

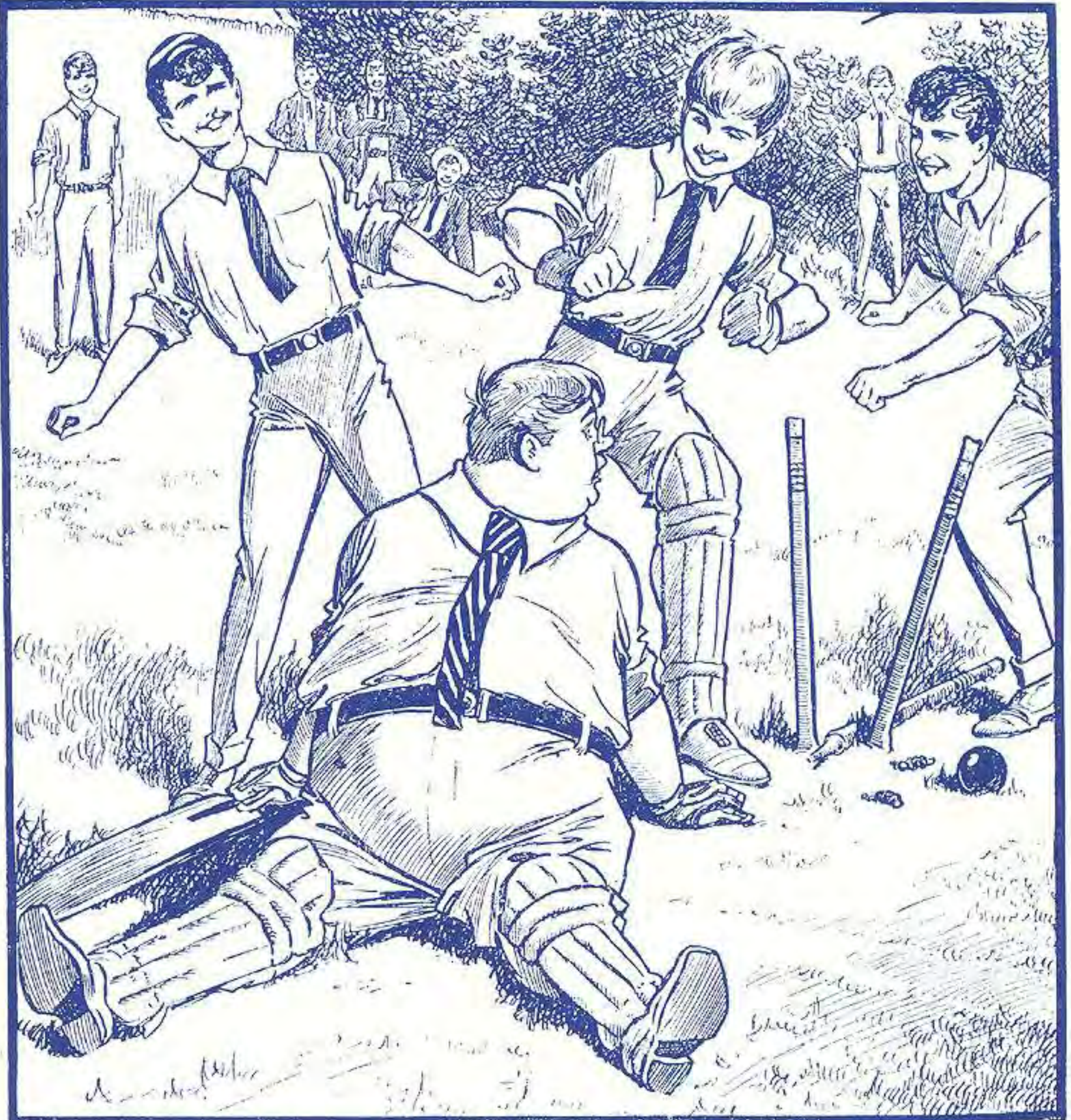
SIR JIMMY'S PAL!

A Grand Long Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.



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THE BOWLED BUNTER!

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SIR JIMMY'S PAL!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Peculiar Prospect!

"MAULY looks rather down-hearted," remarked Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove were airing themselves in the quadrangle after morning lessons when Bob spotted Lord Mauleverer under the elms.

Harry Wharton & Co. paused in their saunter, and turned their attention to the dandy of Greyfriars.

Lord Mauleverer did look down-hearted—there was no mistake about that.

Which was surprising; for, as a rule, his lazy lordship allowed nothing whatever to disturb his lofty serenity. Excepting that he was a pronounced slacker, and found it rather a trouble to exist at all, Mauly of the Remove was not supposed to have any troubles in the world.

But he looked now as if he had been collecting all the troubles at Greyfriars and placing them on his own slim and elegant shoulders.

He was standing under the elms, with his hands driven deep in his pockets and a distinct wrinkle showing in his brow. There was an expression of the deepest and most painful thought upon his face.

"It's a case of war worry," said Bob Cherry. "Mauly wants bucking-up. I'll buck him up!"

The chums of the Remove grinned as Bob Cherry strode behind his lordship.

Lord Mauleverer did not observe him—having no eyes in the back of his head. And he was too deeply buried in thought to notice the proximity of the Famous Five at all.

"By gad!" his lordship was murmuring. "What's a fellow to do? Begad!"

Smack!

"Yaroooh!" roared Lord Mauleverer, coming out of his deep reflections with a jump, as Bob Cherry clapped him on the shoulder—with a clap that was like unto a thunderclap. Bob was always a trifle heavy-handed.

Lord Mauleverer spun round, gasping. Bob grinned at him genially.

"Woke you up!" he remarked.

"You thumpin' chump!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "You've jolly nearly dislocated my shoulder! Yow-ow! I'd mop up the quad with you, you howlin' ass, if the weather wasn't so warm. Ow!"

"What's the trouble?" asked Bob soothingly. "I was only bucking you up, old scout, because you looked down-hearted."

"Yow-ow!"

"Tell your Uncle Bob all about it," said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "I'm the chap to come to for advice. Is it bad news from the Front?"

"Ow! No!"

"Bunter been getting you to cash a postal-order in advance?"

"No, you ass! Ow!"

"Been playing nap with the Bounder, and losing?" demanded Bob Cherry severely.

"You thumpin' duffer, no!"

"Has Sir Jimmy been kicking over the traces?"

"Br-r-r!"

But Lord Mauleverer's expression showed that Bob had hit the right nail on the head this time.

His lordship's deep and painful reflections were on the subject of his relative and study-mate, Sir Jimmy Vivian, who was his one trial.

"Nothing wrong with Jimmy Mauly?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yaas."

"Why, I saw him ten minutes ago, and he looked as right as rain!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Oh, he's all right!" groaned Lord Mauleverer, still rubbing his shoulder, and giving the cheery Bob Hunnish looks.

"Then what are you moping about?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I'm not mopin'."

"The mopefulness is terrific, my esteemed Mauly!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Get it off your esteemed chest, and confide the trouble to your worthy and ludicrous pals!"

Lord Mauleverer grinned faintly.

"There isn't exactly any trouble," he said. "Jimmy is a good little chap—a dashed good little chap. But—" Lord Mauleverer groaned dismally. "You fellows know about Jimmy—all Greyfriars knows, for that matter. It isn't his fault that his pater was an awful waster, and went to the bad, and left him an orphan in a slum—"

"Of course it isn't!" said Harry Wharton. "And nobody's down on poor old Jimmy for that, excepting a worm or two like Skinner and Snoop!"

"If Skinner's been chipping him, you leave him to me," said Johnny Bull. "I'll shove his head in the fountain!"

"Tain't Skinner this time," said Lord Mauleverer hastily. "You—you fellows know how Jimmy was brought up—or dragged up, rather. He never knew even that he was a baronet till my uncle routed him out and found him, after getting a letter from old Vivian on his death-bed. He drops his 'h's' in a way that makes your flesh creep, but a chap can get used to that. He's stoppin' eatin' with his knife, though."

"Ha, ha!"

"Tain't a laughing matter," said Lord Mauleverer distressfully. "If you only knew what I've suffered through seein' him eatin' with his knife—"

"Awful!" said Bob. "Worse than the trenches!"

"Well, I don't know about that," said Mauly innocently. "But it was awful! Still, he's droppin' that."

"Along with his 'h's'?" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, don't be funny! He's improvin' all round, and Skinner don't chip him so much since he licked the cad. But—but—but—"

"The butfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh.

"But what's he been doing?" asked Wharton, in wonder. "He's a rough diamond, but he has a heart of gold."

"That's where the trouble comes in," groaned Lord Mauleverer.

"Eh?"

"If he wasn't a decent little chap it would be easier. But—"

"You're talking in riddles, Mauly. You're not complaining about his good qualities, surely?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Yaas."

"Well, you ass!"

"The assfulness is—"

"Terrific!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Let's bump Mauly! That's what he's asking for. It will buck him up, too."

Lord Mauleverer hastily backed away. "Don't play the goat!" he implored.

"This is a serious matter—awfully serious. You see, when poor old Jimmy lived in Carker's Rents—ye gods, what a place to live in!—when he lived there he had a pal."

"All the better for him, surely!" said Nugent.

"Yaas. But he hasn't forgotten his pal."

"Good for Jimmy!"

"Awfully good for him!" groaned Lord Mauleverer. "As I said, he's a decent little beast—dashed decent! He's not goin' to turn his back on his old pal because he's well off."

"Well, nothing to complain of in that, I suppose?" said Bob Cherry warmly. "He would be a cad if he did."

"Yaas. Only the chap's comin' here."

"Oh!"

"It's decent of Jimmy—the real, square thing!" said Lord Mauleverer. "But what will Greyfriars say? What will all the fellows say? Jimmy's just beginnin' to live down his past. But if the Sparrow comes here—"

"The what?" ejaculated Bob.

"That's his pal's name. The 'Spadger,' Jimmy calls him. Spadger is the way they pronounce Sparrow in Carker's Rents!" groaned his lordship.

"But what's his real name?"

"Name?" said Mauleverer vaguely. "Do people have names in Carker's Rents? This chap doesn't seem to have a name. He's the Spadger!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Jimmy's asked him here," mumbled Mauleverer. "He's just sprung it on me. It's a half-holiday this afternoon, you know, and the Spadger's comin'. Jimmy doesn't see anythin'—anythin' odd in it. But—but—but what will the fellows say? What will Mr. Quelch say if

he sees him—an' the Head? An' Delarey's away to-day, or he might have thought of somethin'—brainy chap, Piet!"

And his lordship blinked dolefully at the Famous Five.

"You know, I'm not a snob," continued his lordship. "I'm quite sure that this Spadger is a rippin' kid—better than Skinner or Snoop, anyway. I'd pal with him with pleasure, as far as I'm concerned, though I dare say the poor kid would pick my pocket. He doesn't know any better. But he's trampin' it from London—"

"From London!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yaas. Started yesterday, I understand; sleepin' in a barn or behind a hedge last night. You can guess the state he'll arrive in. And at the best of times I don't think they dress very fashionably in Carker's Rents, an' I believe they're not very particular about their linen. Rags an' tatters, you know; boots down to the dashed uppers, if—if he's got any boots at all. It's a shame that poor kids live in such a state in this country. With seven million quid goin' on the war every day, it seems odd that we can't afford to keep kids in boots. But there you are! I should say it will nearly finish Jimmy here, if he shows that cheery young gentleman about Greyfriars. He doesn't care; but I do—see?"

"Oh, my hat!" Wharton.

"So there you are!" said Lord Mauleverer. "It's decent of Jimmy; and how can I jaw him for stickin' to an old pal? He's doin' the right thing. But—but—"

"It's rather an awkward position," said Wharton thoughtfully. "I'm afraid the masters won't quite approve of such a visitor—ahem!"

"He might pick a fellow's pocket while he's here!" groaned Lord Mauleverer.

"So bad as that?"

"I understand from Jimmy that the Spadger was brought up on what he calls pinchin'. He was taught by a delightful gentlemen whom Jimmy calls Boozey Smith. What a name!"

"Great Scott!"

"It would be better for him not to come here," said Wharton slowly. "It's rather a fix. Look here, Mauly, we'll put our heads together over this, and help you through."

"Thanks awfully! But what's goin' to be done?"

"We'll think it out. There goes the dinner-bell!"

The Famous Five started for the School House, and Lord Mauleverer followed, with a lugubrious countenance. So far as his lordship could see, there was nothing to be done, and the Spadger's visit would come off, with results that would be unpleasant, and might be disastrous for Sir Jimmy of the Remove!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Loyal Pal!

HARRY WHARTON looked curiously at Sir Jimmy Vivian at the Remove dinner-table.

The one-time ragamuffin of Carker's Rents had changed very considerably since he had come to Greyfriars.

He looked as clean and neat as the other Remove fellows, in Etons and a white collar, and he had learned to dispose of his meals without the use of the knife for conveying food to his mouth, and without helping his fork with his fingers.

Only in speech was he marked off distinctly from the other juniors.

In the Form-room he was well up with

his work—indeed, his wits had been sharpened by his early life as a street arab, and he found things quite easy which were a puzzle to dull fellows like Snoop and Bunter.

In the class he had been placed ahead of Snoop, Skinner, Bunter, Fish, and a good many others, though he took the most outrageous liberties with the King's English.

Sir Jimmy Vivian's chubby little face was particularly bright and contented just now.

Evidently he was looking forward to the visit from his old pal.

Sir Jimmy found life at Greyfriars pretty comfortable. His noble relative, Mauleverer, was kindness itself to him—he shared a study with him, bore Sir Jimmy's little foibles with unexampled patience, and gently led him in the way he should go.

And Delarey, who was also in No. 12, genuinely liked Sir Jimmy, who, in turn, was devoted to him.

Most of the fellows, too, were kind to the reclaimed waif. The Famous Five

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch glanced along the table.

"Vivian!"

"Yessir!"

"Please do not talk at table!"

"Right-ho, sir!"

There was a suppressed chortle among the Removites.

Nobody but Sir Jimmy would have dreamed of saying "Right-ho, sir!" to the Form-master.

"You must say 'Yes, sir!' to me, Vivian," said Mr. Quelch, with a frown at the grinning juniors. "I have told you so before."

"Right-ho, sir—I mean, yessir!" said Sir Jimmy cheerfully. "A bloke kinder forgets, sir. A bloke can't think of heverythink. Kinder goes out of a bloke's 'ead, sir."

"That will do, Vivian."

"Right-ho, sir!"

Mr. Quelch let it pass this time.

Harold Skinner, who was next to Vivian, pretended to be looking about on the floor. Sir Jimmy, who was full



Old Pals! (See Chapter 6.)

were specially so, and Squiff and Peter Todd and Rake, and even the Bouncer always had a friendly nod and word for him.

Snobbish fellows, like Skinner and Snoop, affected to look down upon him and give him the cold shoulder; but as Sir Jimmy would not have tolerated their company in any case that was no loss to him.

Billy Bunter treated him with lofty disdain; but this was chiefly due to Sir Jimmy's firm refusal to cash his celebrated postal-orders in advance.

Sir Jimmy caught Wharton's eyes upon him, and nodded across the table.

"Pass that there salt, cocky!" he called out—a form of address which Mr. Quelch, at the head of the table, affected not to hear.

The Remove-master was very considerate towards the little waif.

Wharton smiled involuntarily as he passed the salt.

"This 'ere bread is gettin' thicker an' thicker," Sir Jimmy remarked. "It gives me a pain in my innards."

of good-nature, glanced round, willing to help.

"Dropped something?" he asked.

"Somebody's dropped something," said Skinner.

"Wot was it?"

"An aspirate!" said Skinner. And there was a murmured chuckle.

Sir Jimmy snorted.

"I 'spose you mean a haitch, wot you calls a hasperate," he said. "If you're gittin' at me, you skinny toad, you can shut your 'ead—see?"

"You are talking again, Vivian," came Mr. Quelch's voice along the table.

"Pray be silent!"

"Orlright, sir!"

Sir Jimmy went on with his dinner, contenting himself with giving Harold Skinner a look of terrific contempt.

When the Removites left the dining-room after dinner Billy Bunter rolled up to the Famous Five in the hall. There was a grin upon Bunter's fat face, and he was evidently enjoying an item of news.

"I say, you fellows—" he began.

"Buzz off!"

"I say, have you heard?" grinned Bunter, disdaining to notice that plain hint that his presence was superfluous. "About Vivian, you know? He's got a visitor coming this afternoon. He, he, he!"

"What do you know about it?" growled Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he! I happened to hear him telling Mauleverer—quite by chance, of course." Bunter almost exploded with mirth. "A kid he calls the Spadger—he, he, he!—a slum denizen, you know, who sells papers and picks pockets. Nice sort of customer to come to Greyfriars! He, he, he! Yooooop!"

Billy Bunter's cachinnations came to a sudden termination as Bob Cherry gave him a push which caused him to collide violently with the wall.

Bunter let out a roar, and slid down the wall to a sitting position, whence he blinked breathlessly at the chums of the Remove.

"Groogh! Beast! Groogh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went out into the quad, and Wharton hurried to join Sir Jimmy, who had gone out by himself. He tapped the youthful baronet on the shoulder.

"Allo!" said Sir Jimmy genially. "Nice arfternoon, ain't it? You blokes playing cricket—wot?"

"There's a match with the Third," assented Harry.

"I'll bring my pal to see you playin'," said the baronet. "Did you know I've got a friend coming this arfternoon—name of Spadger? I've mentioned 'im to you."

And Sir Jimmy smiled with satisfaction.

In spite of the fact that at Greyfriars Sir Jimmy found his lines cast in pleasant places his thoughts turned often to his earlier home, and, doubtless, with regret.

He had many kind friends at the school, but none whom he could call exactly a pal. And at Carker's Rents, with all its misery and poverty, he had had a pal!

"Yes, Mauly's mentioned it," said Wharton. "When are you expecting your friend, Jimmy?"

"Any time in the arfternoon. You see, he's trampin' it from London, and it's a good step 'ere."

"I'll tell you what," said Harry. "You'd like your pal to meet some of your friends here, Jimmy. Suppose we make up a little party to meet him on the road, and—"

"And bring 'im here?"

"Ahem! I don't suppose he would care much about Greyfriars," said Harry diplomatically. "What about taking him for a drive? Mauly would stand a trap, with pleasure, or I would—"

Sir Jimmy gave him a very keen look.

"He's coming 'ere," he said stubbornly.

"But—don't you see—it may be a bit unpleasant for him—"

"Wot rubbish! The Spadger don't care for a sneerin' cad like Skinner—and if Skinner says a word to him, the Spadger will slip into 'im, I can tell you!"

"Oh!"

"Old Spadger's a reglar fighting-cock," said Sir Jimmy. "I've seed 'im knock out a growed man."

"Ahem!"

"I ain't ashamed of a old friend, and I ain't going to let Spadger think as 'ow I am. That's wot he'd think if I didn't 'ave 'im in the study and look arter 'im. If you are too 'igh-class to speak to my

pal, you needn't," added Sir Jimmy sarcastically. "Spadger ain't coming to see you!"

Wharton coloured. It was solely for Sir Jimmy's own sake that he was speaking, and he did not like to be suspected of snobbishness.

"Nothing of the kind!" he said sharply. "But—"

"There ain't no buts. Spadger's coming 'ere. I'm goin' to show 'im over the school, too," said Sir Jimmy defiantly.

"Have you asked permission—"

"No, I ain't. Do you always ask permission afore you has a feller 'ere—your pals from 'Ighcliffe, f'rinstance?"

"N-no. But—"

"Tain't no good torkin'," said Sir Jimmy. "'Sides, I've 'ad all that from Mauly. Well, what do you want?" added the baronet, as Skinner joined them.

"I hear from Bunter that you're expecting a visitor?" said Skinner blandly.

"Well, Bunter's tellin' the truth for once," growled Sir Jimmy.

"We shall all be delighted to see him," smiled Skinner. "Quite an honour for Greyfriars, I'm sure. Will he be dressed in rags and tatters, or in tatters and rags?"

Skinner meant that remark to be humorous. But Sir Jimmy Vivian did not take it in a humorous spirit. Perhaps he had had a little too much of Skinner's delightful humour.

He pushed back his cuffs, and pranced up to Skinner.

"You sneakin', sneerin' cad!" he said. "Always gittin' at me, and now gittin' at my pal Spadger! Come on!"

Skinner backed hastily away. In a battle of words Skinner could always hold his own; but when it came to fist-cuffs he was generally found wanting.

"Keep off, you blackguardly young hooligan!" he exclaimed.

Biff, biff!

Instead of keeping off, Sir Jimmy came on. His knuckles rattled on Skinner's thin and somewhat bony face and nose.

The hapless humorist dodged round Wharton.

"Keep him off!" he yelled.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No jolly fear! You shouldn't be so funny, Skinner."

"Come on, you funk!" roared Sir Jimmy.

Wharton stepped out of the way, grinning. Skinner put his hands up, with a savage look. He was bigger than Sir Jimmy, and ought to have been able to give a good account of himself—but he didn't! Sir Jimmy knocked him right and left, till Skinner fairly backed out and ran for it.

"That's good enough for 'im!" snorted the baronet. "And I got the same for hanybody what says a word again my pal Spadger!"

He accompanied that remark with a warlike look at the captain of the Remove.

"You're not going to fight me, Jimmy," said Wharton, laughing.

"Well, then, you let my pal alone," said the baronet.

And he drove his hands into his pockets, and walked away whistling shrilly.

Snoop and Bunter, who had hovered near with the intention of making some humorous observations on the subject of Sir Jimmy's expected guest, decided to reserve their humour for another occasion. The schoolboy baronet was evidently not in a mood for humour.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Great Chance for Skinner!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What about the match?"

Bob Cherry wanted to know.

"I've been thinking about that," said Harry Wharton. "It's a match with the Third. Tubb & Co. aren't exactly dangerous."

"Not exactly," grinned Bob. "I suppose some of us are standing out, to give the lesser lights of the Remove a chance."

"All of us, I think," said Harry.

"Well, just as you like; but cricket's cricket," said Bob, with rather a regretful glance towards the green field. "We don't want the Third to beat the Remove, you know!"

"With Squiff and Tom Brown and Toddy in the eleven, it's not likely to be a win for the Third," said Harry. "I don't think we're risking much. The fact is, I'm thinking of giving Skinner & Co. a chance this afternoon."

"My hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific!" exclaimed Hurree Jameet Singh. "The esteemed and ridiculous Skinner cannot play cricketfully."

"First-class play isn't wanted against the Third. Suppose we give Skinner a look-in, and Snoop and Stott and Bunter and Bolsover major—"

"And every blessed dud you can hunt up inside the walls of Greyfriars!" exclaimed Johnny Bull, in astonishment.

"Look here, what's the little game?" demanded Nugent. "You've got something up your sleeve, Harry."

Wharton laughed.

"Well, I'm thinking of Vivian and his weird visitor," he confessed. "Vivian's set on the poor kid coming here. And—and it would be a bit nicer all round if Skinner and company were busily occupied this afternoon. I suppose they'll be glad to play for the Form. And they'll be off the scene, then, when this Sparrow chap arrives."

"It's risking the match to play so many thumping chumps," said Johnny Bull, with a shake of the head. "There's the Form record to think of."

"Five or six good men will be enough to beat the Third," said Harry. "The rest can slack as much as they like. Skinner and his friends aren't likely to do anything else, I know!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here come the merry heroes," grinned Bob Cherry.

Tubb & Co. of the Third Form were on their way to Little Side.

Tubb gave the Removites a lofty look. Tubb of the Third lived in hopes of beating the Remove at cricket—some day.

"We're ready when you are," said Tubb.

"Ready to give you a lickin' you know," said Paget, the dandy of the Third.

"Ready to wipe you off the glad earth," added Bolsover minor.

Wharton looked at his watch.

"Stumps pitched in ten minutes," he said. "We won't be late, Tubby. Give us a few minutes to make our wills!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubb snorted, Paget sniffed, Bolsover minor and Wingate minor grinned. The fag cricketers marched on. The Famous Five turned to the School House. Bolsover major of the Remove was in the doorway talking to Skinner and Snoop, and he gave the Co. an unpleasant look.

"Family concern, as usual, to-day, I suppose?" he sneered.

"Eh? I don't quite catch on," said Wharton.

"Don't you? Don't you think it's time somebody else had a look-in in the matches?" jeered Bolsover major.

"Some of the fellows think they had a right to play in the last Highcliffe match."

"About three-quarters of the Remove thought so, I think," said Wharton good-temperedly. "Must make up the eleven according to requirements, Bolsover. You are not up to Highcliffe form, frinstance."

"I dare say you think so!" sniffed Bolsover major.

"Well, as I'm skipper, what I think is of some consequence, isn't it?" asked Harry. "But never mind that. Would you care to play this afternoon?"

The bully of the Remove looked more amiable at once. Bolsover major was quite convinced that he was up to the form required by the most exacting fixture in the Remove list. He regarded it as his natural right to figure in the Highcliffe, St. Jim's, and Rookwood matches; but unfortunately the cricket captain did not see eye to eye with him. However, it was something to play in the Form team in a Form match, and the bully of the Remove looked as amiable as it was given to him to look.

"I'm your man," he said. "I don't see why Skinner shouldn't have a chance for once, if you come to that, too."

"Skinner?" said Wharton thoughtfully, while the Co. smiled.

Skinner sneered. "Catch Wharton putting me in!" he said. "I'm not one of his pals."

Wharton affected not to hear that unpleasant remark.

"Skinner?" he repeated. "You see, you hardly ever turn up for practice, Skinner."

"I rather think I'm in form enough for a fag match," said Skinner disdainfully.

"Give him a chance!" said Bolsover major.

"Well, it's a go," said Wharton, as if making up his mind. "You can chuck it this afternoon, Bob, and Skinner can play."

"Any old thing," said Bob Cherry, with a smile. "Wish you luck, Skinner!"

"Oh, all right!" said Skinner, considerably surprised, and not very pleased, as a matter of fact. He liked sneering about the Remove captain playing his pals, as he put it. But he was not keen to exert himself on a warm afternoon, when he came to think of it; and neither was he keen to give up some little schemes he had been forming for Sir Jimmy's benefit that afternoon. "But—but I say," he went on, "I don't want to shove myself in, if it comes to that—"

"It doesn't come to that," said Wharton calmly. "I offer you the place."

"It's a chance for you, Skinner," said Bolsover major, in surprise.

Skinner bit his lip. He was fairly caught.

"And you can play, too, Snoop," said Wharton.

Snoop jumped.

"Me?" he ejaculated.

"Let's see what you can do."

"Oh!" said Snoop.

"I say, you fellows," chimed in Billy Bunter, "if Wharton can play Snoop he can play me. I'm better than Snoop any day!"

"Must draw a line somewhere," said Bolsover major. "You're a fumbling idiot, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

"Well, after all, Bunter might have a chance," said Wharton thoughtfully. "Get into your clobber, Bunter. I'll play you."

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Bunter, blinking in amazement through his big spectacles. "You—you mean it?"

"Certainly!"

"Good! I'll show you something like cricket!" cried Bunter, with emphasis, and he rolled into the house to change.

Skinner and Snoop were exchanging dubious glances. They did not want to play that afternoon, in point of fact. They were ready to grouse about being left out, but they were not willing to exert themselves.

"Look here, Wharton," said Skinner at last; "I don't know that I care about playing this afternoon. On second thoughts, I'll stand out."

"Same here," said Snoop at once. "I've got something else on, to be candid."

"You're refusing?" exclaimed Bolsover major, in astonishment. "Why, only five minutes ago you were sneering about Wharton playing only his own friends!" Bolsover major was a good deal of a bully, but he had some sense of justice. "Now Wharton's offered you places in the team are you going to refuse to play?"

"Yes, I am," said Skinner. "I've got something else on."

"Same here!"

Bolsover major frowned.

"You're not going to refuse!" he said, in his most dictatorial tone. "Here you've been jawing to me for ten minutes, running Wharton down, and making out that he doesn't give you fair play! Now he comes along and offers you places in the team, and you're too dashed slack to play! You're not going to do it! You'll play!"

"I suppose we can do as we like?" bawled Skinner.

Bolsover major shook his head.

"No, you jolly well can't! If you didn't want to play, what were you grouching about being left out for? You'll come in and get into your flannels, you two, and I'll see that you do it, too. Come on!"

Skinner and Snoop looked furious. They were pals of Percy Bolsover's, in a way, but Bolsover's friendship was an unreliable quantity. The bully of the Remove looked so truculent now that they did not venture to argue with him. They went into the house with him sullenly, to change, and the Famous Five indulged in a chortle.

"Poor old slackers!" grinned Bob Cherry. "They'll score duck's eggs, but they'll have to field, anyway. Perhaps they won't grouse so much after this—in case they're not asked to play."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer came out of the house looking glum. He glanced rather reproachfully at the Co.

"You fellows seem very merry," he remarked. "Blessed if I feel merry! I hear that Skinner and Snoop have got on to it, and they're gettin' up some scheme or other for the Sparrow's benefit. Bunter says so."

"That's all right—Skinner and Snoop and Bunter are playing cricket this afternoon," said Wharton.

"Begad! Are they?"

"Yes—and they won't worry Sir Jimmy and his pal," said Harry laughing. "And we're going to help you look after the Spadger, Mauly."

"You're cuttin' cricket?" asked his lordship, in surprise.

"Yes."

"Begad! You're awfully good," said Lord Mauleverer gratefully. "I'm awfully obliged to you. This is goin' to be an awful afternoon!"

"Buck up!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly, and Lord Mauleverer just dodged an encouraging smack on the shoulder.

Sir Jimmy Vivian was already posted at the gates, waiting there for his expected guest. His eyes were on the road, upon which he expected every moment to see the dusty figure of the

London waif. Lord Mauleverer joined him there—and there was a startling contrast between Sir Jimmy's bright and cheery face and the lengthy and lugubrious countenance of his lordship.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder is Called In!

VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, looked up with an expression of amazement as Skinner came into his study.

The Bounder of Greyfriars was smoking a cigarette. It almost fell from his mouth at the sight of Skinner.

Skinner was in flannels, and had bat under his arm. Otherwise he did not look much like a cricketer. His face was dark and sullen, and his eyes had a spiteful gleam in them. Certainly he did not appear to be keen on the game.

"You?" ejaculated the Bounder. "You playing cricket?"

"I'm in the Form Eleven!" said Skinner savagely.

The Bounder stared.

"You!"

"Surprising, ain't it?"

"Well, rather!" agreed Vernon-Smith. "Who'd have thought it? Is this Wharton's idea of a joke on the Third?"

"I can play cricket, I suppose?" said Skinner fiercely.

"Something wrong with your supposer, then, I should say," remarked the Bounder coolly. "You can't!"

Skinner flung his bat savagely on the table.

"I don't want to play," he said. "Wharton's tricked me into it. He's offered me the place, taking me at my word—I never thought he'd do it. It's to dish what I was planning for that rotten ragamuffin who's coming here this afternoon."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder.

"Oh, cut the cackle, confound you!"

"If you don't want to play why are you going to play?" asked the Bounder.

"Wharton can't make you."

"That fool Bolsover is backing him up. It happens that I'd just been saying to Bolsover that Wharton would never give me a chance, because he keeps the cricket in his own gang. You know Bolsover! Now if I don't play I've got a fight on with him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fat-headed rotter!" said Skinner savagely. "I've made the silly fool back up against Wharton more than once, by piling it on about favouritism and all that, and—and now he seems to smell a rat, and he's going to make me play, or else I've got to fight him. I don't want to fight him."

"I imagine not," grinned the Bounder.

"You were always too dashed clever, Skinner, and catching yourself in your own traps. If you refused the place when it's offered, it amounts to telling Bolsover plainly that you've been pulling his leg, and setting him against Wharton for nothing. A fool never likes to find out that he's been fooled!"

"Well, I've got to play!" growled Skinner. "Wharton's idea—I can see that—is to keep me sticking on that confounded cricket-ground all the afternoon so that I can't chip in when that ragamuffin is here to see Vivian. Snoop's in the same fix—and they've even put Bunter in the team!"

"By gad! What a team!"

"Good enough to beat the Third. Not if I can help it, though!" said Skinner viciously.

The Bounder gave him a contemptuous smile. In his anger and malice Skinner was capable of giving away the match, so far as lay in his power. The Bounder, with all his faults, had never fallen so low as that.

"But I didn't come in to talk about that," said Skinner. "I may not be able to get off while that young ruffian's here, Smithy. Will you take it on?"

"Take what on?"

"Showing him up," said Skinner eagerly. "You could do it better than I could, if you liked. Their idea is to keep him out of sight of the masters, and all that. They want to keep Vivian from getting into a row for bringing him here, and to avoid a scene, and so on. I want just the reverse."

"You would!" smiled the Bounder.

"It's the chance of a lifetime," said Skinner. "The dirty little rotter has no right to come to a school like this. Like his cheek, I think! Quelch will have him turned out if he sees him, I should say. Vivian will get into a row. And if everybody sees the two little slummy rotters together, it will make Mauleverer simply squirm with shame. Vivian's his relation, you know. They can be made to sit up all round."

The Bounder laughed.

"And that isn't all," went on Skinner, his eyes gleaming viciously. "From what Bunter says—he heard them talking—this kid from the slums is a regular rotter—a little beast who's been taught to pick pockets, and all that. He might pinch something while he's here—"

"My hat! That would make a terrific row!"

"That's what I want!" said Skinner, between his teeth. He rubbed his nose, which still showed the marks of Sir Jimmy's knuckles. "Mauleverer would nearly die of shame, I think, if that happened, and it were shown up. Fancy the slummy little beast being taken in to the Head, and Mauleverer called in, and Vivian, and perhaps the police sent for!"

"Quite an entertainment!" yawned the Bounder.

"And Wharton would be dragged into it—he's backing Mauleverer up," said Skinner. "They'd all be drawn into it, and ragged by the Head. You're up against them now, Smithy."

The Bounder smiled.

"What do you want me to do exactly?" he asked, eyeing the cad of the Remove very curiously.

"What I was going to do, if that rotter, Wharton, hadn't got me off the scene!" said Skinner savagely. "See that all Greyfriars knows that little slum beast is here—let the whole school see him, by hook or by crook—and give him a chance to pinch something. He's bound to rise to it."

"By gad!"

"It will make the whole gang of rotters squirm," said Skinner eagerly. "And it's just in your line, Smithy. You're awfully deep!"

"Thanks! I was going down to see Jerry Ilawke at the Cross Keys this afternoon," remarked Vernon-Smith thoughtfully.

"You can chuck that for once, to oblige a pal."

"Such a pal as you, Skinney!" smiled the Bounder. "After all, it would be very entertaining, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, rather! And—"

The study door opened, and Bolsover major looked in.

"Oh, you're here!" he said. "Come on, Skinner!"

"I'm coming!" growled Skinner. He cast a glance back at the smiling Bounder as he moved to the door. "You won't be going out this afternoon, Smithy?"

"No. I sha'n't go out, after all," assented the Bounder.

"Good!"

Skinner followed Bolsover major down the passage. He was not quite satisfied; but he felt that he had done his best—or

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his worst. Snoop was with the bully of the Remove, and he was looking vicious. Bolsover major had no mercy on the two slackers.

Bolsover was not a bright youth. It was easy enough for a cunning fellow like Skinner to influence him, and Skinner had caused a great deal of trouble for the captain of the Remove by doing so. Favouritism in cricket was Skinner's constant complaint, and Bolsover major had sympathised with him. But Skinner's prompt refusal of a place in the team had opened Bolsover's not very sharp eyes, and he was angry—and very determined.

It was a standing grouse with Skinner that he never had a chance in the Form Eleven, and he had obtained Bolsover's sympathy and encouragement, and now he refused it when it was offered. It had dawned upon Bolsover's somewhat dull brain that the cad of the Remove had been pulling his leg for his own purposes, and that suspicion made Bolsover as hard as nails towards his whilom follower.

He kept a very sharp eye on Skinner and Snoop as he piloted them down to Little Side. He was prepared to collar them if they showed any disposition to bolt, knock their heads together, and march them down to the field with a grip on their necks. Bolsover major was a rather high-handed fellow—at least, when he was dealing with fellows like Skinner and Snoop.

The Famous Five were on the ground, but they were not in flannels. Sampson Quincy Ifley Field, otherwise Squiff, had willingly accepted the captaincy for the match—though he was not over-pleased with the team he was provided with. Still, the Australian junior had no doubt of beating the lag eleven of the Third.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here come the conquering heroes!" remarked Bob Cherry. "Make it a century, Skinner!"

"The centuryfulness will be terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh. "The duckeggfulness will also be great!"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter was there, looking as if he were on the point of bursting out of his flannels. "I rather think I shall get a century, you know!"

"How many centuries will it take you to get it?" inquired Johnny Bull.

The Owl of the Remove gave Johnny a disdainful blink.

"You shouldn't blare your jealousy like that, Bull," he said. "If you're envious of a fellow's form, it's better to keep it dark."

"Why, you fat idiot—" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose you'll be putting me in first, Squiff?" remarked Bunter.

Squiff chuckled.

"I don't think!" he replied.

"Better, you know! A really good innings to begin with will encourage the fellows. In fact, I insist!" said Bunter firmly.

"Insist away," said Squiff, laughing.

"Ready, Tubb?"

"Waiting!" said Tubb loftily.

The two skippers tossed for innings, and Squiff won the toss. He elected to bat first, and Tubb & Co. of the Third, went into the field.

"You'll open the innings with me, Brownie," said Squiff. "Bolsover, old scout, see that none of the batsmen get too far away, will you?"

Squiff had had a hint from Wharton.

"You bet!" said Bolsover major, with emphasis.

Squiff and Tom Brown went into the field. The rest of the eleven, in order of play, was—Peter Todd, Mark Linley, Penfold, Rake, Tom Dutton, Bolsover major, Skinner, Snoop, Bunter. There were four of the best, three very good

players, and four that were of little use, in the Remove Eleven. Harry Wharton & Co. remained on the field to watch the game, and encourage the lesser lights with their presence, till they should be wanted—when Sir Jimmy's pal from Carker's Rents arrived at Greyfriars!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Cricket!

SQUIFF and Tom Brown made the running for the Remove. Tubb & Co., in the field, had plenty to do. As a matter of fact, Third Form bowling was not first-rate, though Jack Wingate—the minor of the captain of Greyfriars—was a good fast bowler for a youngster. Wingate of the Sixth gave a good deal of time to coaching his minor, and Jack had benefited by it.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked on, with one eye, as it were, on the school gates. Skinner and Snoop waited, with very surly expressions. They would gladly have cleared off and left the eleven in the lurch, but that they were not allowed to do. Bolsover major was quite prepared to knock their heads together if they tried it, and there were the Famous Five to be reckoned with.

Vernon-Smith sauntered down to Little Side while the innings was on. Harry Wharton gave him a friendly nod.

The Bounder no longer played for the Remove—his peculiar manners and customs forbade that. He had fiercely resented at first his exclusion from the team. But that seemed to be over. To the surprise and annoyance of Skinner & Co. the Bounder kept on speaking terms with Harry Wharton, and showed no disposition whatever to give the captain of the Remove a fall, as Skinner had hoped he would.

Wharton, indeed, had been considering of late whether it would be possible to give the Bounder a show in the team again. But there were difficulties in the way. At his best the Bounder was as good a player as any in the Remove; but, owing to his foolish way of life he could never be depended upon to be at his best. After a night out of bounds, Smithy was not in a condition to play in a hard match. He would always have been a most uncertain quantity to reckon upon.

"Thirty for none!" remarked Bob Cherry, with a grin. "I don't quite think the Third will pull it off this time."

But a few minutes later he added:

"There goes Brownie!"

The New Zealand junior was out to Wingate minor's bowling. Peter Todd went in next, and, by a great stroke of luck, Paget caught him in the next over. But when Mark Linley joined Squiff at the wickets the innings looked like being booked for a long life.

The score jumped to 50 before Squiff was out. Penfold made 10, and was then bowled by Jack Wingate. Rake took his place. Dick Rake had scored 4 when he was stumped.

"Looking up for the Third," remarked Nugent. "Sixty-four for five wickets. The Remove may have to bat a second time."

Tom Dutton went in, and was still batting when Mark Linley got out. Then came Bolsover major's turn.

Bolsover gave Skinner and Snoop an expressive glance as he went to the wickets. As soon as he was gone the two slackers exchanged glances. Squiff gave them a smiling look.

"I think I'll go and get a ginger-pop," remarked Skinner, with a sidelong look at the Australian junior.

"You won't!" said Squiff cheerfully.

"Look here, Field—"

"You'll be wanted soon. Stick where you are!"

Squiff swung his bat in a meaning way. Skinner and Snoop looked at the bat and looked at Squiff, and decided to remain where they were.

The score was exactly a hundred when Tom Dutton came out, and Peter Todd clapped his deaf study-mate on the shoulder.

"Jolly good for you!" he said appreciatively.

"Eh?"

"Good for you!" shouted Peter.

The deaf junior shook his head.

"Nothing over the allowance," he said firmly.

"Eh?" ejaculated Peter. "What allowance?"

"Didn't you say food for me?"

"Oh, my hat! Good for you!" shrieked Peter.

"Wood for me? What wood?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd did not explain further. Tom Dutton looked very puzzled, but he had to remain puzzled.

"Man in, Skinner!" said Squiff.

"I say, Field, hadn't I better go in?" urged Billy Bunter. "I'm getting pretty tired of waiting here, I can tell you! I'm hungry, too."

"You won't have long to wait!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Bob was right. Skinner would probably not have put up a good show if he had done his best. But he went to the wickets with the determination to do his worst—which was unnecessary.

"Play up!" said Bolsover major, as Skinner passed him on his way.

Skinner's eyes gleamed.

"Yes, you watch me!" he said.

And he went on to his end.

Tubb was bowling; and Tubb was not exactly a dangerous bowler. But he bagged Skinner's wicket with the first ball.

There was a cheer from the Third-Formers round the field.

"Well bowled, Tubb!"

"Bravo!"

Tubb of the Third grinned with glee. But Tubb's triumphs were not over yet. Snoop replaced Skinner at the wickets, with a sneering grin on his seedy face. Tubb sent down a ball that Billy Bunter could have stopped, but Snoop did not stop it. It spread-eagled his wicket.

"Bravo, Tubb!" roared the Third.

Tubb's chubby face was glowing like a full moon with satisfaction. This was something like! Tubb prided himself upon his batting, but he had never set up as a great bowler. Yet here he was taking wickets to order, as it were!

Squiff gave Sidney James Snoop a very expressive glance as he came off.

"Ducks' eggs are cheap to-day!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"The measly worm threw away his wicket!" growled Johnny Bull. "So did Skinner."

"Not at all," said Skinner blandly. "The bowling's deadly. You know what a bowler Tubb is."

"Liar!" said Johnny Bull, who had a painful directness of speech sometimes.

But Skinner only grinned. He did not expect to be believed.

"Man in, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter was grunting as he put on his pads. A grin spread round the field as the fat junior ambled out to the wicket.

Owing to his short sight, the Owl of the Remove nearly walked into the wicket, and the wicket-keeper took him by the ear and led him off it, amid chortles.

"Leggo, Paget, you cheeky beast!" howled Bunter.

"There you are!" said Paget grinning.

"Don't brain me with that bat, fatty!"

"Yah! Go and eat coke!"

Billy Bunter took up his position at the wicket. He looked as if he were trying to render an exaggerated caricature of the Harrow straddle. Tubb of the Third grinned gleefully. Tubb would have given his sugar allowance to perform the bat-trick, and with Bunter at the wicket there was no reason why he shouldn't take his third wicket.

"Go it, Tubb!" sang out the Third.

Down went the ball, with all the force Tubb could muster. Billy Bunter did not even see it coming. It knocked his middle-stump clean out of the ground.

Then—and only then—did Bunter's bat revolve in the air, sweeping round with terrific vim, and as it naturally met with no resistance the momentum of that terrific sweep spun Bunter round like a top.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A yell of merriment arose as Bunter revolved on his own axis, so to speak, and sat down on the crease with a heavy bump.

"Ow!"

"How's that?" yelled Tubb, in great glee.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How's that, umpire?"

"Out! Ha, ha, ha!"

"The bat-trick! Hurrah! Good old Tubby!" roared the Third.

"I—I say, you fellows, I'm not out!" yelled Bunter. "Why, Tubb hasn't bowled yet—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You Owl!" shrieked Paget. "Can't you see your wicket's down?"

"I suppose you pushed it down," said Bunter, blinking at him suspiciously. "You can't stump me before the ball's bowled. I should think even a Third-Form fag would know that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, what are you fellows going off for?" shouted Bunter, scrambling up wrathfully as the field began to clear off. "I haven't had my innings yet!"

But the fieldsmen cleared off, unheeding. The innings was over, Bunter having been last man in.

Billy Bunter toddled away to the pavilion in great wrath.

"I say, you fellows, I'm not out—I haven't been bowled yet—"

"You blessed Owl!" roared Bob Cherry. "You were clean bowled!"

"Well, I didn't see the ball!"

"Did you expect to?" chuckled Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You two rotters!" shouted Bolsover major, striding up to Skinner and Snoop, who backed away in alarm. Bolsover major was even more wrathful than Billy Bunter. His innings had chiefly consisted of watching wickets going down at the other end of the pitch. He had the consolation of being "not out"; but it was not very consoling. "You two sneaking rotters, you chucked your wickets away! Do you call that cricket?"

"I—I didn't!" stuttered Snoop.

"I—!" began Skinner. "Here, I say! Leggo! Yarooooh!"

The enraged Bolsover seized the two slackers, one in each powerful hand. Their heads came together with a loud concussion.

"Yah!"

"Oh!"

Bolsover major hurled the two slackers into the grass, where they sat and rubbed their heads dazedly.

"You rotter!" shrieked Snoop.

"Oh, my hat! Oh, my head!" groaned Skinner.

"I've a jolly good mind to boot you!" roared Bolsover major. "Call that cricket?"

"Yow!"

"Ow-wow!"

"My hat! I wouldn't have missed this for worlds!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This is even better than cricket!"

"When you bounders are ready to field, we're ready to bat," Tubb of the Third remarked sarcastically.

Harry Wharton & Co. waited till the Removites were in the field. Having seen Skinner and Snoop take their places with the rest they sauntered off. The two rascals of the Remove were safe for some time now, for it was not likely that the Remove would have to bat again. Tubb & Co. would have to follow on, and Skinner and Snoop would be fielding all the time.

Satisfied that Skinner and Snoop were well disposed of, the Famous Five strolled away to the school gates.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Spadger Arrives!

SIR JIMMY VIVIAN scanned the dusty road with an eager eye. Lord Mauleverer was leaning lazily on the gate, but Sir Jimmy hardly knew that he was there.

All his thoughts were directed towards the expected arrival—the pal he had not seen since Mauly's uncle had taken him away from Carker's Rents. And a light came into the schoolboy baronet's eyes when a dusty figure appeared on the road.

Like an arrow Sir Jimmy shot out of the gateway, and Lord Mauleverer detached himself from the gate, with a yawn.

"Begad! I suppose that's the merchant!" murmured his lordship.

He gazed along the dusty road after Sir Jimmy.

That cheery youth had met the new-comer already. They were out of hearing of Mauleverer, but he could see that Sir James Vivian was greeting his pal in the most hearty manner.

Mauleverer's face grew more and more dismayed as he looked at Sir Jimmy's pal.

Exactly what the "Spadger" would look like his lordship had had only a vague idea. He had expected something rather odd and queer. The Spadger more than came up to his expectations.

At that moment his lordship was devoutly thankful that Harold Skinner was not on the spot to draw general attention to the youth from Carker's Rents.

Not that Mauleverer felt anything but kindness and sympathy for the little waif. But the Spadger was certainly a most extraordinary visitor to come to Greyfriars School.

He seemed about fourteen, though his face had a peculiar old-young look that told of a hard and troubled life. He was dressed in a man's trousers cut short, which bagged round his thin limbs, a man's coat cut down, but which reached nearly to his knees in spite of cutting down, and boots that looked as if they had been picked off a dust-heap. Round his neck he wore a coloured neckerchief, with nearly all the colours of the rainbow in it, dimmed by dirt. The cap on his tousled head was a rag. And the long tramp and sleeping in the open air had told upon the Spadger's clothes, such as they were. He was covered with dust as with a garment. His boots were caked with it. His toes, which peeped out of his boots, were thick with it. And the poor Spadger was quite innocent of socks.

"Oh, begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer helplessly.

Sir Jimmy was shaking hands warmly with the Spadger, heedless of the fact

that the handshake decidedly soiled his own hand. They came on towards the school gates together.

Lord Mauleverer watched them with mingled feelings. Pity for the unfortunate little waif, indignation that there should be such want and misery for one so young, struggled in his breast with utter dismay at the idea of introducing so dreadful a scarecrow as Sir Jimmy's old friend into the school. But the Spadger was not looking miserable. He was too accustomed to the conditions of his strange existence to feel them as Lord Mauleverer felt them for him. His face, under the perspiration and dust, was quite bright with the pleasure of seeing his old pal Jimmy again.

Doubtless Sir Jimmy realised that his old pal was not quite what was expected of a visitor at Greyfriars. There was a defiant expression on his face as he came up to the gates and met Mauleverer's eyes.

"This 'ere is my pal Spadger?" he said grimly.

The Spadger looked at Lord Mauleverer—handsome, elegant, well-dressed, cool and calm, in spite of the hot weather, and he flushed under his dust. For the first time a misgiving came into his breast. He hung back. Through the gates he could see the wide quadrangle within, with the old trees and the glimpse of grey old buildings beyond. A sudden fear seemed to smite the Spadger. He caught Vivian's arm, and hung back.

"I—I better not go in, Jimmy," he muttered huskily. "I—I never thought you was at a place like this 'ere. I—I wouldn't 'ave come if I'd knowed."

"You're coming in, of course," said Jimmy. "Ain't you come to see me?"

"Yes; but—but"—the Spadger whispered—"that there young toff—"

"He's a relation of mine," said Sir Jimmy.

Lord Mauleverer recovered himself. He was ashamed of having been startled out of his usually urbane manners for a moment.

He stepped gracefully towards the new-comer.

"Glad to meet you, my young friend!" he said, holding out his hand.

Sir Jimmy grinned with satisfaction.

But the poor Spadger gazed as if frightened at the slim and elegant hand that was extended to him, not venturing to touch it.

"Shake hands with Mauleverer, Spadger!"

Lord Mauleverer settled that matter by taking Spadger's hand and shaking it cordially.

"Now come in!" said Sir Jimmy.

"I—I say, Jimmy—"

"This 'ere way!"

Sir Jimmy fairly dragged his dusty friend through the old gateway. Lord Mauleverer followed in a dazed state. Gosling was in the doorway of his lodge, and he jumped as he saw the new-comer.

"My heye!" ejaculated Gosling. And in righteous indignation he came out to bar the way.

The Spadger shrank away, and would certainly have bolted but for Sir Jimmy's grip on his arm. But the schoolboy baronet held him fast.

"This 'ere is agin the rules, Master Vivian," said Gosling severely. "You can't bring tramps into the school, and you knows it! Wot I says is this 'ere —"

"Who're you calling a tramp?" demanded Sir Jimmy fiercely.

"That there young vagabond," said Gosling. "And wot I says is this 'ere —"

"This 'ere gentleman is a friend of mine," said Sir Jimmy, "and I'll thank you to keep a civil tongue in your 'ead, Gosling!"

"My heye!"

"It's all right, Gosling," said Lord Mauleverer feebly. "This young gentleman is a friend of ours."

Gosling stood with his mouth open in astonishment as the elegant Mauleverer took Spadger's disengaged arm and walked on with him. The porter did not venture to dispute the matter with Mauleverer.

Between the two Removeites the Spadger was walked into the quad with slow and reluctant footsteps. Greyfriars had had a terrifying effect upon him.

Gosling blinked after them dazedly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

It was Bob Cherry's cheery voice. The Famous Five had arrived on the scene.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Honoured Guest!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. looked at Spadger.

They had to look at him.

But they had their faces quite under control, and poor Spadger did not observe surprise, or any other emotion, in their looks.

The sight of Greyfriars had borne in upon Spadger's mind the fact that he had been somewhat wanting in tact to visit his old chum at the new big school. In his life at Carker's Rents he had never heard or dreamed of anything like Greyfriars, with its grey, stately old buildings, its shady quadrangle, its wide playing-fields, and its crowds of well-dressed fellows.

But if anything could put the little fellow at his ease, the cheery cordiality of the Famous Five was sure to do it.

Whether there would be a row if the masters saw Spadger, and whether it would cause trouble to themselves for giving him a welcome, they did not know, and it was not much use thinking about it now. Their only idea was to help Lord Mauleverer through a difficult business, and to avoid having poor Spadger's feelings hurt while he was at Greyfriars.

And they were prepared to give time and trouble, and, if necessary, to face a wiggling, to carry out that kind and good-natured intention.

"This chap your friend, Vivian?" said Wharton cheerily.

"That's old Spadger!" said Sir Jimmy.

He stole a suspicious look at the captain of the Remove as he spoke.

He knew very well that Wharton must have remarked the visitor's extraordinary appearance, and he hardly understood the delicate motives that caused Harry to assume a mask of polite blindness.

"How do you do, kid?" said Harry cordially.

"Glad to see you at Greyfriars!" said Bob Cherry, giving the Spadger a friendly tap on the shoulder.

"The gladfulness is terrific!" declared the Nabob of Bhanipur, a remark that caused the Spadger to stare a little.

And Nugent and Johnny Bull, having nothing particular to say, grinned the most hospitable grin they could assume at short notice.

Sir Jimmy looked pleased.

"You'll like these 'ere blokes, Spadger," he said. That's Wharton—captain of our Form; that's Nugent; 'im with the feet is Bob Cherry; and that's Bull; and the darkey is a real prince—'Urree Singh."

Bob Cherry, perhaps, did not like being described as "him with the feet," and possibly the princely Nabob of Bhanipur was not flattered at being alluded to as a "darkey." But Sir James Vivian had manners and customs of his own. Lord Mauleverer went very pink. The Famous Five shook hands all round with the silent and bashful Spadger, to impress upon him that he was very welcome, and was, in fact, quite one of themselves.

"Better get into the 'ouse," said Sir Jimmy. "Come on, Spadger! I dessey you want a rest, old son!"

"I do that!" faltered the Spadger.

"But—"

"Kim on!"

Ogilvy and Russell of the Remove paused, in passing, to look on. Bunter minor of the Second Form stood rooted to the ground, gazing.

It was pretty clear that if Spadger remained on view in the quad he would soon attract a crowd. Even Sir Jimmy realised that, and he piloted his friend towards the School House as fast as he could.

Lord Mauleverer went with them; and the Famous Five gathered round like a bodyguard. Their object was to screen Spadger from observation from the windows as much as possible. Russell and Ogilvy, who had heard of Sir Jimmy's intended visitor, guessed that this was he, and they good-naturedly joined in the procession, forming a further screen for the dusty waif. Kipps and Wibley came hurrying up across the quad, and joined up also. Sir Jimmy's friend, as he walked on, was the centre of quite a numerous crowd, and safely screened from view.

As it happened, Mr. Quelch was sitting reading at his study window, which was open, and he glanced out. But so effectually was the Spadger surrounded that the Remove-master did not observe him.

The procession arrived at the big doorway of the School House, and Vernon-Smith joined them there. There was a grin on the Bounder's face.

"That Vivian's friend?" he asked.

"That's the chap," said Bob.

"Introduce me, Vivian!" grinned the Bounder.

"No larks, Smithy," said Bob Cherry under his breath.

"Who's larking?"

"Well, don't!" said Bob. He was very uneasy as to what the Bounder's intentions might be.

Sir Jimmy looked rather suspiciously at Vernon-Smith, but he introduced him, and the blushing Spadger shook hands with the millionaire's son.

"Had a good journey down?" asked the Bounder affably.

"Purty fair," said the Spadger shyly.

"It's good weather for 'oosin' it!"

"You haven't walked from London?" exclaimed the Bounder.

Spadger grinned.

"I ain't done nothink else," he replied.

"My hat! You must be lagged!"

"I started yesterday mornin'," explained Spadger. "I slep' under a haystack last night, and a nice change it was, too, arter the old arch in Carker's Rents."

"Oh!" said Vernon-Smith.

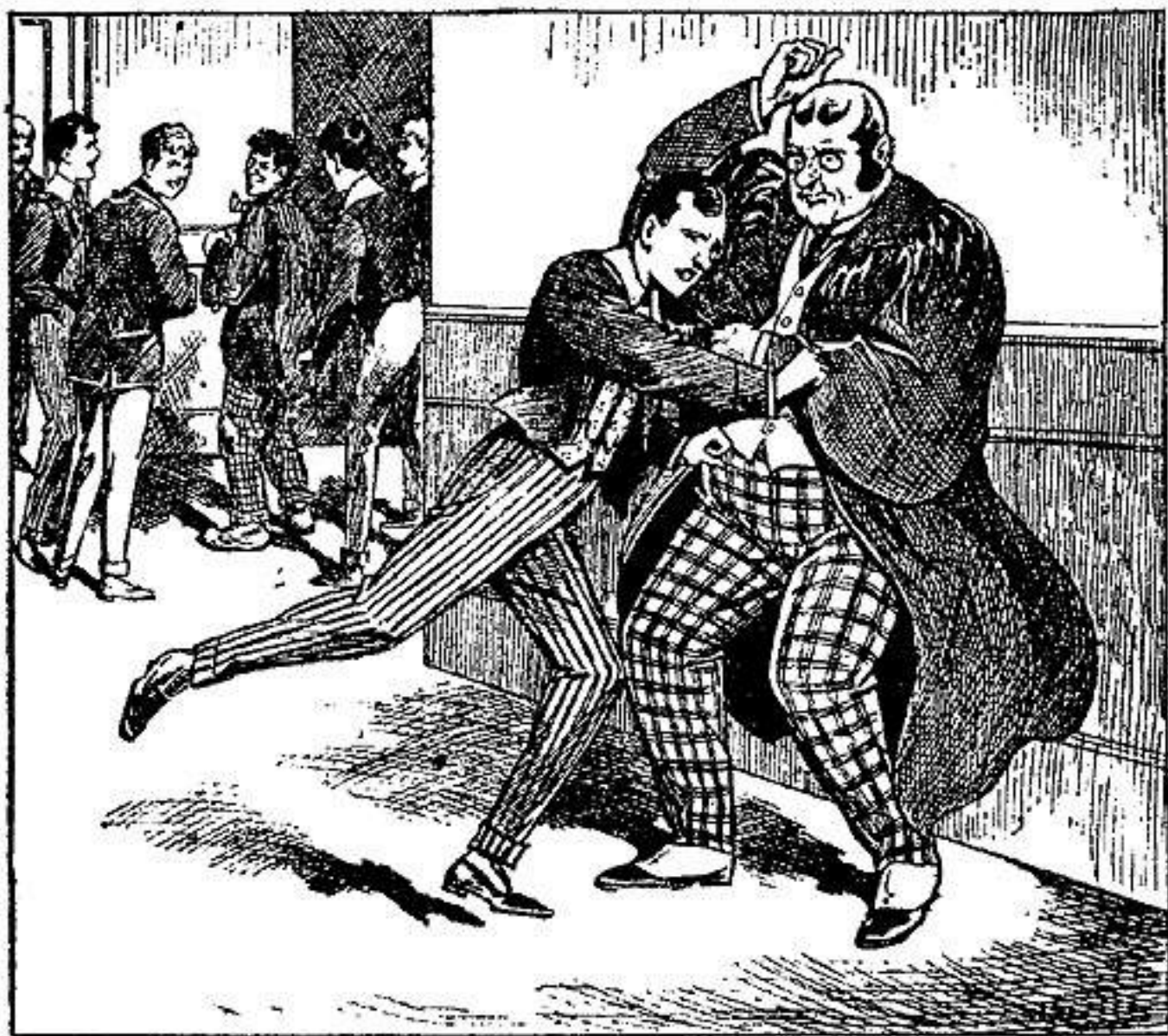
"Never knowed there was so much grass in the country," said Spadger, encouraged, and talking a little more freely. "Prime, I calls it!"

"This 'ere way!" said Sir Jimmy, piloting his friend towards the staircase.

"Ware beaks!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, appeared at the end of the passage.

Vernon-Smith suddenly detached himself from the group and ran down the



The Bounder in a Hurry! (See Chapter 7.)

passage, as if in a hurry to get to the Common-room. Apparently not seeing Dr. Prout, he ran right into him, and there was a loud gasp from the stout Form-master as he staggered against the wall.

"Ow! Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Prout. "What—what—"

"Sorry, sir!" gasped the Bounder.

"Vernon-Smith—you utterly stupid and clumsy boy—"

"Sorry, sir—"

"Why do you not look where you are running?" thundered Mr. Prout. "Take two hundred lines, Vernon-Smith! I shall report this to your Form-master!"

"Oh, sir!"

Mr. Prout gave him a majestic frown, and, having recovered his breath, walked on—little dreaming that the accident had been intentional. By the time he reached the outer hall Spadger had disappeared. The crowd of juniors had rushed him up the stairs.

"Good old Smithy!" murmured Bob Cherry, in great admiration of the Bounder's quick resource.

Spadger was safe in the Remove passage now. On this fine half-holiday the studies were deserted. Everybody was on the cricket-ground or the river.

"Don't jaw about this, you chaps!" Wharton murmured to Russell and his companions.

"Mum's the word!" said Ogilvy, with a nod. "We savvy!"

And Russell, Ogilvy, Kipps, and Wibley went downstairs again. Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five were left with Sir Jimmy and his friend. Spadger was pretty secure from notice so long as he remained in the junior quarters—till the fellows began to come in at tea-time.

All had gone pretty well so far—not at all as the amiable Skinner had intended. Skinner was still fielding in the Form match, and mentally calling down anathemas on many heads as he fagged to and fro in the hot sunshine.

"Tea in the study—what?" said Bob Cherry.

"Perhaps your pal would care for a wash and a brush-up, Jimmy!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"I dessay he would," said the baronet, with dignity. "Come, on Spadger. This 'ere way."

He led his visitor up to the Remove dormitory.

Even Sir Jimmy was beginning to realise that his friend was not quite in proper trim for a visit at Greyfriars. Poor Spadger realised it only too keenly. But for the kindness of his reception the little waif would have been overwhelmed with shame and mortification.

He stole several sidelong glances at Sir Jimmy, but he read only friendliness in his old chum's face. The schoolboy baronet was not in the least ashamed of his friend. But he had realised that it would be just as well not to let the Head or the masters see him if it could be avoided. And he was glad that Skinner and Snoop were occupied elsewhere.

"I didn't oughter 'ave come 'ere, Jimmy," said the Spadger, as the baronet took him into the Remove dormitory. His dusty boots left very plain traces on the clean floor.

"Rot!" said Sir Jimmy cheerily. "It's a long time since I've seed you, Spadger."

"It are, Jimmy. But you ain't forgot an ole pal?"

"No fear! I'll give you a brush down," said Sir Jimmy, sorting out a clothes-brush.

He raised clouds of dust from the waif's odd garments, and a sea of dust collected on the floor round the Spadger.

"You're makin' a awful muck 'ere, Jimmy!" said Spadger nervously.

"That don't matter."

"I'd 'ave put on some better clobber if I'd 'ad any, Jimmy."

"That's all right."

"These trousis is noo," said Spadger eagerly. "I give old Moses nincence for 'em, Jimmy!"

Sir Jimmy did not think they were very cheap even at that price, but he did not say so.

"Ow you gettin' on 'ere, Jimmy?" asked Spadger, as the baronet brushed away industriously.

"Fust rate."

"All them blokes your friends?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Lucky for you!" said the Spadger wistfully. "Do they speak to you jost as if you was one of theirselves, Jimmy?"

"You 'eard 'em," said Jimmy, a little restively. "Why shouldn't they? I'm a baronet, ain't I? And there ain't another in the school. Temple, of the Fourth, 'as a father a baronet, though."

"And that there lord wot's your relation—he's pally?"

"Course he is."

"And to think that you used to 'awk winkles in the street, Jimmy!" said the Spadger.

"Better 'ave a wash," said Sir Jimmy, swamping water into a basin.

"I 'ad a wash afore I started yesterday."

"H'm! We wash every day 'ere. Spadger."

"By gum!" said Spadger. The glories of Jimmy's new life were a trifle dimmed to the little waif by that statement.

However, he washed, and Sir Jimmy combed and brushed his hair, the Spadger remarking that he was "werry pertickler!"

In about an hour Sir Jimmy's labours were finished, and the Spadger certainly looked all the better for them.

"I—I say, Spadger," Sir Jimmy hesitated. "Look 'ere, old son, I can let you 'ave some noo clothes—if you like—"

Spadger shook his head.

"No fear!" he said promptly. "I ain't come 'ere to cadge, Jimmy. I come to see you as an old pal."

"I shouldn't miss 'em!" said Sir Jimmy. "Look 'ere, I've got three pairs of boots, Spadger, and they'd fit you—"

"I ain't taking nothink, Jimmy!" said Spadger firmly. "Ain't you wrote already and offered me money, and ain't I said no? Nothink of that kind!"

"But—but—"

The Spadger looked at him with sudden suspicion.

"Oh!" he said, with a deep breath. "You—you mean I ain't dressed well enough to meet your friends—"

"No, I don't!" said Sir Jimmy with sturdy loyalty. "Kim on, Spadger, jost as you are."

"I—I don't want to disgrace you, Jimmy—"

"Bosh! Come on!"

And Sir Jimmy took his friend's arm and led him out of the dormitory before he could say anything further.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Birds of a Feather!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were preparing tea in Mauleverer's study. His lordship assisted them by sitting on the sofa and watching. The Co.'s idea was to give Spadger as handsome a spread as the food regulations would permit, and keep him company in the study and talk to him, and make his visit as pleasant as possible—and see him off afterwards, keeping him from view all the time if they could. As for Sir Jimmy's intention of showing him over the school, they hoped the baronet would give up that idea. Spadger's presence was being kept dark so far, and that was all to the good.

Allowances for tea in the studies were very short, as every slice of bread and every lump of sugar was restricted, under the "grub rules." But the Co. generously pooled their allowances for the occasion, so that the guest should have plenty. They were prepared to go without in order that Greyfriars hospitality

should not suffer. It was pretty certain that at home in Carker's Rents Spadger never exceeded the food allowance. It was very doubtful whether he had the chance to live up to it.

Wharton glanced out of the window when all was ready. He could see the cricket-field, and he noted that the Third were still batting—it was doubtless their second innings. Skinner and Snoop were in the field with the rest of Squiff's team. Wharton's glance fell upon the Bounder in the quadrangle. He was talking to Sammy Bunter of the Second, and the fat fag was grinning. Wharton remembered that Bunter minor had seen Spadger come in. The two juniors were near the wall, and their voices floated up to Wharton at the window.

"Rags and tatters," Sammy Bunter was saying, with a fat chortle. "Billy told me he was coming. What a scarecrow! Look here, Smithy, I'm not going to keep mum. It's too good to keep!"

"I was going to ask you to go down to Friardale for me, Sammy," said the Bounder.

Bunter minor sniffed.

"Catch me!"

"I want some of Uncle Clegg's toffee," remarked the Bounder. "If you'd fetch me a bob's worth, Sammy, I'd go halves. And a bob's worth of ginger-pop on the same terms."

Sammy Bunter's eyes glistened behind his glasses. He was as greedy and unscrupulous as his major.

"Well, I don't mind doing it to oblige you, Smithy," he said graciously.

A two-shilling-piece changed hands, and the Bounder walked down to the gates with Bunter minor to see him off.

Harry Wharton smiled as he drew in his head from the window. He knew that Vernon-Smith would never see any of the toffee or the ginger-pop he had sent Sammy to the village for, and the Bounder knew it, too. Sammy was safely booked for the time, and that was the Bounder's object.

Sir Jimmy came into the study with Spadger a few minutes later, and the honoured guest was given a seat at the table.

His face glowed at the sight of the spread on the hospitable board. There was no doubt that Spadger was hungry.

Kind faces beaming round him put the Spadger at his ease.

"Pile in, old feller!" said Sir Jimmy.

"Wot-ho!" said Spadger.

He piled in.

Sir Jimmy looked a little uneasy for a moment as the Spadger helped himself to jam with his teaspoon, and proceeded to eat it from the dish with that instrument. The baronet had learned that at Greyfriars they did not do this. But jam was almost an unknown luxury to Spadger, and he was going to enjoy himself. Nobody but Sir Jimmy seemed to remark it, however. There was a bland blindness on all sides. Nobody else seemed to want any jam, though.

"This 'ere is prime!" said Spadger, looking round. "You blokes always feed like this 'ere?"

"Ginerally," said Sir Jimmy.

"You're in clover. You've got sugar, too!" said Spadger, in surprise. "I ain't seen sugar for donkeys' years."

It was the whole allowance of half a dozen juniors that was upon the table; but that fact was not explained to the visitor. They were only too glad to see him help himself liberally. Some of the Greyfriars fellows had found the food restrictions a little trying. It had hardly occurred to them that there were people to whom the strict allowance would have represented, not short commons, but un-

accustomed plenty. The Spadger's visit was a lesson to them, if they needed one.

Meanwhile the Bounder, after seeing Sammy Bunter safely off, had sauntered down to the cricket-ground. He found the Third Form's second innings on its last legs. Tubb & Co. had scored 30 for their first innings, and Squiff had requested them to follow on. They had followed their innings, with the result that they were now nine down for 26. Last man had just gone in as the Bounder arrived on the scene, and Skinner and Snoop were looking a little more hopeful. They were chained to the spot as long as the match lasted; but even Bolsover major could not think of keeping them any longer when it was over. That was a circumstance Wharton had been compelled to leave to chance—the possibility that the fag wickets would go down at a remarkably rapid rate to the Remove bowling.

The Bounder had thought of it, and that was why he was there. His own motives the Bounder hardly knew. He had never been considered a particularly good-natured fellow. Perhaps there was something that appealed to him in entering into a contest with Skinner and outwitting him—or perhaps the sight of the forlorn little waif from the slums had touched a soft spot in his heart. But whatever the reason, the Bounder had so far been playing Wharton's game, not Skinner's—and it was due to him that Sammy Bunter had not brought a crowd of curious fags round the door of Mauleverer's study.

The last wicket went down to Squiff's bowling, and Tubb of the Third came off the field with a grunt. The Third had scored 58 in the two innings; so they were beaten by an innings and 45 runs—which really was not worse than they might have expected. Still, nothing could alter the fact that Tubb had performed the hat trick against the Remove. And Tubb could swank on that for quite a long time.

Billy Bunter blinked reproachfully at Squiff as the fieldsmen came off. The Owl of the Remove was of opinion that the match would have ended much earlier, with a still more sweeping victory, if he had been put on to bowl. Why the Australian junior had stuck his best bowler in the long field, and kept him there, was a mystery to Bunter—unless it was dictated by personal jealousy.

Vernon-Smith joined Skinner and Snoop as they limped off the field. The match had not been an exacting one; but the two slackers were fairly done. Sidney James Snoop was drooping with fatigue, and breathing like old bellows; and Harold Skinner, though not so far gone, was tired, hot, savage, and brimming over with malice and bitterness. The Bounder regarded the two hapless cricketers with a mocking smile.

"Enjoyed yourselves?" he asked.

Snoop groaned.

"Oh, dear! I'm dead beat! I'm done! I'm nearly roasted! Blow the sun! Blow the cricket! Blow everything!"

"Still, it's a distinction to play in a Form match."

"Hang the Form match!"

Snoop limped away to the nearest seat under a tree, and sank down upon it, in the depths of misery. His face was steaming with perspiration, and he had a separate ache in every limb. He would willingly have condemned the inventor of cricket to boiling oil at that moment.

Skinner tramped on towards the School House, his face black with anger. The Bounder walked by his side.

"That ragamuffin's come, I suppose?" said Skinner.

"Yes."

"Not gone yet?"

"Not yet."

"Good!" said Skinner, between his teeth. "I'll make 'em sit up! Are they keeping him dark?"

"Naturally!"

"You haven't done as I asked!" said Skinner savagely.

"I've been rather busy, as it happens," smiled the Bounder.

He did not explain in what way he had been busy.

"Well, it's not too late." Skinner ground his teeth. "They planted that rotten cricket-match on me to keep me off the grass! I dare say Wharton didn't count on its ending so early. I'll make 'em squirm—that gang—and Mauleverer, and Vivian, and their ragamuffin pal. I'll make 'em all pay for what I've been through this afternoon! You've seen the beast, Smithy?"

"I've been introduced to him."

"My hat! I suppose he's a regular out-and-outer?"

"Quite a corker!"

"Rags and tatters and dirt—what?"

"Exactly."

"Good! They'll like Quelchy to come down on them, entertaining a hooligan like that in the school!" said Skinner viciously. "I suppose the little sweep didn't pick your pocket when you were introduced to him?"

"Ha, ha! No."

"According to what Bunter heard Vivian saying to Mauleverer, he does that kind of thing," said Skinner. "He has done it, anyway, it appears!"

"He wouldn't do it here," said Vernon-Smith, eyeing Skinner curiously. "Stands to reason Vivian has warned him."

"He's a thief, anyway!"

"He wouldn't steal here, if he is. He seems very pally with Vivian, and he's got sense enough to know that anything of that kind would land Vivian in awful trouble."

"That's what it's going to do," said Skinner, his eyes glinting.

"You seem to be certain of it," said the Bounder, laughing. "I didn't see any signs of it."

"Easy enough to plant something on the rotter," said Skinner. "He might have picked your pocket while you were talking to him."

"He might have."

"Well, I'm going to talk to him," said Skinner, with a spiteful grin. "and after that I'm going to miss something—see?"

"What a wheeze!" exclaimed the Bounder, with a light laugh.

Skinner grinned.

"That will bring it all out before the Head," he said. "That's what I want!"

"I see. You're going to plant something on Spadger, and complain to Quelchy that you've been robbed?" said the Bounder musingly.

"That's the idea."

"No good my advising you not to?"

"Not in the least," Skinner sneered.

"I suppose you're not going to give me away, Smithy?"

The Bounder laughed.

"I can suggest an improvement in the scheme," he remarked. "It would look more convincing if he robbed me instead of you—what?—while you were fielding at cricket. Suppose he had lifted my pocket-book while I was chatting with him in the hall, you happen to hear me mention that it's missing, and you think of him at once, and make inquiries?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Give me the pocket-book, old scout!"

The Bounder slipped his pocket-book into Skinner's hand and walked away, whistling carelessly. Skinner slid the book into his pocket, and went on to the School House, his eyes gleaming.

Skinner was tired, savage, bitter, and full of resentment and revenge; but it was a great comfort to him to reflect that Lord Mauleverer and his friends were to suffer, if all went well.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Trouble!

TEA in Mauleverer's study was nearly finished, when a tap came at the door. It opened, and Skinner looked in.

He did not receive a welcome.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is the game over?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, yes, it's over!" said Skinner.

"How did it go?" asked Wharton, with a smile.

"We've beaten the Third!"

"Bravo!"

"You look as if you've enjoyed yourself," remarked Nugent.

"Oh, yes; quite a good time!" assented Skinner. "Is this the merry guest? I've come to be introduced."

Spadger was looking at Skinner. He could see that the new-comer was not quite like the fellows he had already met. The sneering expression on Skinner's face was enough to enlighten him.

Sir Jimmy Vivian was restive.

"You needn't trouble, Skinner!" he snapped. "Spadger don't want to know you. You cut off!"

Skinner stood his ground. He had come there with a purpose, and he did not mean to leave till it was effected.

"Spadger!" he said. "Is that his name?"

"Yes, it is!" growled Sir Jimmy.

"My hat! Is it a name?"

"That's the door, Skinner, dear boy," said Lord Mauleverer. "Would you mind gettin' on the other side of it?"

"Oh, certainly!" smiled Skinner. "I'm going to spread the news. I'm sure a lot of fellows would like to see this merry merchant. I'd have given you a look-in before, only I've been rather busy—owing to Wharton's kindness!" He gave the captain of the Remove a malevolent look. "Where did you get those clothes, Spadger?"

Spadger flushed crimson.

Bob Cherry jumped up.

"Get out, Skinner, or I'll chuck you out!" he exclaimed.

Skinner dodged round the table, coming behind Spadger. Bob was after him like a shot.

"Hands off, you fool!" hissed Skinner.

He backed away from Bob, backing right into Spadger's chair. Spadger jumped up as the chair rocked. Skinner caught hold of him, and whirled him round between himself and Bob Cherry.

"Ere, you leggo, you bloke!" gasped Spadger.

Bob reached at Skinner and caught him by the collar. Skinner held on to Spadger as he was dragged round the table towards the door. The little waif was dragged over, and Skinner fell on him.

"Yoop!" spluttered Spadger.

The whole tea-party were on their feet in a moment. Skinner was sprawling on Spadger, and Bob had lost his hold on him.

As Skinner scrambled up he was seized by half a dozen pairs of hands.

"Let go!" he yelled. "I'm going!"

"You are!" said Wharton angrily.

Skinner was whirled to the door, and six or seven feet were planted behind him to help him into the passage. He shot out of the study like a stone from a catapult, and bumped on the passage floor, with a yell.

Bob Cherry followed him out.

Skinner leaped up as a heavy boot

started operations on his person, and fled for the stairs. Bob chased him along the passage, letting out with his boot at every other step, and Skinner fled madly down the staircase.

Bob Cherry returned a little breathlessly to Study No. 12.

"I don't think Skinner will come back," he remarked. "Not hurt, young'un?"

"No, sir!" gasped Spadger.

Spadger was breathless, but he was not hurt. He sat down again, with a very red face. Skinner had succeeded in spoiling the pleasure of his visit to the school, and the little waif was feeling very uncomfortable. Sir Jimmy's face darkened with anger.

"Another cup of tea, kid?" asked Nugent.

"Thank you, sir," faltered Spadger.

No one felt at ease now. Skinner was on the war-path, and they knew that trouble was coming. The cricket-match had kept him off the scene for most of the afternoon; but he was free to do his worst now—and in a more savage and spiteful temper than he would have been if left alone. Every moment now the chums of the Remove expected visits to the study. Skinner was certain to spread the news of the little waif's presence there.

Their expectations were soon realised.

The door opened, and Billy Bunter blinked in through his big glasses, with a fat grin on his face.

"I say, you fellows, I hear your visitor's come!" he remarked. "Skinner says—"

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

"I say, you know, I don't mind joining you," said Bunter, coming into the study. "I'm hungry, you know. I'm not proud. I'll have tea with Spadger. I don't mind. Can you give a fellow a chair?"

Wharton gave his chair to Bunter. It was the easiest way of keeping the Owl from saying anything unpleasant to Spadger. Billy Bunter started at once on what was left of the good things, and gave Spadger a benevolent blink. A liberal supply of eatables always brought out the best qualities in Bunter's nature.

But the evil moment was only staved off by placating Bunter. A few minutes later Sidney James Snoop grinned into the study.

"Hallo, you've got the chap here?" he asked. "My hat! What a sight! Where did he dig up that coat?"

A cushion flew across the study, and landed on Snoop's chest with a bump that hurled him backwards into the passage. There was a roar from Sidney James as he landed on his back.

Bob Cherry kicked the door shut.

Spadger's face was crimson.

He was seeing a side of Greyfriars that had been concealed from him hitherto by the careful management of the chums of the Remove. Lord Mauleverer looked deeply distressed. Spadger rose to his feet.

"I—I'd better be goin', Jimmy!" he muttered. "I oughter never 'ave come 'ere, an' I see that now."

"Stay where you are, Spadger," said the baronet. "Them rotters ain't no account; don't you mind them."

"Sit down, kid," said Bob Cherry. "Only a—a—a lark, you know!"

"Yaas, bogad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer helplessly.

"I'll jolly well out the next bloke wot shoves 'is nose into this 'ere study!" growled Sir Jimmy. "I ain't standin' this 'ere!"

Sir Jimmy soon had his chance. Bolsover major threw open the door, and stared in. He burst into a roar of laughter at the sight of Spadger in his ancient coat at the tea-table.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major. "Is that it? Ha, ha, ha!"

Sir Jimmy made one jump at the bully of the Remove. Bolsover major staggered back, with the baronet clinging to him and punching savagely.

But it would have gone hard with Vivian if the other juniors had not rushed to his aid. The Famous Five seized Bolsover before he could deal with the baronet, and pitched him into the passage.

But five or six fellows were coming along now, and they all grinned in at the open doorway. Harry Wharton slammed the door, and set his foot against it as it was tried from without. Bob Cherry turned the key. Loud voices and laughter rang in the Remove passage. The fellows there were not all ill-natured like Skinner by any means; but they regarded Sir Jimmy's visitor as a screaming joke, and thought it would be a lark to have him out. The Remove passage was buzzing with voices and merriment. Temple & Co. of the Fourth had joined the crowd, and a dozen fags of the Third, and two or three Shell fellows. And now voices demanded, through the keyhole, a sight of the distinguished guest.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Blow Falls!

"WHERE'S Smithy?"

Skinner was asking that question up and down Greyfriars.

He was anxious to find the Bounder, but the Bounder seemed to have vanished entirely. Skinner had spread the entertaining news of Sir Jimmy's visitor, and started a crowd to Study No. 12 to behold him in all his glory. Now he was ready to carry out the darker part of his scheme—and for that he needed the Bounder's aid. In sprawling over Spadger on the floor of the study, Skinner had deftly thrust Smithy's pocket-book into the ancient coat worn by the little waif. That, of course, was why Skinner had gone to the study and taken his chance of being thrown out on his neck. It had been quite easy, for Spadger naturally had not suspected anything of the kind.

The Bounder's pocket-book having been planted on the little waif of the slums, it was time for the Bounder to come forward and claim it. And just at that moment, when he was so badly wanted—by Skinner—Vernon-Smith had disappeared.

It was extremely exasperating, and Skinner anathematised the Bounder as he sought him up and down the school—in vain.

Apparently Smithy had gone out. Sir Jimmy's guest would probably be departing soon. Skinner could not afford to waste much time. As Smithy was not there to help him carry out his scheme, he had to carry it out by himself. After all, it was plain sailing. To accuse the waif of having picked the Bounder's pocket, to find the stolen pocket-book on him, and then, in the most virtuous manner to call Mr. Quelch to deal with the matter—that was Skinner's little game. That disastrous conclusion to the Spadger's visit was all Skinner could want in the way of revenge.

Having failed to find the Bounder, Skinner made his way at last to the Remove passage, which he found crowded with juniors.

"They're keepin' the door locked!" grinned Temple of the Fourth. "They won't let us see their merry visitor."

"What on earth is he like, Skinner?" asked Hazeldene.

"A frightful-looking young ruffian," said Skinner. "Looks as if he's just come off the treadmill. And I rather fancy he's booked for the treadmill again, too. Smithy's missed his pocket-book!"

"My hat!"

"Oh, gad!" ejaculated Temple. "Is that the kind of visitor they've got?"

"Looks like it," said Skinner. "Smithy's told me he was talking to the young hooligan when he came, and he missed his pocket-book soon afterwards. He's gone out now—but I don't see the fun of allowing the young rotter to walk off with Smithy's pocket-book. Smithy doesn't want to—to make a fuss, but I think he ought to be made to give it up before he goes."

"I should jolly well think so!" exclaimed Bolsover major. Bolsover's temper had not been improved by his violent ejection from the study. He was quite prepared to forget his recent high-handed dealings with Skinner, and back him up now. "A blessed young thief! Well, he looks it!"

"I say, that's rather thick!" said Hazeldene incredulously. "Wharton wouldn't have anything to do with him if—"

"Wharton doesn't know, of course," said Skinner. "But he's going to know. Let me get to that door!"

Skinner pushed through the crowd to the door of No. 12, and knocked.

"Go away, hang you!" came Bob Cherry's angry voice from within.

"You've got to let me in," said Skinner coolly. "That young vagabond has picked Smithy's pocket."

"You lyin' cad!" yelled Sir Jimmy furiously.

"I ain't!" gasped Spadger almost tearfully. "You young gents don't believe I'd do nothink of that kind? I ain't touched nothink!"

"All serene, kid," said Harry Wharton. "We know it's a rotten lie!"

As a matter of fact, Wharton felt an inward misgiving. There was little doubt that the poor Spadger had been brought up to "pinching" in the slums; and it was at least possible that he had been unable to resist the temptation to help himself in a well-dressed and well-to-do crowd of fellows.

There was dismay in every face in the study now.

"Begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer feebly, and he sank on the sofa. His lordship felt quite knocked out by this latest development.

Sir Jimmy was red with fury. He jumped at the door and unlocked it.

"Hold on!" said Johnny Bull.

"I'm goin' to 'ammer that rotten liar!" howled Sir Jimmy.

"You'd better let us in!" came Skinner's cool, cutting voice. "If you don't I shall call Mr. Quelch here!"

The door was unlocked. But Wharton held back the enraged baronet from rushing upon Skinner. The matter could not be settled by fisticuffs.

Skinner looked into the study with a sneering grin. A crowd of faces appeared behind him.

"That young rascal's stolen Smithy's pocket-book!" said Skinner, pointing at the Spadger. "He's got to give it up."

"It's a lie!" yelled Sir Jimmy.

"Dry up a minute, Jimmy!" said Wharton, with a worried brow. "Skinner, if this is one of your lies—"

"Smithy's missed his pocket-book. He was talking to that kid in the hall," said Skinner. "He told me so. Of course, the fellow picked his pocket."

"Of course he did!" bawled Bolsover major. "Doesn't he look that sort? Look at him!"

"Where's Smithy?" demanded Whar-

ton. "He can speak for himself, I suppose."

"He's gone out. He—he didn't want to make a fuss about it."

"Then there's no need for you to chip in."

"You want that young thief to get away with his plunder!" sneered Skinner. "Well, I tell you flat, if he doesn't turn out his pockets now, in the presence of all the fellows, I'll call Quelch in at once!"

"Call him now!" shouted Snoop.

"By gad! I'll call him!" exclaimed Bolsover major.

"Hold on!" rapped out Wharton. Above all, the chums of the Remove did not want the Remove-master called there. Apart from Skinner's accusation, Spadger had to be kept dark from the masters if possible.

"Let him turn out his pockets, then!" snorted Bolsover major.

"He ain't going to!" howled Sir Jimmy. "Spadger ain't touched nothink!"

"I'll do it—I'll do it!" exclaimed Spadger. "There ain't nothink 'ere that don't belong to me, young gents."

"Well, if Spadger doesn't mind—" hesitated Wharton.

"I don't mind, sir."

Wharton hesitated. But he nodded at last. It was the simplest way to knock Skinner's accusation on the head.

"Well, go ahead, young 'un!" said Harry.

There was a grin on most faces as Spadger gathered up his ancient, overflowing coat and began to turn out the ragged pockets. He gave a sudden gasp, as a fat pocket-book dropped out and fell to the floor.

"Hallo! What's that?" shouted Bolsover major.

"It's a pocket-book, by gad!" said Temple.

Lord Mauleverer picked up the pocket-book. It was a handsome, expensive article, with Russia-leather covers, and the Bounder's monogram in gold. There was no doubt as to its ownership. That imposing pocket-book was known by sight to all the Remove.

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Sir Jimmy gazed at the pocket-book dumbfounded.

He was speechless.

Skinner broke into an unpleasant laugh.

"Is that Smithy's?" he jeered.

"Begad! It's Smithy's right enough!" muttered Lord Mauleverer, in the depths of misery. "Oh, gad!"

Spadger burst into a yell.

"I never took it! I swear I never took it, sir!"

But that statement was not likely to be believed. Not that the Famous Five were likely to be hard upon the poor little wretch, trained as he had been. His supposed action was only too natural.

"Oh, Spadger, old man!" groaned Sir Jimmy wretchedly. "Didn't I warn you about that there—?"

"I never took it, Jimmy!"

The baronet made no reply to that. It was only too clear to his mind that Spadger had taken it. How else had it come into his pocket?

"Rotten little thief!" said Bolsover major in disgust. "That's the kind of fellow you chaps treat as a guest, is it? Yah!"

"The poor little beggar doesn't know any better," faltered Bob Cherry.

"I'm going to Mr. Quelch!" said Skinner.

Wharton caught him by the arm.

"You're not, you cad!" he said between his teeth.

"Let me go, Wharton!" Skinner was

virtuously indignant. "I'm not going to be a party to protecting a thief."

"No fear!" said Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, he ought to be sent to a reformatory, you know," said Billy Bunter. "I'm shocked, you know. Give me that pocket-book, Mauly. I'll take it back to Smithy."

"Shut up!" growled Mauleverer.

"Oh, really, Mauly—if you think I can't be trusted with Smithy's bank-notes—"

"Hallo, here's Smithy!" exclaimed Temple.

The Bounder of Greyfriars came along the passage. There was a cool and somewhat sardonic smile on his face.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder Chips In!

"SMITHY!"

"Here's your pocket-book!"

"That young hooligan had pinched it!"

The Bounder looked into the study, and nodded to the Co. Lord Mauleverer silently handed him the pocket-book.

"You don't want to make a fuss about this, Smithy," muttered Wharton. "Remember that poor little beast was taught this kind of thing—"

"Like you, to be asking favours of a chap you've turned out of the cricket team!" sneered Skinner. "You can let go my arm, Wharton. Mr. Quelch is going to deal with this affair!"

"Oh, don't be in a hurry," yawned the Bounder. "I hear you've been looking for me, Skinner."

"Ye-es, I—"

"I've been in Newland's study," smiled Vernon-Smith. "I was waiting for the dramatic climax, dear boy!"

Skinner eyed him uneasily. He never quite knew how to take the Bounder.

"Does the unfortunate little beast admit his guilt?" continued the Bounder, with the same curious smile on his lips.

"He says he didn't take it," muttered Wharton, "but—"

"I never did!" wailed Spadger. "I wouldn't go for to do such a thing 'ere, where I've been treated so good!"

"It was found in his pocket!" sneered Skinner.

"I don't know 'ow it got there," said Spadger. "I know I never 'ave set heyes on it afore!"

"Likely yarn!" grinned Snoop.

"Bit too thick," remarked Temple.

"Still, now you've got it back, you can let the little beast off. Just turn him out!"

"It's going before Mr. Quelch!" said Skinner obstinately. "I don't believe in protecting criminals. If you don't let go my arm, Wharton, I'll yell for a prefect."

"Don't be in a hurry," said the Bounder coolly. "Haden't you better own up, Skinner, that it was all a little joke of yours?"

Skinner's jaw dropped.

"Wha-a-at?" he gasped.

"What?" shouted Wharton.

Skinner eyed the Bounder in terror now. For the first time it dawned upon him that the sardonic Bounder of Greyfriars had been playing with him.

The Bounder laughed.

"It's only one of Skinner's little jokes," he said. "Sorry—awfully sorry—to upset your sweet little game like this, Skinner. But it's rather too thick—making out that a kid is a thief. Own up!"

"You rotter!" screamed Skinner.

"One of Skinner's little jokes!" repeated Wharton, his brow growing dark.

"I don't see, Smithy—"

"Plain enough to see. Skinner put it in his pocket, of course!"

"What?"

Bob Cherry gave a yell that might almost have lifted the roof.

"That's why Skinner collared him here. He put it in his pocket while they were on the floor!"

"Oh, begad!"

"Skinner, you sneaking cad—"

"The sneaking cadfulness is terrific!"

All eyes were on Skinner's scared face now. He made a desperate attempt to brazen it out.

"It's a lie," he gasped, "a—a rotten lie! How—how could I get hold of Smithy's pocket-book to play a trick with like that?"

"Easy enough to get hold of it, when I gave it to you for the very purpose," said the Bounder coolly.

"You gave it to him?" shouted Wharton.

"Certainly."

"To plant on that poor kid?"

"Exactly!"

"Why, you—you," Wharton panted, "you were in it, then you—"

"Go easy!" drawled the Bounder.

"Don't be in a hurry to call me names."

I gave my pocket-book to Skinner to

plant on him because Skinner intended

to plant something on him, anyway. If

he'd planted something else, I mightn't

have been able to show him up, and the

kid would have been made out to be a

thief. So I lent him my pocket-book

for the purpose, intending to drop in at

the climax and knock his little scheme

on the head. If I hadn't helped him he

would have gone ahead on his own, and

I couldn't have interfered—couldn't have

proved anything, anyway."

"You plotting hound!" shrieked

Skinner.

Wharton's grasp tightened on the arm

of the cad of the Remove.

"I understand now," he said. "But

for you, Smithy, Skinner would have

brought this off?"

"I fancy so!" smiled the Bounder.

"I'm really sorry to show you up like

this, Skinney; but you left me nothing

else to do. I had to work it this way, or

else let you brand that poor kid as a

thief, and you couldn't quite expect that,

could you?"

Skinner's face was a study.

He had not expected this. He had

fully hoped for the Bounder's concu-

rence in his dastardly scheme. Skinner

had often made little mistakes through

judging others by his own standard.

"Oh, you rotten worm, Skinner!"

said Sir Jimmy Vivian, with a deep

breath. "You 'orrid 'Un! You're worse

nor a Prussian! Let me get at 'im!"

"Let me go!" hissed Skinner. "It—

it was only a—a joke, of—of course. I—

I was not going to call Quelchy—not

really!"

"You were!" said Harry Wharton

sternly. "And now you'll go to Quelchy,

whether you like it or not, and stand

the racket for what you've done. You

were sacked from this school once, and

I fancy you're booked for it now, when

Quelchy knows!"

"Hold on!" shrieked Skinner, in utter

terror now. "I tell you it was only a—a

joke! I'll beg the kid's pardon, if you

like. Stop!"

"Hold on," said the Bounder quietly.

"I'm not going to bear witness against

Skinner before a Form-master. Let him

alone!"

Wharton paused. Skinner was clinging

to the doorpost in dire terror. Never

had a cunning schemer been so utterly

defeated and prostrated.

"Well, of all the rotters!" said

Bolsover major. "He ought to be

kicked out of the school! You're a

meaking worm, Skinner!"

"The wormfulness is terrific," said

Hurree Singh. "And the terrific thrash-fulness is the proper caper."

"You leave 'im to me!" said Sir Jimmy savagely. "You 'old my jacket, Spadger!"

There was no holding the baronet. He precipitated himself upon Skinner, and Wharton released the hapless rascal. The juniors crowded back to give them room. Bob Cherry pulled the table aside, and kicked the chairs out of the way.

Skinner was not a fighting-man; but he put up a fight now—he had to! Sir Jimmy was knocking him right and left with deadly drives, and Skinner fought his hardest in defence.

"Go it!" sang out Bob Cherry. "Pile in!"

"Give him jip!" roared the crowd in the passage.

There was not a fellow there who was not down on Skinner now—even Snoop was against him.

Skinner had jip with a vengeance. In five minutes he collapsed on the floor, so thoroughly licked that he felt as if he had been through a mangle. He lay and groaned, while Sir Jimmy pranced round him calling on him to get up. But Skinner couldn't get up, and certainly he wouldn't have got up if he could.

"That'll do," grinned Bob Cherry. "Crawl out, Skinner. I'm going to help you with my boot if it takes you more than a second!"

It took Skinner more than a second to crawl out—and Bob Cherry's boot was needed. And a storm of hisses followed him as he limped and groaned away to his own study.

Half an hour later a crowd of Remove fellows walked down to the gates, and in the midst of them, unobserved, was Spadger. He was escorted safely out of gates, unseen by the eyes of the school authorities, and his friends breathed more freely when he was in the road. Then most of the fellows went in, but Manleverer and the Famous Five and Sir Jimmy remained with the Spadger—and the Bounder. Spadger was very silent. Skinner had not been able to do his worst, owing to the Bounder; but he had succeeded in making the little waif's visit to Greyfriars unhappy enough.

"I've got an idea about that kid," said the Bounder, in a low voice, as he stood aside with the Famous Five. "He can't tramp it back to London!"

Wharton shook his head.

"We can't let him go like that!" he said. "Something ought to be done—in fact, something's got to be done."

"That's what I was thinking. We could get him put up in a cottage at Friardale—and after that—"

"Yes; after that?" said Bob. "That's the question."

"I'll speak to my pater about him," said the Bounder quietly. "He would take him in hand, if I asked him, and get him something to do. It would be better for him to learn a trade, or something, than to go back to his slum. My pater could fix that easily enough, and he'll do it if I ask him."

Wharton's face brightened up.

"That's a jolly good idea, Smithy!" he said. "I was thinking of my uncle; but he's at the Front!"

"If the kid agrees, it's a go," said the Bounder.

The Spadger was called into the consultation. Sir Jimmy backed up the Bounder's suggestion keenly, and Lord Manleverer gave his hearty concurrence. It had weighed on Mauly's tender heart, the thought of the little waif going back to misery and want. The Spadger listened in astonishment, evidently not under-

standing why these good-natured toffs, as he regarded them, should be troubling their heads about his insignificant self. But the satisfaction that came into his thin little face showed how much he liked the idea of escaping a further residence in the delectable purloons of Carker's Rents.

The Bounder's idea was carried out. That night Spadger slept in a cottage, instead of under a haystack. And the same evening the Bounder wrote to his father an unusually long letter.

A couple of days later Samuel Vernon-Smith, the millionaire, came down to see his son—surprised and amused, but quite willing to gratify the Bounder's wish. The Spadger departed from Friardale in the millionaire's motor-car—and his friends saw him off—Sir Jimmy shouting "Ooray!" as the big car rolled away.

The Bounder had won the good opinion of Harry Wharton & Co., and the bitter enmity of his study-mate, Skinner. He seemed to care as little for the one as the other. But he was destined to feel the effects of both in the near future.

(Don't miss "SHARING THE RISK!"—next Monday's grand story of Harry Wharton & Co., by FRANK RICHARDS.)

NOTICES.

Back Numbers Wanted.

By D. Macfarlane, 26, Albert Street, Dundee—"Magnet" Nos. 133, 223, 254, 276, and 395; "Gems" 42 (old series), 10 (new), and number containing "Race to the Tuckshop."

By Ernest Jones, 37, Falkner Street, Liverpool—"Dreadnought," 1-44, 47-50, 54-56, 75, 76, 79, 82, 84, 91-95, 97, 101-103, 105-106, 117, 120, 121; "Dreadnought and Boys' War Weekly," 7; "Puck," 125-227, 237-241, 244-246, 250-253, 262-264, 271, 277-279, 282, 297-301, 313-320, 324, 326-328, 336-339; "Boys' Journal," and 72. Must be clean.

Leagues, Etc.

G. Burke, M. Marlboro' Road, St. James End, Northampton, wishes to join a "Gem" and "Magnet" League in his district.

More members wanted for Correspondence Club already numbering two hundred. Boys and girls. Stamped and addressed envelope, please.—C. F. Irons, Berkley Street, Eynesbury, St. Neots, Huntingdonshire.

The Darvall "Gem" and "Magnet" League wants more members. Also requires small hand printing press for amateur magazine.—H. Foster, 13, Gladstone Street, Darvall, Sheffield. Stamped and addressed envelope, please.

R. Short, Kembala Street, Enfield, N.E.W., Australia, is forming a "Gem" and "Magnet" athletic club (cricket, football, etc.), average age 15-16, and would like to hear from any similar clubs who would arrange matches.

Recruits wanted for the Edgbaston Parish Troop of Boy Scouts, 13-16.—Apply Saturday afternoons at 80, Wellington Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Readers—especially Boy Scouts—wanted for amateur magazine. Specimen copy sent for 1d.—Cecil J. Price, 2, Delaval Road, Whitley Bay, Northumberland.

Members wanted for Boys' Stamp Exchange Club. Stamped and addressed envelope, please.—W. G. W. Phillips, 114, Llantarnam Road, Cwmbran, Mon.

Wanted for small orchestra—two first violins, flutes, clarionets, drums, trombone, bass fiddle, cello, piano conductor.—Please apply Monday nights to G. E. Mellor, 215, Park Road, Oldham.

"Magnet" and "Gem" Social Club wants fresh members.—B. Bashford, 265, Barclay Road, Warley, near Birmingham.

Readers and contributors wanted for amateur magazine. Stamped and addressed envelope, please.—C. Butterwith, 42, Lorne Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

The British "Magnet" and "Gem" Club wants more members.—For particulars apply Frank Lambert, 57, Whitefield Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 491.

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

No. 27.—GERALD LODER.

LODER is not a pleasant person by long odds.

It would be easy to set down here all the good one knows of him. He rescued Wingate minor from drowning once, and so saved himself from expulsion. It was better for Wingate minor and his people, no doubt; but it was worse for Greyfriars!

Is there anything else to put on the credit side? There may be, but it is difficult to remember it. Remorse of the sort that means no more than sorrow at being caught out; good resolutions that are never carried into effect—these are not worth counting.

More than once it has been suggested by correspondents that no such all-round wrong 'un as Gerald Loder could retain his place as a prefect at a public school.

Certainly he could not—if the masters knew a tenth part of what his schoolfellows knew. But they don't; and, in the very nature of things, they cannot. Matters of common knowledge to the boys in a school only reach the ears of masters by the rarest accident. It is due in part to the theory—held as firmly by boys as by offenders against the law—that there can hardly be a worse scoundrel than the informer. And, be it remembered, the masters, brought up in the same code, largely share that feeling. Reason may tell them that there are times when what would be called "sneaking," were the circumstances slightly different, becomes justified. But they are not ready to accept the bearer of tales as anything better than a sneak, unless he has very good cause indeed for laying information.

The other prefects, again, do not know as much of the ways of such a fellow as Loder as the juniors know. He keeps himself very much to his own circle as far as they are concerned. The conditions of life in the senior Forms of a public school help him. Not lightly does the right sort of prefect, however keen on his duty, intrude himself into the quarters of the wrong sort. The two are equals. What authority Wingate, for instance, may have over Loder is due solely to his post as captain. That would justify him in reporting Loder's doings to the Head. It would hardly justify him officially in doing more, though there have been times when he has taken the law into his own hands. Courtney, North, or Gwynne has less standing than Wingate. These are practically helpless to amend matters, except by doing what they hate to do.

So it is that Loder, taking care to keep on the right side of the masters as far as possible, goes on his path of dingy black-guardism almost unchecked. He has lost his



office of prefect more than once when something has cropped up; but he gets it back again very soon, for the Sixth is a small Form, and there are not many fellows from whom to choose the prefects.

Loder is a bully. The Remove and the fag Forms know that as well as they know anything. The Forms above them know it. But, as a rule, he keeps his bullying within bounds; he exercises it mainly in the name of discipline. It is only when his vile temper gets the better of his craftiness that he lets himself go. And then Nemesis usually follows; for, the cloak of authority once put aside, he is in no case to resist the vengeance of the juniors. And that vengeance has often fallen upon him with plenty of weight.

The story of Loder would not be an edifying one if it could be told in full. But it cannot for simple want of space, and in this case one does not regret the limitation. Smoking, drinking, gambling, betting—these are his pleasures. The man about town is not a nice type—one means the man who never works, but attends the races regularly; and is to be found in the gambling-hells. The schoolboy masquerading in the guise of a man about town, betting on the sly with swindlers, frequenting low public-houses, con-

tinually in straits for money, always buoyed up by the hope of some lucky coup, which would be of no real benefit to him even if it came, is still more objectionable.

Loder hates Wingate, of course. They are as opposite as dark and light; and, moreover, Loder wants Wingate's office of captain. He always has wanted it, and will, no doubt, go on intriguing to get it at intervals until at long last the chopper comes down, and Loder goes the way that Carberry went.

He was heavily involved in the business that got Carberry the order of the boot, but he scraped through then. He was in Carberry's sweepstake swindle, too. And he tried to cheat one of his own special cronies, Ionides, the Greek senior, over a race.

Once he attained his ambition, and became captain. One says ambition, but that is scarcely the right word, for the honour and glory of the office are not what Loder covets. He wants most the position of greater freedom to pursue his own shady tastes that it would give him. He did not keep the job long, for the Head discovered how big a mistake he had made, and Wingate resumed office.

There was another time when it looked likely Loder might crawl in, for Wingate's chums refused to stand. But, largely through the canvassing of the Remove, Coker polled more votes than Loder, and, although the appointment of a mere Fifth-Former as skipper was not according to precedent, Coker was allowed to try his hand. The great Horace was plainly impossible as captain; but when he had to be deposed Wingate came back, and all was well.

The relations between the Remove and Loder are various. Skinner and his friends are patronised by him, and run his illegal errands, and eat of the crumbs that fall from his table, so to speak. With Vernon-Smith or Mauleverer, or any other fellow who has plenty of money, Loder and his chums are willing to be friendly. But neither the astute Bouncer nor the lazy Mauly has any use for Loder, and the only occasion on which he has managed to borrow from Mauleverer for a long time past was when he imposed upon him with what seemed proofs that Harry Wharton was in sore trouble, and that he alone could get him out of it.

The Famous Five, Peter Todd, Squiff, Tom Brown, Rake, and fellows of their type, are at daggers drawn with the bullying black-guard. At time his position enables him to do them a bad turn, but they usually get even with him in the long run, and more than once they have had the very real satisfaction of taking it out of him bodily, a terrible slump in dignity for a prefect, but better—in Loder's eyes—than the alternative of reporting, which would mean expulsion.

Wingate has thrashed Loder. So has Coker. So has his former close chum, Walker, who found Loder too thick for him at last. Carne is Loder's chief pal now. But Carne will be dealt with later in this series.

The Editor's Chat.

For Next Monday:

"SHARING THE RISK!"

By Frank Richards.

Snoop plays a big part in this fine yarn. But my readers know what to expect from Snoop. His part may be a big one, but it will not be an admirable one. Some of you will doubtless remember that Snoop was able to stay on at Greyfriars after his father was convicted of embezzlement and sent to prison. This was owing to the generosity of his uncle. Josiah Snoop reappears in next week's story. He is in trouble and in danger, and he naturally hopes for help from his son. But the help comes from others. Two fellows share a heavy risk to get it. I am not going to tell you who those two were, or how it came about that Snoop stood aside, because that would spoil the interest of the story to some extent. You will know next week, and that is time enough.

A LETTER OF COMPLAINT.

"Billy" writes from Hackney as follows:

"I have just read your latest 'Boys'

Friend Library,' entitled 'After Lights Out,' and I think it is all right. What I don't agree with you is this new rule printing the words closer together. Why, your 'Gems' and MAGNETS ain't worth a penny! Why, they're too short! Please bear in mind that if this goes on much longer I will stop buying them altogether, and my friends will follow my lead. I have at least a dozen friends who buy your books. Now, don't forget, will you? Be a good 'un!"

It is of no use getting angry with "Billy," of course. He does not mean any harm. He only says what he thinks—without thinking! All that has been explained here—not once, but many times—about paper shortage has passed "Billy" by completely. He is aware, no doubt, that there is a war on. He knows that you don't get as much for a penny now as you used to when you are buying bread or cakes or sweets or vegetables or fruit. But he does not see—for the simple reason that he has never tried to think the thing out—that what applies to these things applies also to paper.

But "Billy" also objects to the use of smaller type. As far as possible I have avoided this in the MAGNET. It is too trying to the eyes, especially in cases where so many readers read as they walk along the street, or in trains and trams and buses. But with the "Boys' Friend" 3^d. Library there was a double difficulty. It was abso-

lutely necessary to cut down the number of pages; but if the usual type had been employed with the reduced number, heavy cutting of the stories would have been inevitable. This has been avoided by the smaller type—which "Billy" calls "the new rule of printing the words closer together." But this is a war-time device, like the bread of mixed flour and the sugarless scone, and eating swedes, and so on. The war is very inconvenient, I admit. But I have no more power to cut it short than "Billy" has—I mean my friend "Billy" of Hackney, not the Kaiser.

There is always one thing that can be done when you consider an article not worth the money asked for it. Don't buy it! This is not intended in the least rudely. It is simply common-sense. We don't count for our circulation on people who consider the paper is not worth the money. If we did we should not last long!

And remember this, too. The size before the war was not a standard size to which we had pledged ourselves to stick. We offered then so many pages for a penny. We offer now so many pages fewer. In both cases there it was—take it or leave it. Again without any rudeness. But the two cases are not one, and when we are obliged to cut down we are not infringing any right a reader has.

Think it over, "Billy," and all of you who have been inclined to take his view.

YOUR EDITOR.



A KEEN READER.

A BLACKHEATH
SUPPORTER.FRED BRYAN,
Homerton, N.E.JACK TRESTRAIL,
Redruth.C. KOSKY,
Stepney, E.

A PORTSMOUTH CHUM.



S. GERTSKI.

J. J. SKULL,
Hackney, N.FRANK WILLEE,
Blackheath, S.E.G. BURNE,
Bournemouth.A SHREWSBURY
READER.L. SHANACK,
London, E.

A LOYAL SUPPORTER.

T. SIDDALL,
Sheffield.THOS. HEWSON,
Sunderland.A PORTSMOUTH
READER.S. B. G.,
A Keen Reader.ANOTHER KEEN
READER.C. GREEN,
South Wigston.A PORTSMOUTH
SUPPORTER.JOHN R. MILLER,
Glasgow.C. W. HYATT,
Enfield.E. HARDY,
Keighley.

C. ROSENTHAL.

H. ROSNER,
Cheetham.

IN A LAND OF PERIL!

By BEVERLEY KENT,

Author of "Officer and Trooper," "Cornstalk Bob," "A Son of the Sea," etc., etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Bob Masters and Ted O'Brien, an Irish boy, escape from the clutches of Faik, a rascally adventurer who is in pursuit of a secret treasure in the African wilds. Faik is working in collusion with Jasper Orme, Bob's cousin, at Cape Town. The two lads are captured by the natives of the Inrobi tribe, who also surround Faik's party. Faik has done the chief of the tribe a bad turn in the old days, and tries to place the guilt on Bob; but, thanks to a Scotchman named MacGregor, and a friendly native—Mendi—he falls in his plot. Bob is acclaimed chief on the death of Kazna, the former leader. The comrades save Faik from the vengeance of the tribe, then push on after the treasure, but are waylaid by Mopo and a strong force. Mopo, who is Bob's deadly rival, is beaten off, with his braves, and Galza, a messenger from the Inrobi, comes to their camp.

He brings tidings of Mopo, who is in pursuit. The companions elude Mopo by diving into the lake, and they find a wonderful underground country, inhabited by a tribe of weird people unlike the human race. These strangers they overcome, secure the gold, and then, after amazing adventures, find themselves back in the world they had quitted. Mopo, Faik, and also Orme, Bob Masters' cousin, with a strong party, are on their tracks.

(Now read on.)

Mopo's Redemption!

"But ye did not fight with them a'," MacGregor explained; "for the chief and others with him had left the waggon that they might wreak destruction on us. And in this they failed, and yet have they met with success; for that for which we travelled so far to find they now have, and to my race it means what your oxen and mealies are to ye!"

"Then shall we follow them; but the time is not now," Kampa answered. "And does not the old soothsayer speak with wisdom, oh Barelegs? For if I send some braves to fight these evil ones, and go with others to meet Mopo, may not the numbers in either case be too small? But if first we overwhelm Mopo, then can we march on from victory to victory!"

"Ye are a true general," MacGregor agreed, smiling. "And as ye say, Kampa, so shall these fights be waged!"

"Then we continue the march forthwith, not with the noise of battle songs, but as lions advancing stealthily in the shadows of the night," Kampa said. "Thus shall we pounce upon our prey!"

In silence they moved off. Some went ahead to reconnoitre. Ted was glad to lean on MacGregor's arm. He knew he would need a good rest before he could feel strong again. Mendi and Galza, walking near them, whispered continually.

Not a sound was made as they went along the plain. For two hours they tramped, the scouts ahead picking up the trail. The night was nearly over, when two of the scouts hurried back and said they had discovered Mopo's resting-place. All the warriors were eager for an immediate attack; but Kampa explained to them Bob's peril.

Then Mendi and Galza stepped forward. "Let us go, oh, Kampa!" Mendi pleaded. "For we can creep upon Mopo and find the young white chief, and perhaps we may be able to free him!"

"Thou canst go; but that is not thy sole mission," Kampa answered. "For of these things have I spoken with the great Barelegs. There is another who goes with thee—he yonder with the neck of a giraffe and the eyes of a fish. Thou walkest into danger, but that thou dost not fear!"

"There can be no fear for me when the young white chief is in peril," Mendi replied. "But what thou sayest I do not understand. What, then, is the mission?"

"Ye must walk boldly, so that Mopo will be aware of your coming; and when you draw

nigh ye must call on him to come from his lair. And this evil one who goes with thee will be bound, and each of ye shall have an axe. And if Mopo's warriors rush forward, then shalt thou cut down this evil one, and escape as best thou can!"

"And if Mopo comes alone?"

"Then he and this whiteface may talk; and there thou stayest until the young white chief is sent to ye, when ye all return. And if Mopo will not send him, then thou slayest this man and come back!"

"And thou?" Mendi asked.

"We first surround them, so that Mopo cannot escape. When the young white chief is saved we deal with Mopo!"

The warriors advanced at Kampa's bidding, and lay down with battleaxes ready around Mopo's resting-place. Then Mendi and Galza, with Faik between them, walked forward. MacGregor and Ted waited with hearts beating fast.

Before long Mendi's voice rang out. Eagerly they listened. Several minutes passed.

"What's going on?" Ted asked nervously.

"Mopo has come forth; the parley has begun," Kampa said—"for otherwise there would have been a tumult ere now; nor can it be that Mopo did not hear the call. Nay, rather he came forth at once, else we would have heard Mendi's voice again!"

The braves around were beginning to grow very restless. They had risen, and were grasping their axes, eager for the moment when they might charge. And then suddenly in the distance a small party was seen advancing.

"How many are there?" Ted asked anxiously.

"There be four," Kampa said.

"Then Bob is saved!"

His voice rang out with a joyous thrill. But at that moment the more impetuous of the braves dashed forward. Their cry rang out. The others followed. From all sides they rushed to close in on Mopo and his followers and cut them down. With a cry of horror Ted started to follow, but he was too weak to run fast; but MacGregor, for one of his age, ran with extraordinary swiftness.

"Kampa, call them back!" he shouted. "Mopo has kept his word now at least! It is not meet that he should die!"

But the old medicine-man was powerless. It looked as if Mopo's last hour had come. Then Ted called out again.

"Bob has turned and is running back!" he cried. "He is going right into the fight!"

Thinking that the lad had turned to lead them, the braves broke into another cheer. Over the ground all swept, their battleaxes gleaming in the moonlight. But as they came close, and Mopo and his followers gathered in a cluster, prepared to sell their lives as dearly as they could, Bob swung round.

"Halt!" he commanded. "I am your chief, and I must be obeyed!"

On they dashed, and Bob sprang to Mopo's side.

"Halt!" he cried again. "If Mopo dies, then I die with him!"

They stopped. Their eyes were shining with fury, their chests were heaving. They could not understand.

"Wait for Kampa!" Bob continued. "Then shall all be decided!"

The old medicine-man and MacGregor arrived. They saw Mopo standing erect by the lad's side.

"Kampa," Bob began, "who ruleth this tribe?"

"Thou, young white chief," Kampa replied.

"Then was it by thy bidding that this attack was made?" Bob asked.

"Nay, it wasna; Kampa is not to blame," MacGregor said. "These fellows got out of hand!"

"That is good tidings," Bob replied, addressing the old medicine-man; "for to Kampa honour is as dear as to me, and would it be just that he who released me should be attacked before all was known? He gave me my freedom, and I was going forth to

say his life was to be spared, for that had I promised him!"

A murmur of disapproval ran round.

"He would have killed our chief!" one cried.

"And did he not let me go?" Bob asked. "Much has he done that is evil, but in this did he not do well? Nor was he the worst of the evil ones, for he was led astray by others!"

"What dost thou ask?" Kampa inquired.

"That he be let go free."

"And then?"

"He can do mischief no more. Am I not among my friends? And does he not see his folly?"

The braves began murmuring again.

"Oh, young white chief, thou askest much of thy people!" Kampa protested solemnly: "For is not this Mopo as a snake? And if he be not punished, but returns with us, is not that a sign that men may disobey the laws as they choose? For if Mopo has done so, why not others?"

"Thou speakest wisdom, as always, Kampa," Bob replied. "Yet I bid thee ponder on what I say now. For Mopo spoke of punishment, and knew it must be decreed. And then I gave him a choice. And Mendi has told me that now we go on to seek the evil whiteface who stole our treasure!"

"That is so."

"And therein lay my choice. For Mopo can fight with us if thus he chooses, and by the manner of his fighting will we know if evil has left his heart. If he fails, then he goes forth a wanderer with those who followed him. Thus shall he and they be judged. And if he proves that he means well, then he may return with us!"

"But he can never be our chief!"

"To that he consents!"

"Then be it thus," Kampa agreed. "Mopo, thou hast heard. Dost thou consent?"

Mopo lifted his axe, and held the shaft towards Bob.

"Thus do I say," he answered.

Bob took the weapon and handed it back. "Mopo, thou art pardoned, and all who have followed thee," he affirmed. "Now fall in. We march to fight the last fight!"

Mopo and his followers advanced and joined the other warriors. Dawn was now breaking, and before starting all partook of a good meal. Then the march was resumed.

Orme's tracks were picked up soon, and the avenging party never lost them. After a short rest at midday they pushed on again, and towards evening they came to a small, deserted camp. It was clear that Orme was travelling day and night.

But darkness proved to be no obstacle to the scouts of the Inrobi, though travelling became slower. At midnight they halted, and slept for three hours; then, after eating, they went on, refreshed and expectant. Orme could not keep going all the time; they knew that he also must cry a halt now and then.

And an hour after sunrise next morning he and his party were seen in the distance, trekking along the veldt. A consultation was at once called. To attack him in daylight would mean a needless loss of life. It was decided to wait till that evening. So to right and left two parties of the youngest and most active of the warriors were sent forward to outpace him, and then fall upon him from the front. The rest followed.

The villain was not travelling fast. It was evident he and his gang were much fatigued; so to keep up with him was an easy task, nor was there any surprise when it was seen that he had decided to halt and rest.

"He must be dead-beat," Bob remarked. "He has covered a great distance, and carrying those sacks of gold, too!"

"Greed and fear have both urged him on," MacGregor said. "I expect he hoped to be able to shake off pursuit by most strenuous exertions during the first three days. He's going to get an eye-opener!"

(Conclusion next week.)