are met to welcome strangers to our land. The most holy priest Menathon, who serves two estimable gods—one made of wood and the other of stone—has assured me that the strangers are something more than human; that they are messengers from those heavens where Paulus, Adonis, and the rest enjoy perpetual wooden or stono felicity. But the strangers are more modest. They say they have come from that place in which we all believe—the Upper World."

Pontius paused, and the populace shrieked and roared their appreciation of the jest.

"Well," went on the king, "if we haven't believed the old wives' story before, there is no excuse now, for the citizens of that land have come down to us. They say they are its citizens, and what further proof do we need? They have told me of wonders done in that far land—of men flying in the air and swimming under the water, and speaking from one end of the world to the other. So here we are, and here they are, to give us instruction or amusement. Guests of Kamurba, we await your pleasure."

"Get those things ready, Will. Let no one else touch them," said Tom tensely. Then he rose, and confronted the huge gathering.

Not a word of that brief speech made by Pontius, not one play of his features or inflection of tone, had escaped him; and he had marked keenly how it had been received both by the populace and the massed assembly of white-clad priests. He saw the discordant elements present. He knew the priests to be frauds and the king to be a sceptic, yet he must utilise these facts or be crushed between them. Tom's mind had been made up.

"Great king, venerated priests, and you, good citizens—greeting!" he said. "In one sense the holy Menathon has spoken simple truth. We know that we have not made the world or ourselves. There are Powers, call them what you will, behind all that we know and see—or shall I say there is one vast Power? And since nothing happens without His permission, and we are here, it may be humbly said that He has sent us."

"Venerated priests, say I not well in affirming that ye hold whatever of learning is in this land? It is not well, then, to scoff at your teachings. But from any heavens we have not come. We are indeed from that material Upper World whence your own ancestors came."

"It is true that in this Upper World men can live under water, because they have boats made to hold air and keep out water; also it is true that men can fly with machines built for that purpose. Here we have no such boats or machines. Therefore it is manifestly unfair to ask and expect a demonstration of these things. Yet can we do some things even here."

"You affirmed that you could slay a man at twice the

distance of the longest bow-shot," said Pontius. "Yonder, on the uppermost terrace, is a standard-bearer. Slay him!"

"Not so, king!" returned Tom. "Bring into the arena one of your fiercest beasts, and you shall judge of our power; but slay an inoffensive man we will not."

"And why?"

"It would be wrong."

A strange look came into the eyes of the monarch.

"Very well; have it as you will," he returned. Then he added haughtily: "The braziers, the keepers, and the largest of the beasts. Quick!"

Down in the arena there ensued a scene of intense bustle. Twelve huge braziers were brought in, and arranged at intervals. In these fires of wood and pitch were lighted. Into the fires were thrust long irons measuring at least thirty feet each.

Then came a blare of trumpets, and through one of the entries there approached a dozen trained animals of the elephant kind, harnessed with thick chains to a huge beast of a species long since extinct in the Upper World. In height it measured some forty feet. Its legs were shackled with chains, the links being half a foot in thickness.

"You wish me to kill that beast?" questioned Tom.

"Even so, my teller of wonders. But there is one condition: You may not shoot it in the eye."

Boyton stared his consternation at Tom. He knew full well that the eye was the only vulnerable part of the brute's body.

"Very well, great king. I have your permission to descend to the arena?"

Pontius bowed coldly, and signed to a guard. He thought that Tom would attempt an escape.

Tom passed down a flight of steps until he came to the gravelled enclosure. Quite unconcernedly he walked to where the mammoth stood amid its group of pigmy custodians. He spoke a few words to one of the men, who placed a ladder against the mammoth's side. Tom mounted, and descended a moment later.

"Stand away!" he said commandingly, and himself withdrew a few paces from the monster animal.

And then, just as everyone was wondering what the boy was about to attempt, there came a terrific report, a wild scream from the giant beast, and it fell, lifeless, to the ground. One of the elephants had been stunned, and another lay crushed beneath the mammoth.

Never in old Rome had gladiator a more enthusiastic ovation. The priests vied with the populace; the priests because they had sat writhing under the lash of the king's tongue, the populace because monsters such as these were the nightmare horror of daily life. Only by shooting an arrow through the eye could one slay them. And who could find the mark in the gloom of the wooded lands or the badly-lighted ways where the poor dwelt?

Pontius himself came from his throne; priests were thronging into the arena. Boreus stood gazing alternately at the fallen elephant and at Tom.

"Tell me," said Pontius quietly, "how did you this deed?"

As well as he was able, Tom explained that it had been wrought by means of a cordite cartridge.

"Oh, some sort of fireball!" commented the king, his wonder subsiding. "Well, that's not so very wonderful—not so wonderful as speaking from one end of the world to the other."

"King," said Tom, "have you in your palace any high official worthy of trust—someone who is there now?"

"Mambres, my secretary, is there."

"One moment, Pontius. Will, bring down that field-telephone."

"And now, great king," said Tom, when the telephone had been brought, "I want one of your guards to act as guide to my friend here while he carries this and unrolls the wire."

"Guide to where?"

"To the presence of Mambres. Your palace is three miles from here. Will you order other soldiers to keep the people from touching this wire?"

"But for what purpose is all this?"

"To enable you to converse with Mambres. I will stay here, and announce when all is ready."

Pontius turned his chronically sceptical eyes on Tom.

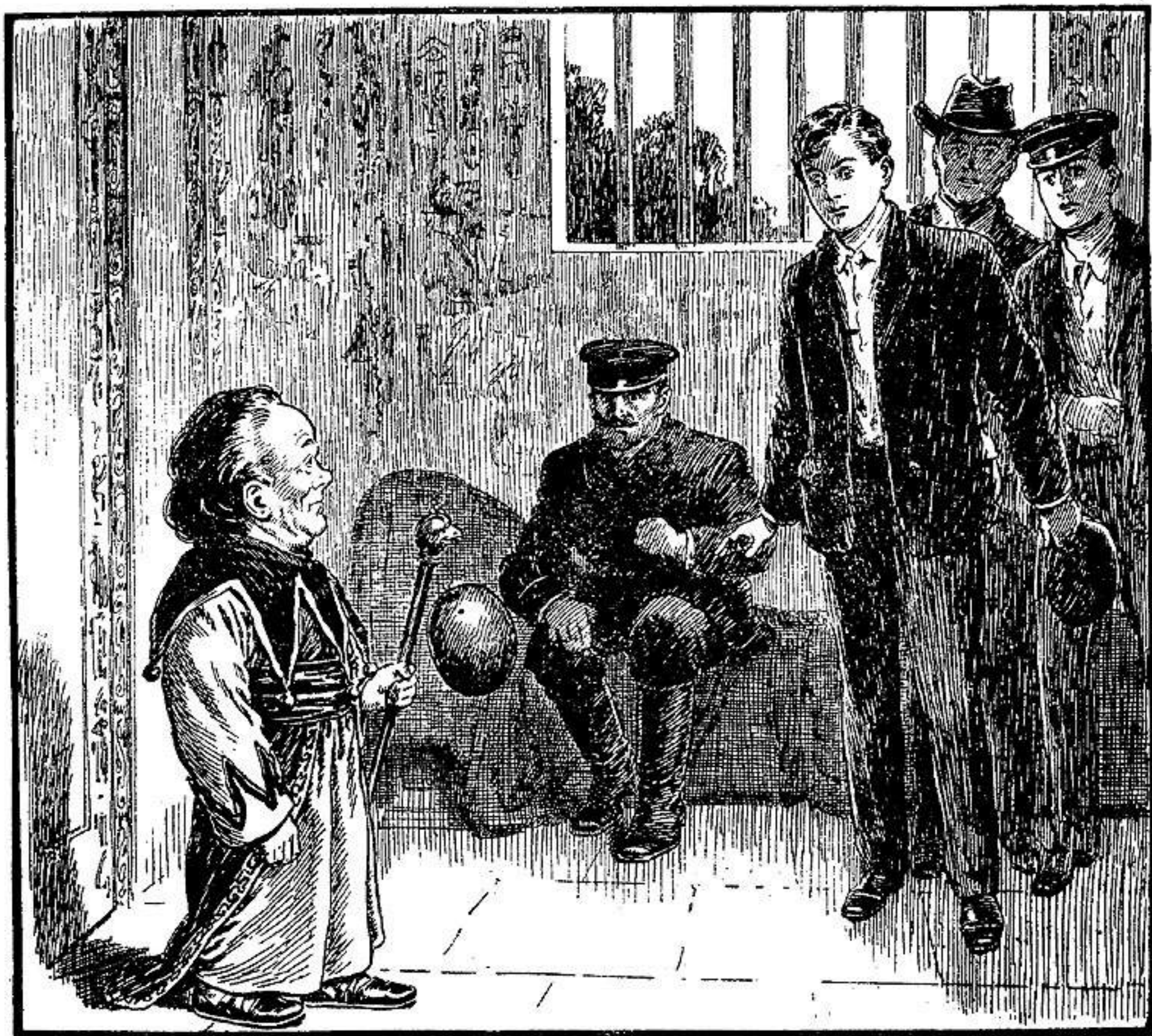
"Give your commands. They shall be obeyed. But woo to you if you try to make me believe another lie!"

It was Boreus who received Tom's instructions, and he preceded Will, while the rear was brought up by soldiers.

"Time will drag, Pontius, unless we have some amusement," said Tom. "Shall I show you a trick—merely a trick, mind; something that is honestly intended to deceive the eye?"

"As you will," returned the monarch.

Then for a space of about half an hour Tom became an amateur conjurer. Not only so, but he showed the king how the tricks were done, and, to his astonishment, in the midst



An exclamation came from Tom as the door opened, and there waddled in the dwarf whose caustic gibing had roused the anger of Menathon. (See page 22.)

of one, he caught the gaze of Menathon resting on him with a scowl.

"Why, see there"—and the king nodded—"our good friend of Paulus and Apollo deprecates such a waste of good material. Here be half a dozen miracles, enough to make a host of the unwashed fall on their faces and say how clever the wooden gods are."

The telephone-bell rang.

Pontius stared.

Tom picked up the instrument.

"Hallo!" he said.

"Hallo! That you, Tom?"

"Yes. Is Mambres there?"

"Yes. I am handing him my end of the instrument."

"Take this, and speak into it as if you were speaking face to face with Mambres, and place this at your right ear," said Tom.

Pontius complied. Of set purpose he broke into a discussion that had been left unfinished at the palace that morning. Then, as he paused, his eyes widened. He spoke again, fiercely, commandingly; and now he almost dropped the instrument.

"A strange device," he commented. "Here is no deceit; I admit that. Which of your gods could do this, Menathon?" Then he added, in commanding tones: "Let apartments in the palace be prepared for the strangers."

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"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

"Be wary!" said Menathon, in an aside to Tom.

The arena was now cleared, and there followed an exhibition of popular sports and games; but the king, after a word with Tom, quitted the amphitheatre.

Menathon followed Tom to his late seat, where he and his companions began to repack the apparatus they had brought; but the priest, not caring to conceal his impatience, took our hero aside.

"I told you to be wary," he said. "You are going to be the guest of a man who is like a child with a lighted lamp playing among shavings of dry wood. He holds the lamp of knowledge. If he destroys the entire social structure by his folly, he will have no one to blame but himself."

Tom simply bowed.

"If Menathon and such as Menathon had not tried to palm off fable as fact, the king would not have believed fact to be fable," he said to his companions.

He had spoken in a low tone, but the language was Latin, and the sharp ears of the priest had heard. Without further word, but his face wearing a smile of a character quite new to it, the priest strode away.

A Cabinet Council and a Revolution.

Tra, the gaoler, had been commanded to deliver at the palace the possessions of our friends. The latter found these in a large chamber connected with the suite of apartments

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allotted them. They were received with every mark of favour.

Sumptuous garments were brought for their use. They were waited on by obsequious servitors, and were presented with carved personal gée-gáws—chains, brooches, and rings, cunningly wrought in what was evidently valued—a sort of fossil gum resembling amber.

And in due course they were conducted to the Royal banqueting chamber, where they half reclined on cushioned couches, ate of strange dishes, and looked at each other wonderingly.

There was music of a kind, all blare, and tinkle, and strum. There was much talk, and the king thrice sent a portion from his own plate for the honour of his guests; but the end came, even to the long-drawn-out wine-drinking, and our friends deemed themselves at liberty to retire.

Barely had they arrived at their quarters when an attendant summoned them to the Royal presence.

"Great Scott!" said Blake. "Aren't we ever to be allowed to get a nap?"

They found Pontius idling with a tame bird of brilliant plumage.

"I deemed it better for you to be here than in the prison," he said.

"Your Majesty is kindness itself," returned Boyton, before the others could speak.

"Well, you see," went on the king, "in the first place, we shall need every room in the prison for other guests; and then it is just possible some of your tricks, or magic—call it what you will—may prove useful. The fact is, I have determined to smash up all this priestcraft, and the soldiers are busy, I expect, in conveying the venerated worshippers of venerated lumps of stone and wood to the hospitable abode of Tra!"

"And what will you substitute, king, for the teachings of the displaced priests?" asked Blake.

"Substitute? Nothing. The people shall be taught that all belief in gods and demons and the rest of it is a tissue of lies. They shall be taught to look to me as the only one they need fear."

"Then, great king, you will be a fool, like many other kings," said Blake boldly. "If you are going to teach the people to hope for and strive for all that is beautiful, and true, noble, and exalting—if you aim merely at casting out proven falsity, such as the worship of those wooden and stone gods, you will do well. Beyond that—"

"Stop!" said Pontius, his face flushing. "I have determined on this thing. I alone will rule in this broad land. There shall be no gods but me!"

A loud murmur came from without; moment by moment it

increased in power. The king struck a gong, and said angrily to an attendant:

"The rabble are noisy. Bid the soldiers slay them!" And now without the chamber, in the vast corridors, there were running steps and voices. Pontius angrily strode to an entry, and threw its door wide.

A guard reeled by, his face bloodstained. Mambres, his own face pallid, came up hurriedly.

"King," he said pantingly, "the priests have raised a force, and are attacking the palace. They threaten to depose you, and make Menathon king. Some of the guards have gone over to them. They are frightened of the priests, for you have been denounced as a blasphemer of the gods!"

A loud and bitter laugh came from Pontius. Then he turned to the companions with the words:

"You have your choice! Join the rebels or slay them!"

"We do neither," returned Tom. "Will you make me sub-ruler of your kingdom for an hour? By that, and that alone, I may manage to save you!"

"There is my signet!"

With this Pontius handed a ring to Tom.

"I would address the people," said Tom to Mambres.

"Hasten, then! The guards can scarce defend the doors!"

Tom rushed into the apartment where the late contents of the brig had been stored, and seized a rocket. Then, matches in hand, he passed out to a balcony, or jutting terrace. He was fully visible to the huge concourse, but his appearance gave rise to loud threats. Evidently he was associated in the popular mind with the destroyer of the gods.

Then Tom ignited the rocket.

As it sped higher and higher, hissing on its course, there was a loud shout of wonder, and when it broke into showers of amber, purple, azure, and crimson, there were cries of delight.

"Good people," said Tom, "I am for the time ruler of this land. The priests shall be set at liberty. Here and now I promise that there shall be a council elected by you, and that this shall bring your grievances to the notice of the king, and that he shall redress them. Choose the members of the council now, then send them hither!"

"I will have them hewed in pieces if they set foot in the palace," said Pontius.

"Place the handcuffs on that man's wrists!" ordered Tom.

Before Pontius could guess what was intended, Will and Boyton had carried out Tom's request.

"Guard him!" said Tom.

Tom now swung round, and re-entered the palace.

"Ho, there!" he cried. "Admit to the Royal presence the council of the people. Let none do them hurt, on peril of death!"

The marvelling attendants sped to obey the command, and for the first time in the history of this strange country there presently trooped into the palace men who were deputed to speak the people's mind.

As they came into the presence of the king and our adventurers, the sight of Pontius manacled brought smiles of triumph to their faces. Tom confronted them.

"Listen!" he said. "I wear the Royal signet, and rule this land for the next fifty minutes. Hereby I confirm you in your power as spokesmen of the people. I declare that henceforth there shall be but one Government in this land, and that it shall consist of you, Kairon, five priests or other men selected by Kairon and the king himself. Pontius shall have no power to abrogate these laws. I give to Boreus complete control of the army. Such is the Royal decree. Let the scribes be called, and let this be set down in writing, and be made known throughout the land!"

In another minute the scribes were busily at work.

Boreus came in as they were writing.

"What is this that I hear?" he demanded.

Tom turned to him, and spoke in a tone that brooked no opposition:

"I have given this land a constitution. I have entrusted you with the national sword. Pontius shall reign, but he shall do so with the help and the consent of his subjects. So shall you have justice, peace, and light."

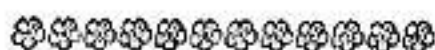
He turned to Will.

"Release the king!" he commanded.

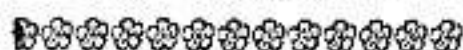
As he spoke there came a sound from behind a gaudy tapestry near the doorway. Tom, glancing carelessly in that direction, caught for a brief instant the gaze of Patho fastened on his face. The dwarf made a rapid sign imposing silence, beckoned, and passed through a small doorway to an inner apartment. There was that in the dwarf's face which told our hero that danger threatened.

(Another long instalment of this grand serial next Monday. Order your copy early.)

NEW BOOKS FOR THE NEW YEAR.



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A Great Sporting Story.

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A Grand Tale of School Life.

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 416.

GREAT PENNY BUMPER NUMBER OF THE "BOYS' FRIEND" OUT TO-DAY! GRAND FREE PICTURE PLATE!

GREAT POPULAR TRIUMPH OF "HAIR-DRILL."

BEAUTIFUL MISS ELLALINE TERRISS'S STRIKING ENDORSEMENT.

Says she owes her lovely tresses to this delightful toilet practice, and advises all who wish to keep young to follow her example.

1,000,000 SPLENDID "FOUR-FOLD" HAIR BEAUTY GIFTS NOW READY TO BE SENT GRATIS TO ALL READERS.

MILLIONS of British men and women at home and abroad have a soft corner in their heart for Miss Ellaline Terriss, and her gift of perpetual youth is one that many have longed to learn. Certainly Miss Terriss owes much of her charming appearance to her masses of abundant hair, always so tastefully and beautifully dressed, and it is gratifying to find this daintiest of actresses paying tribute to the value of "Harlene Hair-Drill."

A REMARKABLE HAIR BEAUTY OFFER.

So that readers of this paper may at once commence to test for themselves the wonderful improvement "Harlene Hair-Drill" makes in the hair, Mr. Edwards has decided to give everyone an opportunity of following Miss Terriss's example by sending 1,000,000 of his Four-Fold "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfits absolutely Gratis.

We give Miss Ellaline Terriss's letter, knowing it will be read with the greatest interest by those who desire to cultivate a beautiful appearance.

Coliseum, London, W.C.,
October 27, 1915.

To Messrs. Edwards' Harlene Co.,
Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.

Dear Sirs,—Thank you very much for sending the "Harlene" so promptly. As you know, I always like to keep a good supply with me.

I always apply "Harlene" night and morning. It is a delightful exercise I am careful not to forget, and on my dressing-table at the theatre, as at home, "Harlene" is a constant companion. I always tell my friends of "Harlene," and I think I have made many converts to this natural method of growing hair and keeping the hair healthy. I feel inclined to add that every Britisher should use "Harlene," for we all want to keep young nowadays, both men and women.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ELLALINE TERRISS.

WHAT DO YOU ANSWER TO THESE QUESTIONS?

If you answer "Yes" to any of these questions, the "Harlene" Gift is for you.

1. Do you notice any powdery dust when brushing?
2. Do you notice any split or broken hairs in the comb?
3. Is your hair difficult to dress?
4. Does your hair seem dull, lank, and lifeless?
5. Is your hair too dry or too greasy?
6. Do you notice an irritation of the scalp?
7. Is your hair gradually becoming thinner?

"Harlene Hair-Drill" very quickly remedies such conditions. As every little drop of "Harlene" penetrates to the hair cells, so all the waste clogging matter is cleared away and the hair, so to speak, is able to breathe again.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 416.

THIS IS YOUR FOUR-FOLD GIFT.

Prove for yourself by accepting one of these 1,000,000 "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfits exactly how quickly you can regain hair beauty. Send your name and address on this form and you will receive:—

1. A bottle of "Harlene," a true liquid food for the hair, which stimulates it to new growth, building up the very substance of the hair itself. It is tonic, food, and dressing in one.
2. A packet of the marvellous hair and scalp cleansing "Cremex" Shampoo, which prepares the head for "Hair-Drill."
3. A bottle of Uzon Brilliantine which gives a final touch of beauty to the hair, and is especially beneficial to those whose scalp is inclined to be "dry" or where powdery scurf exists.
4. The secret "Hair-Drill" Manual, giving complete instructions for carrying out this two-minute-a-day scientific hair-growing exercise.

You can always obtain further supplies of "Harlene" from your Chemist at 1s., 2s. 6d., or 4s. 6d. per bottle; "Uzon" Brilliantine—1s., 2s. 6d.; "Cremex" at 1s. per box of seven shampoos (single packets 2d. each).

If ordered direct from Edwards' Harlene Co., any article will be sent post free on remittance. Carriage extra on foreign orders.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—An innovation that will be much appreciated by travellers, and incidentally soldiers and sailors at home and abroad, is announced by Mr. Edwards' introduction of "Solidified Harlene." For a long time, in response to many requests, Mr. Edwards has been experimenting in this direction, and has at last produced Edwards' "Harlene" in solid form, so that it can more conveniently be carried in one's portmanteau or equipment than when in liquid form in a bottle.

In addition to the popular Liquid "Edwards' Harlene," Solidified "Harlene," is now on sale at all chemists in tins at 2s. 9d., or supplies may be obtained post free on remittance direct from Edwards' Harlene Co., 20-26, Lamb's Conduit St., London, W.C.

*** "HARLENE" HAIR-DRILL GIFT COUPON ***

★ Fill in and post to ★
★ EDWARDS' HARLENE CO., ★
★ 20-26, LAMB'S CONDUIT ST., LONDON, W.C. ★
★ Dear Sirs,—Please send me your free "Harlene" ★
★ Fourfold Hair-Growing Outfit. I enclose 4d. stamps ★
★ for postage to any part of the world. (Foreign stamps ★
★ accepted.) ★
★ Name ★
★ Address ★

★ MAGNET, January 29th, 1916 ★

★*****★

MY READERS' PAGE

OUR COMPANION PAPERS: "THE BOYS' FRIEND," 1d., Every Monday. "THE GEM" LIBRARY, 1d., Every Wednesday. "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3d., COMPLETE LIBRARY. "THE PENNY POPULAR," 1d., Every Friday. "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:

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

By Frank Richards.

Among the many fine stories of school life which famous Frank Richards has written, next Monday's story will take a high place. It is of the dramatic order, and a series of thrills from start to finish. The old feud between George Wingate and Gerald Loder is revived, and, by a curious chain of coincidences, Loder is enabled to bring home to the captain of Greyfriars a charge of theft. There are many stormy scenes, and many dramatic disclosures, ere harmony is once more restored between the

"FOES OF THE SIXTH!"

As there have recently been numerous complaints from readers stating that they have great difficulty in obtaining their copy of the "Magnet" Library, my chums are strongly urged to order next Monday's issue in advance.

OUR STORY COMPETITION. Result in Two Weeks' Time.

—Official.

The work of adjudication in connection with our recent "Magnet" Story Competition is now nearly at an end, and the result will definitely appear a fortnight hence.

I feel sure my chums will readily pardon the delay, for to read and criticise no less than nine hundred stories is a colossal undertaking.

No trace of either name or address can be found in connection with the following stories submitted:

"ROUGH ON PONSONBY!"

"THE ANTI-FOOTBALLERS AT GREYFRIARS!"

"A SLACKER'S AWAKENING!"

"THE ADVENTURES OF A BUTCHER'S LAD AT GREYFRIARS!"

Will the writers of the above kindly forward particulars?

Will Alec Watson, Leonard W. T. White, and J. Pender, whose stories were entitled respectively "The Spook Headmaster," "His Honour at Stake," and "One of the Best," kindly send me their addresses?

Will the writer of "Spoofed Again!" living at Pontypool, kindly furnish me with his name?

As I have remarked in a previous issue, the majority of the stories were very good and very ingenious, and it will be no light task to hit upon the winner. However, I am hard at it, and the full list of lucky prizewinners will be published in the "Magnet" Library No. 418.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS ACKNOWLEDGED.

To the following readers, who so thoughtfully sent me Christmas cards and greetings during the festive season, I tender my sincere and hearty thanks: Donald Moore, Watson Harland, Jessie Scott, Muriel M., Teddie Taylor, "Automatic" (Scarborough), "Merry Reader," Albert and George Williams, Private Leslie E. Yarnall (Royal Welsh Fusiliers), George McIntyre (Dundee), Fred Brown (Grimsby), W. Whittle, W. Roberts (Southsea), "An Irish Chum," B. Tucker (Manor Park), L. and P. Copper (Manchester), Gwennie B. (Golders Green), J. Smith (Dunblane), George

Edwards (Glamorgan), V. Eaton, Stanley G. C. Jacobs (London, N.), "The Council of Four" (Glasgow), Robert Carlton (Manchester, formerly an anti-Magnetite), "Elsie," W. Perry, Gladys D. Barton (Hockley), "Car-negle Scholarship Winner," "Paddy" (co. Wexford), Dick Williams, Dick Scottle, Edward Moller, Raymond Armstrong, N. C. Oatridge, Gladys Lincoln, Patrick Geere, "Incognito," and Lily Thompson (Liverpool).

Although the wish is somewhat belated, I sincerely hope that all the above may experience the best of luck and prosperity throughout the current year.



READERS' PHOTOGRAPHS.

Our "Magnet" Portrait Gallery is proving a very popular feature, and I am still open to receive the photographs of my boy and girl readers for publication—in fact, the more the merrier!

The following facts, however, must be borne in mind: (1) All photographs must have the name and address of the sender clearly written on the back. (2) In no circumstances can photographs be returned, owing to the treatment which is meted out to them in our Process Department.

NOTICE!

Will "A. B. C." of Limerick, who wrote to me a short time ago on a subject pertaining to the "Greyfriars Herald," kindly furnish me with his full name and address?

PRIVATE FARLEIGH'S GRATITUDE.

I have pleasure in publishing this week the following letter from Private Max Farleigh:

"77, Water Street, Carmarthen.

"My dear Editor,—Allow me to express my very deepest thanks, through the medium of your excellent paper, to the many kind friends who wrote to me in answer to the advertisement in the 'Magnet.'

"I had intended to answer them all personally, but the last few mails have brought such an alarming increase that the task has grown altogether too big for me. From Scotland, from the far North, from the plains of Dartmoor, and from the fens of Essex, they have come pouring in—offers of help, books, cigarettes, etc.—and I wish my correspondents one and all to accept my sincerest thanks for their kindness to a stranger.

"I have written to several, and in due course will endeavour to write to them all personally. In the meantime, believe me to be, your very sincere reader.

"MAX FARLEIGH (Private)."

THE "BOYS' FRIEND" BIRTHDAY NUMBER NOW ON SALE!

TO-DAY the best penny number of a boys' paper ever published appears on the market. The "BOYS' FRIEND," our venerable contemporary, celebrates its twenty-first

(Continued on page IV of Cover.)



A LOYAL READER,
Barrow-in-Furness.



W. CLARK,
Uddingston.



O. F. HILEY,
Birmingham.



PTE. D. S. JAMES,
N. Kensington.



S. LEVY,
Manchester.



F. A. FLACK,
Chorlton-Cum-Hardy,
Manchester.



W. G. SIMPKIN, Southport, Lancs.



R. FACEY,
Colyton, Devon.



J. HARDING,
R.A.M.C.

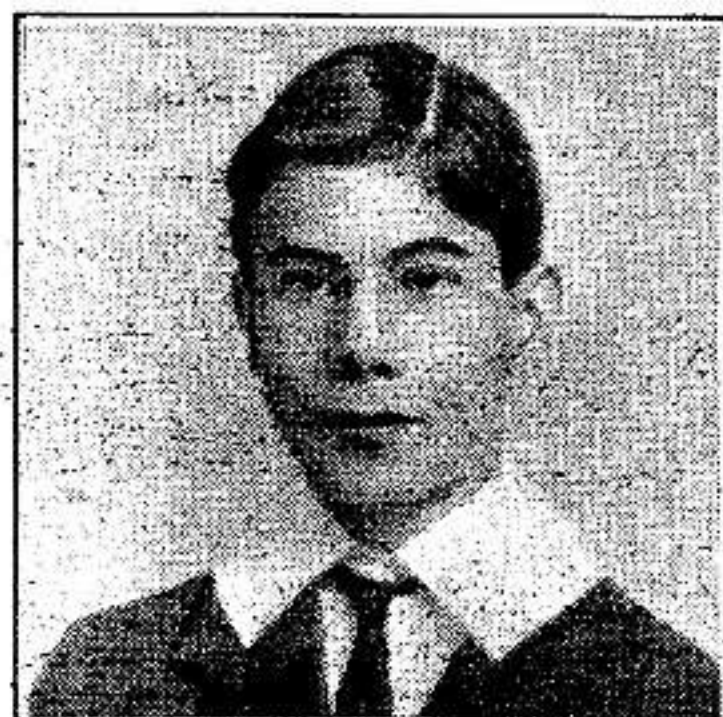


J. SCOTT,
R.A.M.C.



L. G. ATTRIDGE,
Observatory,
Nr. Cape Town.

FRED MATTHEWS.
Dulwich, London.



HERBERT MILLER,
Stockwell.



ALBERT H. FIELD,
Nunhead, London.



ROWLAND HUNT,
Handsworth, B'ham.



W. SHEPHERD,
Inverardoch.



C. THACKER,
Borham Wood, Herts.

THE "BOYS' FRIEND" BIRTHDAY NUMBER —continued.

birthday, and in the issue now on sale the following fine features appear:

- A MAGNIFICENT COLOURED COVER.
- A SPLENDID PRESENTATION PLATE.
- A SUPERB SCOUTING STORY.
- A LONG, COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY.
- A GREAT NEW SERIAL BY DUNCAN STORM.
- AN AMAZING DETECTIVE ESCAPE.
- A SPLENDID STORY OF DAN, BOB, AND DARKEY.
- A GRAND TALE OF TOM BELCHER, THE BOY BOXER.
- A FULL PAGE OF EDITORIAL CHAT.

The stories mentioned are tip-top, the illustrations works of art, and the whole number constitutes a really marvellous pennyworth. The full art presentation plate is alone worth the sum asked for the whole number.

Magnetites who do not wish to miss this magnificent feast of reading-matter should hasten to the nearest newsagent's shop NOW, ere it is too late!

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

B. Harrison (Crosshills).—The story you mention has already appeared in threepenny book form. If you experience any difficulty in obtaining it, send four penny stamps to me, and I will forward you a copy.

M. F. W. (Manchester).—Levison was not at Greyfriars long before he was expelled. No, Kipps is not a new boy. He has been at the school some time now. Glad you like "The Pride of the Ring" in the "Greyfriars Herald."

"Constant Reader" (Ipswich).—Write to Messrs. Barr & Co., 21A, Bow Lane, London, E.C., enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for the firm's reply.

Valentine S.—Thank you for your splendid letter. The photograph is hardly suitable for reproduction. It is rather faded. Cannot you send a better one?

Frances M. (St. Helens, Isle of Wight).—Many thanks for your letter. The characters referred to therein are still at Greyfriars but as they are only of minor importance, they are seldom in the limelight. Best wishes!

R. S. and T. N. G. (Carlisle).—Thank you for your suggestion, which I will do my utmost to carry out.

Dolly H. (Portsmouth).—I much appreciate your kind comments. Yes, Phyllis Howell will play a prominent part in various "Magnet" stories now in course of preparation.

G. H. H. (Chelsea).—See reply to Dolly H., printed above.

Leslie G. (Nottingham).—Photograph not quite good enough for reproduction. Can you manage to send another?

A. Bailey, Welsh, & Co. (Dudden Hill School, Willesden).—I was pleased to hear of your recent triumphs on the football field. The six characters you mention, placed in order of merit as boxers, are as follows: 1, Bob Cherry; 2, Dick Russell; 3, Harry Wharton; 4, Peter Todd; 5, Mark Linley; 6, Percy Bolsover. Very best wishes to all of you. Long may your school flourish!

Harold H. (Montreal).—Bob Cherry and Tom Merry are about equal as fighting-men. They have met on two occasions, and honours are easy.

Laurence K. (Manchester).—Thank you for your appreciative remarks concerning Mark Linley's serial story in the "Greyfriars Herald."

"Tyke."—You agree that we cannot cut out all the slang from the stories. Your query is not quite clear—you say the addresses of one or two good modern school books. I take it you don't mean histories and geographies and that sort of thing. Do you mean school stories in book form? Any book-seller would show you some of these.

F. J. (South Africa).—Many thanks for helping to make the companion papers more widely known.

W. D. (Uxbridge).—Thanks for your brother's message from the trenches. I get hundreds of letters testifying to the appreciation of my soldier readers, but never too many.

S. M. (Chesterfield).—Cannot give you the address. We don't frame the letters of "disgusted readers"; we put them in the proper place—the w.p.b.

"A Rugby Friend."—It is never a waste of time to read readers' letters. I like them. So glad you appreciated "School and Sport"—a first-class yarn!

"Automatic" (Scarborough).—Brandreth is no longer at

Greyfriars. You will hear more of Bunter minor, no doubt; but you don't want a whole story devoted to such a gorging little specimen, do you?

"Black Bess."—I am afraid the "Magnet's" influence upon your family would not bear being extended to the whole circle of our readers. You threw away a ten-shilling note through excitement about "School and Sport," and your married sister got so thrilled by a Greyfriars yarn that she dropped her baby! Well, well, well! Don't let these things happen again, or people will be blaming me. My conscience is quite clear, however. I never throw away ten-shilling notes or drop babies. Your plan of sending stamps for copies of the papers to be forwarded to wounded soldiers is one that I am very pleased to fall in with.

G. W. (Abercynon).—H. W. says "Thank you!"

"True Blue" (Cape Town).—Shall be very pleased to see you when you are in England again.

G. H. L. (Forest Gate).—Same story we always hear. The men in the trenches are evidently good judges, for they think no end of the companion papers.

"Your Namesake" (King's Lynn).—Our Correspondence Exchange is closed, and it would not be fair to make exceptions. Sorry!

L. M. (Hendon).—Your mistake! I don't consider it at all wasted time to read your letter. I note that you are another warm admirer of "School and Sport."

A. H. D. (Manchester).—No, I don't think the Famous Five too good to be true. They get into plenty of scrapes; though they never do mean or cowardly things. Surely you would not like Skinner, reformed, as the leading hero, and Wharton as the villain of the play?

"A South African Reader" (Johannesburg).—You have only seen No. 1 of the "Herald" yet! Wait till you've seen a few more, each better than that before it!

T. G. (Farington).—The places and characters are imaginary. You are not, by long chalks, the only ardent admirer of Phyllis Howell. Bunter's ventriloquism will crop up again before long. Many thanks for getting new readers.

J. H. (Sussex).—You ask why the other fellows don't break Bunter of his gorging habits. Can't be did!

"The Dauntless Three."—Do you consider Bunter gets bullied? It strikes me he never gets more than he deserves. So one of you is prepared to knock Bob Cherry's head off? Well, well! He wants to come along and let you try, but the considered opinion of his chums is that he looks better with his head on—even such a head as his. Bull remarks. Wingate is not of Army age, and has not yet finished his education.

"A New Reader" (Anfield, Liverpool).—It is not easy to pick out the best three sportsmen in the Remove, but Wharton, Cherry, and Vernon-Smith are as good as any. Wharton is about fifteen.

J. H. (Blackburn).—"School and Sport" ("Boys' Friend" 3d, Library) gives the Rookwood and Highcliffe footer teams. Don't you think Wharton has enough to do, without keeping Bunter on a chair to choke him off gorging?

H. R. T. (Herne Hill).—The place you name is imaginary. You are lucky to be in a house with so good a leader and such trophies.

"A Loyal Dundonian."—Thanks for letter. I quite see your point. Of course, Kerr does get a bigger show than Ogilvy, the Scots junior at Greyfriars. Will see what can be done.

"Semper Eadem" (Leicester).—Thanks for an interesting letter and for your good wishes.

E. L. (Hockley).—Another threepenny book as soon as possible. But Mr. Richards is a man, not a miracle!

"True Blue" (West Kilbride).—Your town has indeed done well, and you have good reason to be proud. Have had a copy of "How to Join the Navy" sent you.

"Physique."—No one in the Remove has a finer physique than Bob Cherry. The idea of semi-nude photographs does not appeal to me.

W. F. D. (Kennington).—Goalkeepers, like other people, vary in form. Hazeldene is very good indeed at his best, but will not always keep fit. Some people simply can't spell. Bunter is one of them.

"Three Sons of Wales."—Thanks for photographs. Glad you like "The Pride of the Ring." No. 1 of the "Magnet" is quite unobtainable, I fear.

"Conlaig."—Another admirer of "School and Sport" in general, and Phyllis Howell in particular! I will see what can be done to meet your wishes.

J. P. H. (Clifton, Queensland).—We are all proud of the Australian troops, which are equal to the best anywhere. Sorry the papers have not been coming along quite regularly.

Yours Editor