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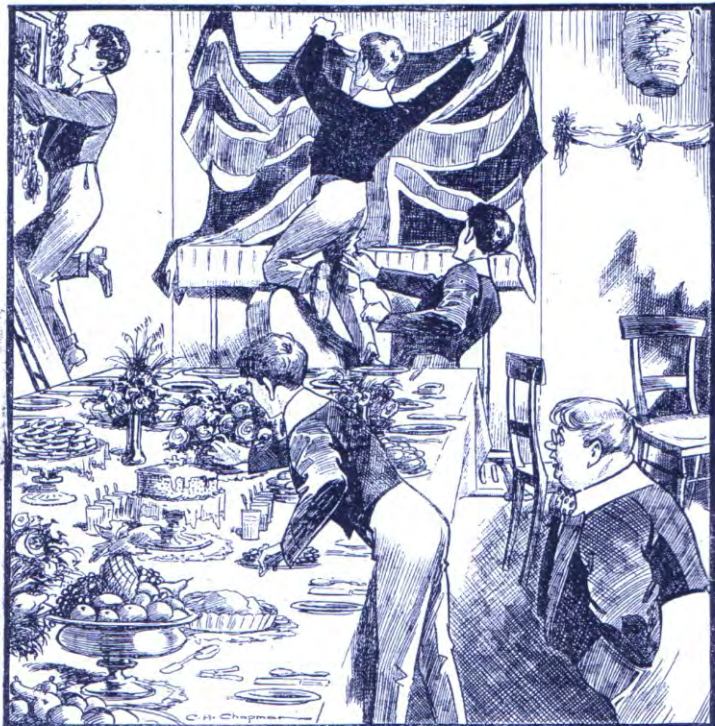
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THE HERO'S HOME-COMING!



PREPARING TO WELCOME THE DEMOBILISED MASTER!

(A Stirring Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chimes of Greyfriars.) 9-8-19



By
**FRANK
RICHARDS.**

**A Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of HARRY WHARTON & CO.
AT GREYFRIARS SCHOOL.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter Does Not Enthusias!

"FLAGS—"
"Of course!"
"And a big drum—"
"Good!"
"And the Remove Scouts as a guard of honour—"
"Bravo!"
"I say, you fellows—"
Billy Bunter looked into Study No. 1 in the Remove at Greyfriars, where five juniors were engaged in deep discussion. None of the five heeded the fat face in the doorway.
"It's got to be a great occasion!" continued Harry Wharton. "We've got to put our best into it!"
"Yes, rather!"
"I say, you fellows—" squeaked Bunter.
"Everybody's got to roll up!" went on Wharton. "We'll rout out all the slackers—even Skinner will have to put on his Scout rig and come. It's going to be a day that will be remembered at Greyfriars!"
"Hear, hear!"
"A day worthy to be marked with a white stone!" murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.
"I say, you fellows—" roared Bunter.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, looking round at last.
"Roll away, Bunter; we're busy!"
"I say—"
"We might have a feed in the Rag, too," said Johnny Bull. "I suppose Larry will dine with the Head; but he can have tea with the Remove. If he does, we'll do him well!"
"But when does he come?" asked Nugent.
"That's not settled; but it won't be long now," said Harry Wharton. "I've had it from Mr. Quelch that he's coming. We shall know the day later, and we're got to be ready in time. Larry's going

to know that we're glad to see him back from Hunland!"

"Yes, rather!"
"We've got a lot of Peace-day bunting left over," remarked Johnny Bull. "It will come in useful for Larry's home-coming."

"I say, you fellows!" roared Bunter. "What are you burling about?"
"Larry's coming home," answered Wharton. "Most likely he'll be at Greyfriars next week. Now roll away!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five through his big spectacles.

"Larry?" he repeated.
"Yes; old Larry!"
"Who's Larry?"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at Bunter. They looked at him with grim looks. The news that Lieutenant Lawrence Lascelles, of the Loamshire Regiment, was coming home had excited the Famous Five, and caused joyful commotion all over Greyfriars. And here was the Owl of the Remove asking who Larry was!

"Who's Larry?" repeated Wharton. "You fat clump—"

"Well, who is he, anyway?" asked Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Remove. "Who is he, and what is the fuss about?"

"You fat duffer!" roared Bob Cherry indignantly. "You know jolly well who old Larry is!"

Bunter shook his head.
"I don't remember anybody of that name," he said. "Who is it?"

"Mr. Lascelles, you chump!" snorted Johnny Bull.

Bunter blinked again.

"Mr. Lascelles?" he repeated.

"My only hat!" said Wharton in measured tones. "The fat idiot has actually forgotten Larry!"

"Oh, I remember now!" said Bunter carelessly. "You mean the beast—"

"What?"

"The beast who used to teach us rotten maths—"

"Why, you—you—" "I remember the beast now!" said Bunter, with a nod. "He used to give me extra maths. He was always worrying a chap. I thought he was gone for good. Didn't he go to the war, or something?"

"Why, you—you podgy image!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Billy Bunter seemed quite indifferent to the five separate and distinct glares of wrath and indignation that were turned upon him. Mr. Lascelles, the mathematician master, had been a good while "at the war," and the Owl of the Remove had forgotten his existence. Absence did not make the heart grow fonder in Bunter's case. Though, as a matter of fact, the fat junior had never been fond of Mr. Lascelles. "Larry" believed in work, and Bunter didn't, and that was a difference of opinion that could never really be reconciled.

"So Lascelles is coming back, is he?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, you fat rotter!"

"Oh dear! Isn't it rotten!"

"Rotten!" shrieked Bob.

"Yes, rather! I'd forgotten the beast; but I remember him now. He wanted every fellow to be a swot and a sap. Awful beast, wasn't he?"

"Well, my hat!"

"I say, you fellows, I think we ought to go to the Head and protest. If you fellows like to go, I'll come with you. Once we've got rid of Lascelles it ain't fair to have him planted on us again, is it?"

"You—you—you—" gasped Wharton.

Evidently William George Bunter did not share the Famous Five's enthusiasm on the subject of the returning hero.

"Do you know he got the Military Cross?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Did he?"

"And two wound stripes, you worm!"

"Oh, he's been wounded, has he?" said Bunter. "I shouldn't wonder if that makes him rotten-tempered than ever. I don't think he ought to come back. Do you?"

"Oh, jump on him!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"But what is the fuss about?" asked Bunter, blinking at the indignant juniors. "It's rotten enough the beast coming back at all, but there's no need to make a fuss that I can see. I shan't stand any of his nonsense, I can tell him! Why couldn't they send him to Russia?"

"To-to—to Russia!" stammered Wharton.

"Yes. Just the kind of chap they want to wallop the Dolbishes—better than coming back here and ragging us at maths," said Bunter peevishly. "Still, I suppose it can't be helped!"

"C-c-can't be helped?"

"I didn't come here to talk about that beast Lascelles, though——"

"That—that what?"

"That beast Lascelles. I came to ask you fellows if you could lend me a few bob till my postal-order comes? I'm expecting it——"

Bob Cherry rose to his feet, his hand resting on a cushion.

"Do you expect anything beside a postal-order, Bunter?" he inquired.

"Well, yes; I'm rather expecting a big cheque from one of my 'sided relations. If you could manage ten bob——"

"Anything else?" asked Bob.

"Well, I may get a tuck-hammer from my uncle, the baronet. If it comes, I'll whisk it out with you chaps. If you can make it a quid——"

"Expecting anything else?"

"Eh? Not just at present!" said Bunter, blinking. "I——"

"Then you're going to get something you don't expect!" said Bob.

"Eh?"

"This, 'r instance!"

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter, apparently, was not expecting it; but he certainly got it! "It" was the cushion.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

Yaroooh! Fire! Thieves! Yaroooh! Help! Murder! Fire! Thieves! Yaroooh!

Yaroooh! Fire! Thieves! Yaroooh!

Swipe, swipe!

"Oh! Yah! Ooooh!"

Billy Bunter dodged out of the study and fled.

"Come back, you fat rotter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Come back and have some more!"

But it appeared that Bunter had had enough. He dodged into Study No. 7, and the door slammed, and a key was heard to turn. And from within No. 7 came, in a wild howl:

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

Bob Cherry turned back into Study No. 1, breathing hard. And the Famous Five resumed their interrupted discussion of the great reception which was to take place when "Larry" returned to Greyfriars—without any further interruption from the Owl of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Three Cheers from Skinner!

"ROT!" That was Skinner's opinion, for what it was worth.

It was not worth very much, probably. But Harold Skinner of the R-remove expressed it with considerable emphasis.

Skinner of the Remove had never pulled with "Larry." He had not for-

gotten him, like Billy Bunter; but, though he remembered him, it was not with any pleasure. Skinner was a slacker of the first water, and so there had been trouble between him and the mathematics master; and Skinner seldom forgot a grievance, real or imaginary.

Skinner wasn't glad to hear that Larry was coming marching home again, and he was quite candid about that. There was, according to Harold Skinner's own statement, no humbug about him. He didn't like the man, he never had liked him; he was glad when he went, and he was sorry he was coming back. So far had Skinner got with his candour when Bob Cherry took him by the back of the neck, rubbed his nose in the rug, and put a sudden termination to his candid remarks.

But Skinner still aired his opinion—keeping one eye open for Bob Cherry when he did so, however. He listened with a sneer to the eager discussions among the juniors as to precisely when Mr. Lascelles was likely to arrive at Greyfriars, whether he would be much changed, and whether he would be "crooked" in any way from his wound. There was no doubt that Larry was going to have a great reception when he did come. The Sixth were as enthusiastic about Larry as the juniors. So were the Fifth. Indeed, Coker of the Fifth was supposed to be composing a great speech of welcome to be uttered on the great occasion.

Skinner looked on the enthusiasm in his Form with a sour eye. He remembered old troubles with Larry; and, judging the young master by himself, he supposed that Larry remembered them, too. He confided to his chum Stott that Mr. Lascelles would be down on him from the start.

Stott shook his head.

"I don't suppose he even remembers you, Skinner," he said, after some reflection.

"Oh, bosh!" snapped Skinner.

"Besides, he wouldn't bear malice, if he did. He was a bit of a grinder, but he was a good sort, in his way."

"Rubbish! He'll be down on you, too, Stott!"

"Oh, will he?" said Stott doubtfully.

"Yes; unless you turn yourself into a sop, like Lisle or Penfold, and exude mathematics at your nose and ears," grunted Skinner.

And Stott looked very thoughtful. Stott was a burly youth, whose body had developed faster than his brains; he was a very slow thinker, and under Skinner's influence.

"Well, it can't be helped," he remarked. "Let's hope that Lascelles has forgotten us. I don't care, anyway."

Skinner grunted.

"What do you think, Snooty?" asked Stott.

Sidney James Snoot sniffed.

"I think Skinner's an ass, and that Larry hasn't given him a thought since he left Greyfriars, and won't give him another when he comes home," he said.

"He'll be down on me!" said Skinner.

"Rot!"

"I was down on him——"

"And you got some lickings for being cheeky," said Snoot, "and serve you jolly well right!"

"Oh, you go and eat coke!" growled Skinner.

And he left the study with a very discontented look. There was a buzz of voices in the Remove passage; nearly half the Form had gathered there, by the big window at the end of the passage, and they were listening to Harry Wharton, who had news.

"Larry's coming back next Wednesday, you fellows——"

"Hurrah!"

"The Head and Mr. Quelch are going to meet him in London, and bring him here in the Head's car——"

"Bravo!"

"The whole school will welcome him," continued the captain of the Remove. "But he's got to have an extra-special welcome from this Form. Larry always got on with the Remove."

"Hear, hear!"

"He made us work!" said Wharton. "Well, after all, we come here to work, don't we?"

"Hem!"

"Hum!"

"H'm!"

The ejaculations of the Removites were a little less enthusiastic. Some of the fellows admired Larry for being a worker. Some didn't. Those who didn't were possibly in a majority. But they all admired him for being a fine, straight, first-class fellow in every other way; a good cricketer and footballer, and a man who had stood up to the Germans and helped to give those unpleasant persons the "kyboosh." That atoned for his hard-working qualities.

"And he's been through it," went on Wharton. "Wounded twice——"

"Good old Larry!"

"Military Cross——"

"Bravo!"

"And all Greyfriars is proud of him—except a few miserable slackers who don't count——"

"Hear, hear!"

"And we're going to give him a rousing welcome! The Remove are going to turn out as one man——"

"Yes, rather!"

"The Head's making next Wednesday a whole holiday instead of the usual half—in honour of Larry's home-coming——"

"Good old Head!"

"Bravo!"

"Every fellow in the Remove has got to turn out in Scout rig, and form a guard of honour for Larry——"

"Bravo!"

"Topping!"

"Rot!"

There was only one voice that said "Rot!" and that was Skinner's. Bob Cherry caught it.

"What's that, Skinner?" he roared.

"Eh? Oh! Nothing!" stammered Skinner.

"Yank that ead here, somebody!"

Skinner dodged back; but Squiff and Mark Lissy caught him by the shoulders and rushed him forward. Bob Cherry fixed a grim, indignant glare upon his sullen face.

"So you think it's rot to give old Larry a welcome?" he said.

"Oh, rats!"

"Do you want your nose rubbed again?"

"H-r-r-r-r!"

"You're cringing worm!" said Bob, breathing hard. "You know that Larry went out to fight the rotten Huns——"

"Well, he'd have been yanked away by a policeman if he hadn't gone," said Skinner, shrugging his shoulders. "I don't see anything in that!"

"W-e-w, you-you-you——" Words failed Bob Cherry, and he doubled his fists, feeling that it was a time for action.

"I think it's rot," said Skinner.

"That's my opinion. And rats to you!"

"My hat! I'll——"

"Hold on, Bob!" Harry Wharton jerked his indignant chum back.

"Skinner isn't worth punching. But he wants a lesson."

"The wantfulness is terrific!" growled Hurree Singh. "Let us give him the celebrated frog-march!"

"Colla!" him!"

Skinner dodged, but he dodged in vain. The indignant juniors were thronging round him.

Three or four pairs of hands grasped Skinner. "Now," said the captain of the Remove, holding up his hand, "you can't help being a worm, Skinner. We make allowances for that. But there's a limit."

"Ow! Leggo!" "You're going to give three cheers for Larry!" went on the captain of the Remove. "If you don't you'll get damaged!"

"Yah! I won't!" "Bump him!" "Bump!" "Oh! Ah! Oooop!" "Now go ahead with the cheers!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Skinner did not feel like cheering. His look was almost demonic. He gasped instead.

"I—I—I won't!" "Yaroooh!" roared Skinner, as he smote the floor of the Remove passage a second time. "Stoppit! I—I'll cheer, if you like! Ow! Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I said three!" said the captain of the Remove sternly. "Ow-yow! Hurrah!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removes. The expression on Skinner's face as he cheered was extraordinary. It was, as Vernon-Smith remarked, worth a guinea a box.

"One more!" chuckled Wharton. "Yah! You rotter—" "Bump!" "Oh erikey! Ow! Hurrah!" howled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Now kick him out!" Skinner dodged a dozen boots—not very successfully—and fled. A roar of laughter followed him. Skinner's opinion remained unchanged, but it was probable that he would not express it so freely in public again.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bolsover Major's Opinion!

BILLY BUNTER rolled into Study No. 11 in the Remove the following day after lessons, and blinked round him through his big spectacles. Skinner and Stott were in their study, but the table was bare, and there was no sign of a feed about—and Bunter's fat face lengthened.

"Where is it?" he asked. "Where's what?" growled Skinner. "The spread."

"Fathead! There isn't any spread!" "You asked me to come here after lessons!" exclaimed the fat junior indignantly. "I thought it was a spread!"

"Well, it isn't!" "Br-r-r-r!" grunted Bunter. And he rolled round to the door again.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Skinner. "It's a meeting, you fat duffer!"

"Blow your meetings!" grunted Bunter. "I wouldn't have taken the trouble to come here for a silly meeting! I suppose I may as well stop as I'm here, though!"

And Bunter plumped into the armchair, perhaps with a lingering hope that light refreshments would follow Skinner's meeting.

Bolsover major looked in at the doorway, with Hazel-dene.

"Trot in!" said Skinner. "What's it all about?" asked Hazel-dene.

"I'll tell you when the rest of the chaps come!"

"Oh, all right!" Fisher T. Fish was the next to arrive. After him came Tre-luce and Smith minor. The meeting seemed to be complete then, for Skinner rose and closed the door.

The meeting seemed rather puzzled as to what it had been called for. There was a general demand for Skinner to explain. The black sheep of the Remove mounted on a chair.

"Gentlemen—" he began. "Cut it short!" suggested Bolsover major.

"I thought Skinner was asking us to tea!" remarked Hazel-dene. "Blessed if I thought we were coming here to listen to Skinner speechifying!"

"Oh, let him explain!" said Smith minor. "Only don't be jolly long-winded, Skinner!"

"Skinner frowned. "Do listen to a chap without wagging your chins for a minute or two!" he exclaimed. "It's about Lascelles coming home next week."

"No need for a meeting here, that I can see. Wharton's managing the reception."

"That's what I'm coming to. Now, there isn't a chap in this study who liked Lascelles when he was here."

"That's all over!" said Bolsover major uneasily. "He's been to the war since then."

"What difference does that make?" "Well, I think it makes a difference!" "Let's be candid!" said Skinner.

"New departure for you, anyhow!" commented Tre-luce. "But let's, certainly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "We don't like the fellow," said Skinner. "He gave us lickings, for one thing. He made us grind. I remember his pulling Bunter's ear—"

"Beast!" said Bunter. "I dare say Bunter asked for it!" remarked Smith minor.

"Yah!" was Bunter's rejoinder to that. "He jawed you for smoking, Bolsover, and—"

"Well, it's against the rules to smoke; what's the good of having that up against him?" grunted Bolsover. "If I were a master in a school I suppose I should do as he did. Don't talk rot!"

Skinner knitted his brows. His meeting was composed of fellows who certainly hadn't liked Larry when he was a master at Greyfriars; but the fact that Larry had fought the Germans since then seemed to weigh more with them than did that of Harold Skinner. There was a plentiful lack of enthusiasm in Skinner's meeting, that was evident.

"Well, a lot of fellows are talking you end of rot about Lascelles," said Skinner sulkily. "They're arranging some tomfool reception or other. Now, my idea is to be on the scene—"

"Of course!" "And give a counter-demonstration. We—"

"What?" "We shall be in a minority, of course, but we can make our voices heard," said Skinner eagerly. "When they cheer Lascelles we'll give him groans—"

"Groans!" repeated Bolsover major. "Well groan and hiss—"

"Groan and hiss?" "That's it! Groan like thunder!" said Skinner, his eyes glistening. "And that will be a counter-demonstration—see? Lascelles is sure to notice it, and though we're in a minority, it's bound to hurt his feelings a lot!"

"Hurt his feelings!" gasped Bolsover major.

"Yes; don't you think so?" Percy Bolsover glared at Skinner. It was true that he had had trouble in the past with Lieutenant Lawrence Lascelles. But the expression on Bolsover's bulldog face showed that he did not take Skinner's view. It showed, in fact, that he took a very different view.

"Well, my hat!" stammered Bolsover. "You—you're proposing to groan at a man coming home from the war! You meanly worm!"

"What?" "You—you cringing Hun! Get off that chair!"

"I—I—I—"

Crash! Bolsover major kicked the chair from under Skinner, and the orator descended suddenly with a crash. There was a roar as Skinner reposed on the study carpet. "Well, of all the cads!" said Hazel-dene. "I really think you take the bun, Skinner! I'm off!"

Hazel-dene left the study, followed by Tre-luce and Smith minor. Bolsover major took Skinner by the ear and helped him up.

"Leggo!" howled Skinner furiously. "I say, you fellows, it's not a bad idea!" said Bunter. "I think—"

"What's that?" roared Bolsover major. Billy Bunter jumped.

"I—I mean, it's a jolly rotten idea!" he said hastily. "I'm surprised at Skinner. That's what I really meant to say—I'm surprised at him. Sherked, in fact! You're an awful cad, Skinner!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Blessed if I see anything to cackle at, Fish! I'm really shocked—"

"I guess Skinner is the outside edge!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "Let's bump him!"

"Rake out the cabs in the grate, Bunter!" said Bolsover major.

"What-af-fer?" "To rub Skinner's head in!"

"Oh! All right! Certainly, old chap!"

"Will you let go, Bolsover!" hissed Skinner, in a tone of concentrated fury.

"Not till I've rubbed your napper in the cinders!"

"You silly fool—" "Buck up, Bunter!"

"He, he, he! Here you are, Bolsover!"

Billy Bunter had changed sides with enthusiasm. He did not want his napper rubbed in the cinders as well as Skinner's.

"Now, you worm!" said Bolsover, dragging the struggling Skinner to the gate by main force. "You want to give Larry groans when he comes home, do you?"

"Yaroooh!" "You can give some groans for yourself. I think you will before I'm finished with you!"

"Yew-ow! Help! Lend me a hand, Stott, you idiot!"

"Oh, gets!" said Stott. "Gr-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r!" came from Skinner as the bully of the Remove proceeded to rub his head in the cinders industrially collected by Bunter. "Yew-ow-ooooooooooh! Mmmmmmmmm!"

Stott strolled out of the study, grinning, followed by Fisher T. Fish. Billy Bunter stood blinking at Skinner's punishment with a fat grin.

"Mmmmmmmmmmm!" came from the hapless Skinner. "Groooooogggghhh!"

"There!" gasped Bolsover. "Now, perhaps, you'll have enough groaning to do without groaning at Larry when he comes home!"



Bolsover major kicked the chair from under Skinner, and the orator descended suddenly with a crash. There was a roar as Skinner reposed on the study carpet. (See Chapter 3.)

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter, as Skinner sat up, gasping. "I say, Skinner, you do look a sight! He, he, he!"

"Grooooooh!" howled Bunter.

Skinner made a furious dive at him, and Billy Bunter fled from the study, still chortling a fat chortle. Harold Skinner sank into a chair, gasping for breath, and clawing wildly at the cinders in his hair. He was still clawing when Stott and Snoop came in to tea, and they chuckled as they saw him.

Skinner's meeting had not been a success. When they met in the Remove that night, Bolsover major asked him if he was going to call another meeting, adding that in that case he would be on hand. Skinner's reply was a snarl. He had had enough of calling meetings.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Comes Round!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were very bright and busy the next few days.

There were a good many little preparations to be made for the hero's home-coming.

Funds were raised in the Remove for a glorious spread in the Rag—it being hoped that Larry would accept the Form's invitation to tea. And when the spread was arranged the admirers of

Larry found a new recruit in Billy Bunter. All Larry's friends and loyal admirers were to be present at the feast, and that was quite enough to convert William George Bunter into a most enthusiastic admirer of Larry Lascelles.

"Splendid chap!" Bunter ejaculated, rolling into the Rag on Saturday afternoon, where the Famous Five were engaged in sweeping and garnishing, so to speak.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you burbling about now?" asked Bob Cherry, pausing in the task of fastening up a huge Union Jack over the fireplace by means of a hammer and a liberal allowance of nails.

"Ripping fellow!" said Bunter.

"Are you alluding to me?"

"You!" Bunter snorted. "I'm speaking of old Larry, of course."

"Old Larry?" repeated Wharton.

"Yes, rather—our old pal Larry!" said Bunter. "You fellows can run him down if you like. I stand up for him!"

"Why, you—you—"

"I know he used to make us work," said Billy Bunter, blinking severely at the astonished juniors. "What about it? We're here to work, ain't we?"

"Well, my hat!"

"Besides, you slackers can grumble at work if you like. You'll never hear me grumble!"

"Great pip!"

"I stand up for Larry!" said Bunter

loftily, as if he were the absent master's sole champion amid a host of detractors. "I don't care what you say; he's a splendid chap! Look at the way he's killed no end of Huns. We've had little troubles; but I forgive him. He used to rag me a bit; but I consider that he's wiped out the past by standing up to the Huns in Flanders."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to cackle at. Larry's a splendid chap, and I'm not going to hear anything against him!"

"Look here—" roared Johnny Bull wrathfully.

Bunter held up a fat hand.

"Not a word!" he said.

"What?"

"Not a word against Larry!"

"You—you fat idiot!" gasped Johnny Bull. "I've a jolly good mind to mop up the floor with you!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"The esteemed Bunter has smelt out the feed, like the worthy war-horse sniffing the battle from afar!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, with a grin.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

"Of course, I shall be present!" said Bunter loftily. "You need not think it's on account of the feed, though. I feel bound to be present to welcome Larry home. I regard him more as a pal than a master, really. I shall certainly be

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present, and I'm going to make a handsome contribution to the fund for the feed."

"Well, I'm treasurer," remarked Frank Nugent. "I'll take your contribution now, Bunter."

"I happen to be short of cash at the present moment, Nugent. But I am expecting a postal-order shortly."

"Oh crumbs!"

"The same old postal-order?" asked Bob Cherry sarcastically. "I should think it had grown whiskers by this time!"

"I intend to whack in the whole sum," said Bunter generously. "It will be for a rather large amount, I expect. It's from one of my titled relations, you know. Now, considering that I'm making one of the largest contributions to the fund—"

"Oh!"

"I think I'm entitled to a seat on the committee of management," said Bunter. "You see that, Wharton?"

"Not quite."

"I'm going to put a lot of energy into the arrangements," said Bunter. "In my hands the thing will be a success. My idea is for me to do the shopping for the feed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blamed if I can see anything to cackle at! Now, we don't want to rush Mrs. Mimble for the stuff at the last moment, so a good idea would be to lay in the things a few at a time. My idea is for me to begin this afternoon. You hand me, say, a pound—"

"I'll hand you a boot instead!" remarked Bob Cherry.

He did, and Billy Bunter departed from the Rag with a howl; and the Famous Five went on with the decorations, unassisted by Bunter.

It was not really likely that William George would be entrusted with the fund for the spread on the great occasion, if he had been there would certainly have been a spread, but William George Bunter would have been the only guest at it.

Billy Bunter having "come round"—with his fat eye on the loaves and fishes—there remained only one fellow in the Remove who looked upon the festive preparations with a sour eye. That one was Skinner. Skinner had not come round by any means. He was cudgelling his brains these days for some dodge whereby he might spoil the great reception; but he was careful not to confide his charitable intentions to anyone in the Remove. Even Stott had turned against him on that subject.

"What are they up to there?" asked Skinner, meeting Bunter as he rolled hurriedly away from the Rag.

"Ho-ow-ow!" was Bunter's reply.

"He was still feeling the effects of Bob Cherry's boot."

"Pitching into you?" asked Skinner, with great sympathy.

"Owl! Yee. That beast Cherry, just because I said I wouldn't hear old Larry run down!" said Bunter indignantly.

Skinner laughed.

"They're putting up flags and things," said Bunter. "Waste of money, I call it. Much better put the cash into the feed."

"Lot of rot!" said Skinner.

"What?"

"Lot of rot!"

Billy Bunter turned his big glasses upon Skinner severely, and turned up his fat little nose.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Well, what are you blinking at, you silly owl!" asked Skinner, surprised by Bunter's expression. "Hitherto, he had

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supposed the Owl of the Remove to be in sympathy with his own views.

"I'm surprised at you, Skinner!" said Bunter loftily. "You shock me! You do really, you know!"

"What do you mean, you fat frog?" growled Skinner angrily. "Isn't it a lot of rot, this fuss about Lascelles?"

"Certainly not!"

"Why, you fat worm!" exclaimed Skinner, much exasperated by this description of his last sympathizer. "Only yesterday you said so yourself!"

"I didn't know about the feed then, of—"

"The what?"

"I—I mean, I never said anything of the sort! I wouldn't! You misunderstood me, Skinner! You're suspicious, you know!"

"So there's going to be a feed, is there?" asked Skinner bitterly.

"Yes, rather! A tremendous spread!" said Bunter, his round eyes glinting behind his glasses. "I'm contributing a couple of pounds to the fund—"

"Liar!" said Skinner, with cheery politeness.

"Oh, really, Skinner! You'll jolly well see when my postal-order comes—"

"When?" asked Skinner.

"I'm whacking it all in," said Bunter.

"Of course, I shall be present. Larry, old Larry, you know—would miss me if I wasn't present."

"Old Larry! So he's 'old Larry' now!"

"He always was old Larry to me!" said Bunter, with dignity. "Some fellows admire a chap who goes to fight the Hun. Some fellows are grateful to the soldiers for defending them. Larry was a

boast in some ways—such as expecting a fellow to care about working, and making a chap grind—but I've forgiven him. I fully consider that he's wiped out the past."

"You mean you're sucking up to those cads—"

Skinner jerked his head towards the Rag—"for the sake of the spread!"

"I'm afraid you've got a suspicious mind, Skinner!" said Bunter severely.

"Of course, I haven't given a thought to the feed! I am only thinking of dear old Larry—"

"Dear old Larry!" hooted Skinner.

"Dear old Larry!" said Bunter.

"How glad I shall be to see him again! How glad he will be to see me!"

"You fat rotter!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Hang you, and hang Larry!" growled Skinner.

Bunter turned up his fat little nose again.

"If you speak of Larry like that, Skinner, you needn't speak to me!" he said. "I'm shocked at you! Larry went to fight the Germans, and now he's coming home in glory, and it's a time for all Greyfriars fellows to roll up and cheer. You're unpatriotic, Skinner. You're a Hun! I must say, Skinner, that I despise you!"

And, elevating his fat little nose a little higher, William George Bunter turned loftily on his heel, turning his back on Skinner in great scorn.

Skinner certainly ought to have been crushed on the spot. He ought to have been, under the weight of Billy Bunter's lofty scorn; but he wasn't. He seemed only enraged, instead of crushed. He rushed after the lofty William George, and landed out with a heavy boot.

Biff!

Bunter's lofty strut was changed suddenly into a scramble.

The fat junior pitched forward on his hands and knees, roaring:

"Yeecooop!"

Skinner grinned, and walked away,

feeling somewhat solaced. And the latest and most enthusiastic admirer of Larry sprawled in the passage and yelled.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Skinner's Little Scheme!

"GOOD - AFTERNOON, Master Skinner!"

Skinner started a little.

He was walking to Courtfield, intending to put in his Saturday afternoon at the cinema. He was quite "fed up" with the preparations that were going on at Greyfriars. All the Remove seemed to have but one topic, and that was Larry Lascelles. Even cricket was forgotten. The hero's home-coming was the one subject that seemed to interest the Remove at present, and Skinner was in a minority of one on that subject. So he had shaken the dust of Greyfriars from his feet, as it were, and started for Courtfield in a sulky humor.

A rather tall, bony man was resting on one of the wooden seats by the wayside, under a plane-tree, and he called to the junior as he was passing. Skinner stopped and looked at him. The stranger's voice sounded familiar, but Skinner did not recognise the man.

The bony stranger was very shabby in attire, and his boots were very down at heel. But he grinned affably at Skinner, and touched his ragged hat.

"Fancy meeting you, sir!" he said effusively.

Skinner stared at him.

"You seem to know my name," he said. "I don't know you!"

"You've forgotten me, sir!" said the bony gentleman reproachfully. "You don't remember Montgomery Snooks? Yet you saw me, sir, when I was the star turn at the Courtfield Theatre Royal, and I came to Greyfriars to help you with some private theatrics. You remember me now, sir?"

"Oh yes, I remember!" said Skinner carelessly. "I don't remember you as a star turn, though. I thought you were a super or something at the theatre, and I jolly well remember you were sacked for getting drunk!"

"Sir!" said Mr. Snooks.

"I thought you went into the Army," said Skinner, eyeing the man. "You don't look much like a soldier, though."

Mr. Snooks shook his head sorrowfully.

"I answered my country's call!" he said, with sad dignity. "I gave up a career of glorious success in my art—I quitted the throngs of the happy and the gay—"

"And said good-bye to the pub!" remarked Skinner.

Mr. Snooks did not seem to hear that remark.

"The day has been," he resumed, "when the motor-cars of the great thronged round the stage-door, and beautiful countesses competed for the honour of carrying off Montgomery Snooks to the festive hall or the brilliant ball-room. All this I gave up, sir, to serve my country."

Skinner grinned.

"You dreamt that you dwelt in marble halls?" he asked.

"And what was my reward?" asked Mr. Snooks sorrowfully. "You conclude, of course, that I caught the eye of the O.C. at once—that I was offered a commission on the spot—that I became a captain, a major, a colonel—that I played as distinguished a part in the war as on the Theban boards in my civilian days. Not so, sir."

"I should judge not, by the look of you," asserted Skinner. "I really don't think anybody would take you for a

colonel on half-pay."

"How was I treated?" pursued Mr. Snooks. "Believe me, sir, incredible as it seems, it was said that I should not make a good and efficient soldier, and the country, sir, dispensed with my services."

"Yet we won the war!" said Skinner sarcastically.

"There was a misunderstanding—a painful misunderstanding—about the captain's watch," said Mr. Snooks. "How it came to be concealed in my bag is a mystery that has never been cleared up. A fussy, interfering, ill-bred sergeant placed a most humiliating construction upon the circumstances. The scene that followed was painful."

"I should imagine it was!" grinned Skinner.

"And, instead of following the path of glory, sir, instead of leading my men over the top, and so forth, I was actually ejected from the military forces of the Crown as not likely to become a good and efficient soldier," said Mr. Snooks, in a grievous tone. "My military career was short. I had no time to distinguish myself."

"Except in the canteen," suggested Skinner.

"And now, Master Skinner, I am actually hard up—actually short of that contemptible but necessary article, cash."

"You don't say so."

"But I do, Master Skinner—I do! And, with food at the present prices—with the necessities of life sold at fifteen shillings a bottle—"

"Good-afternoon!" yawned Skinner.

"Pray do not hurry away, Master Skinner. It is such a pleasure to see you again—such a real pleasure! It is possible that, for the sake of old times, you might feel disposed to make a small advance—"

"Not at all."

"Even a half-crown would be acceptable," said Mr. Snooks tragically.

"Half-crowns are scarce, old top."

"They are—they are," sighed Mr. Snooks. "I have been there! But—ha, ha!—even a shilling—"

Skinner grinned, and shook his head.

Mr. Snooks might have brought it down to twopenny without producing any effect on Skinner.

"Why don't you go back to the Theatre Royal?" he asked. "They ought to be glad to get their star turn back again!"

"I have called on the manager," said Mr. Snooks. "He does not require my services. That man, sir, has been feeding fat on war-profits while I have been away serving my country by—"

"By bawling your captain's watch?"

"No, sir; by—"

"By being chucked out because you were too boozey to be a soldier?" asked Skinner agreeably.

"Ha, ha!" You are pleased to be humorous, sir," said Mr. Snooks. "Did you say a shilling, Master Skinner?"

"No."

"Ahem! Perhaps the young gentlemen at the school may be doing private theatricals again, and may require the services of a distinguished and famous actor, now fallen upon evil days, and willing to hire out his genius, sir, at a low price—"

"Not that I know of."

"Perhaps, sir, you yourself—"

"My dear man, I've nothing to give away!" said Skinner. "You helped me once to play a practical joke on the fellows, and I paid you. That's all! Good-afternoon!" Skinner was moving on, but he suddenly stopped as a new thought came into his mind. "By Jove!"

A look of despondency had settled upon Mr. Snooks' beery visage; but it

brightened up again as Skinner turned back.

"Even sixpence, Master Skinner!" he murmured.

"Look here, you might be able to help me in a stunt," said Skinner. And he sat down on a seat beside the dilapidated Mr. Snooks. "You were only a super at the theatre, but I suppose you can act a bit. And you can make yourself up—I've seen you do that. I wonder if—"

Skinner reflected.

"I could play any part you choose to name," said Mr. Snooks. "You never saw me bring down the house as Hamlet, I suppose?"

"No, I never did!"

"You did not behold my breathless triumph as Othello?"

"Not at all!"

"Or my glorious success in the part of Macbeth—"

"I don't think anybody did," said Skinner coolly. "But never mind that! Look here, I've been thinking of a stunt—a practical joke on the chaps at Greyfriars. Could you make yourself up as a wounded officer?"

"Could a duck swim?" answered Mr. Snooks disdainfully.

"You'd have to put bandages on your chivvy, or something—you could do that. And get a bit cleaner. They know he was wounded—but not just what he got at. Might have been in the face," said Skinner. "Look here, if ten bob's any good to you, I'll stand it for a little job on Wednesday afternoon—"

"I'm your man, sir, whatever it is!" said Mr. Snooks. "Beggars can't be choosers. But while the grass is growing, sir—"

"I'll give you a couple of bob in advance."

"What's the job, sir?"

Skinner thought a minute or two, and then began to explain. Mr. Snooks listened with surprise, but with attention. When Skinner had finished the dilapidated Thespian nodded.

"I could do it on my head, sir! Only a joke, of course?"

"Of course!" said Skinner.

"For ten bob—"

"That's the figure!"

"The remuneration, sir, is small, but acceptable in the present reduced state of my finances," said Mr. Snooks with dignity. "But there will be expenses."

"Cut that out!" said Skinner gruffly.

"Impossible, sir! I shall have to hire certain garments—in these clothes, sir, I should hardly be convincing as an officer. Not in these trousers, sir!"

"I suppose there's something in that," said Skinner reluctantly. It gave Skinner a pain to part with money; but he was very keen on his little scheme, and there was a struggle in his breast between his stinginess and his desire to score off Larry's devoted admirers at Greyfriars. "You could hire the things, though—you needn't buy them."

"I should have to leave a deposit as a—kind of security. It is possible that my present appearance would not inspire confidence."

"Jolly likely, I think!" granted Skinner.

"I know a place where the charge will be reasonable—Mr. Lazarus' in Court-field. And a few pounds—"

"I'm not a Rothschild!" growled Skinner. "I know old Lazarus—he sells us things. I'll go there with you, and see you through. Old Lazarus will trust me with the things you want."

Mr. Snooks nodded.

"In that case, sir, all is plain sailing. Come!" And Montgomery Snooks rose to his feet.

"I'll fix it up with old Lazarus to let

you have the things on Wednesday," said Skinner. "Come on!"

And Skinner walked on to Courtfield with his dilapidated companion, and dodged round side-streets to get to Mr. Lazarus' second-hand shop. He was not proud of being seen in the company of Mr. Montgomery Snooks—useful as that frowsy gentleman was on the present occasion.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Coker's Speech!

"NOW, you cheeky young sweeps!" It was Coker of the Fifth who spoke, and he addressed the Famous Five of the Remove in the quad on Wednesday.

Wednesday—the great day—had dawned bright and sunny upon Greyfriars.

Never had the Head been more popular than he was that day. He had made that Wednesday a whole holiday instead of a half, as usual, in honour of the return of the Greyfriars warrior. And Greyfriars rejoiced thereat.

Not that the juniors had slackened that morning by any means. They had worked harder at great preparations for Larry than they were accustomed to work in the Form-rooms.

The Rag was a scene of glory. There were flags all over the room, and banners draped at the head of the table where Larry was to sit at the spread—for the juniors had made up their minds that Larry would accept the invitation to tea with the Lower School.

He really couldn't do less.

And the feast was laid in with unusual plentifulness—carefully locked up from a possible raid by Billy Bunter. On the great day the Famous Five were chatting in the quadrangle, with an eye open to see the Head's car start. Dr. Locke was going to London in the car to meet Lieutenant Larry Lascelles, and bring him home in the afternoon. Mr. Quelch was going with the Head. And Larry's sister was coming down with Larry. Exactly when the car would return the juniors did not know; but there was going to be a rousing reception when it arrived with Larry—they knew that.

Coker of the Fifth interrupted their chat with his polite interjection. Coker appeared a little wrathful.

He raised a large hand, and pointed a finger at the Famous Five in an accusing manner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, dear old top!" said Bob Coker cheerily. "Have you got 'em again?"

"I hear—" began Coker.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"I hear," roared Coker, "that you cheeky fags have got some silly scheme on for giving Mr. Lascelles a reception."

"Where did you hear that?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Isn't it so?"

"Oh," said Coker, mollified. "That's all right, then! Of course, I shouldn't allow it!"

"My dear chap, you're right off the wicket! There isn't any silly scheme on that I've heard of."

"Good! That will do!" said Coker loftily.

"But there's a jolly good scheme on," went on Wharton. "Perhaps that's what you were referring to!"

"You cheeky young sweep, so you have got a scheme—"

"Certainly!"

"I thought so!" said Coker, frowning. "Don't bandy words with me, Wharton! I didn't come here to talk nonsense!"

"Why are you doing it, then?" queried Nugent.

"None of your cheek, Nugent! Now, look here!" said Horace Coker impressively. "You fags have to keep your place this afternoon. I can't have a swarm of fags fooling round when I'm making my welcoming speech to Mr. Lascelles!"

"Making a speech?" asked Bob. "Yes! And you fags have got to lie low. Of course, you can be present!" said Coker generously. "But I shall want you to take a back seat—see?"

"The selfishness is terrific!" murmured Horace Singh.

"You can cheer when I give the sign," said Coker—"not before."

"Not before!" smiled Wharton.

"That's it. On this occasion I am master of the ceremonies, so to speak. I intend Mr. Lascelles to have a good reception—an impressive reception. To make of a success, it is necessary for me to keep the affair entirely in my own hands. You see that?"

"Not quite!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"The not-quitefulness is—"

"Terrible!" chorled Johnny Bull.

"Now, I don't want any nonsense!" said Coker warningly. "This isn't a matter for fags to have a hand in, excepting to cheer when they're told. You can do that. But you're to be very careful not to interrupt my speech. I've often a lot of trouble with that speech."

"Then it must be a corker," said Bob Cherry, with a wink at his comrades.

"Got it about you, Coker?"

"Yes, I've the manuscript in my pocket," said Coker. As a matter of fact, Coker had been reading out the most impressive passages in his great speech to whomever would listen; and he was not above inflicting the same upon the Removites. "I'll read you a few lines, if you like, just to show you how it goes."

"Oh, do!" cried the Famous Five imploringly.

"All right, I will!" said Coker generously.

He extracted a sheaf of impot paper from his pocket, covered with sprawling writing in Coker's own original orthography. The Famous Five gathered round in a very respectful attitude to enjoy the treat. Coker cleared his throat with a little cough, and started.

"On this auspicious occasion—"

"Hold on!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"What is there suspicious about the occasion, Coker?"

"Auspicious—no suspicious, you young ass!"

"What's the difference?" asked Bob, with great gravity.

"Well, my hat!" said Coker. "Greyfriars is coming to something! When I was in the Remove I knew the difference between auspicious and suspicious."

"But you're a rather unusually gifted chap, Coker!"

"Yes, that's so. Still, you ought to know. Auspicious occasion means a joyful occasion—a great occasion." Coker kindly explained, the juniors listening under the solemnity of oaks. "An occasion under favourable auspices, you see—Latin derivation, of course."

"You ought to be a Form-master, Coker!" said Nugent, in great admiration.

"Well, I dare say I could handle fags quite as well as some Form-masters," assented Coker. "But let's get on!"

"On this auspicious occasion, it gives me great pleasure to say a few words on—"

"Is generally does give you pleasure to say a few words, doesn't it, Coker?"

"If that's meant for cheek, Cherry, I—"

"But you've used up a lot of impot paper on a few words," remarked Bob.

"A few words is a figure of speech!" said Coker testily. "Orators always begin like that, when they mean to run on for hours. This speech will take about half an hour to deliver."

"Everybody standing silent all the time?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Exactly!"

"I can see us doing it!" murmured Bob.

"What did you say, Cherry?"

"Ahem! Get on with the washing, old scout!"

"On this auspicious occasion—"

"resumed Coker.

"Do you say that twice?"

"Of course not, you young ass!"

"But you've just said it twice!"

"I was beginning again, you fathead! Don't interrupt!"

"Oh, I see—a restart after the interval! Go ahead!"

"On this auspicious occasion—"

"That's three auspicious occasions!" murmured Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"On this auspicious occasion,"

roared Coker, "it gives me great pleasure to say a few words. In the name of Greyfriars School, sir, in the name of all Forms, high and low, I welcome you to Greyfriars. The fellows have chosen me as their representative in welcoming you—"

"Have they?"

"You didn't choose yourself, Coker?"

"That's a way of putting it. Shut up!"

Read

"FOES OF THE FIFTH!"

A Wonderful Complete Story of TOM MERRY & CO. at St. Jim's,

By MARTIN CLIFFORD,

in

"THE GEM."

Out This Wednesday.



"The fellows have chosen me as their representative in welcoming you to these classic shades!"

"What?" "What?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"The whatfulness is terrific!"

"These which, Coker?"

"Classic shades!" roared Coker crossly.

"But it's going to be a sunny afternoon," objected Wharton. "There won't be any shades when Larry gets here!"

"It's an oratorical effect," explained Coker. "You fellows don't know any thing about oratory. Of course, you wouldn't be ignorant of fags!"

"Ahem! Presently! How well you put it, Coker! Heave ahead!"

"To these classic shades," resumed Coker. "Never, in the history of this scholastic establishment, have the hearts of Greyfriars beaten—"

"Haven't they?"

"Yours stopped, Franky!"

"Not a bit!"

"You've got it wrong there, Coker," said Bob Cherry, laying his hand on his waistcoat. "Mine's still going!"

Coker glared.

"Have the hearts of Greyfriars beaten with more pride," he roared, "than on the present auspicious occasion. For—"

"That's another auspicious occasion!"

"Auspicious, you young ass!"

"I mean auspicious! Is it the same auspicious occasion, or another auspicious occasion?"

"The same, of course! Dry up! 'For long and weary years we have been engaged in war with the Hun,' said Coker eloquently.

"Five!" said Bob.

"Never mind the number, you silly kid—"

"But you said four long and weary years—"

"You thumping little idiot! I said for long and weary years—"

"Yes, four long and weary years—"

"Oh, shut up and listen! You haven't any sense, Bob Cherry! 'For long and weary years we have been engaged—'"

"Time we fixed the day, then!"

"What!"

"If we've been engaged four long and weary years, isn't it about time for the wedding!"

"You—you—you silly little idiot!" gasped Coker.

"Oh, Coker!"

"You're not such a silly fool as you make out!" roared Coker. "I believe you're pulling my leg!"

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bob, in great surprise. "That's dawned on him at last! He believes we're pulling his leg, you chaps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—" spluttered Coker.

"Look here, I won't read out any more of my speech—"

"Thanks!"

"For this relief, much thanks, old chap!"

"Good man!"

"But if you don't keep off the grass while I'm welcoming Lascelles I'll jolly well lick you all round!" roared Coker.

"Remember that! And if you cackle at me, Bob Cherry, I'll lick you now!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

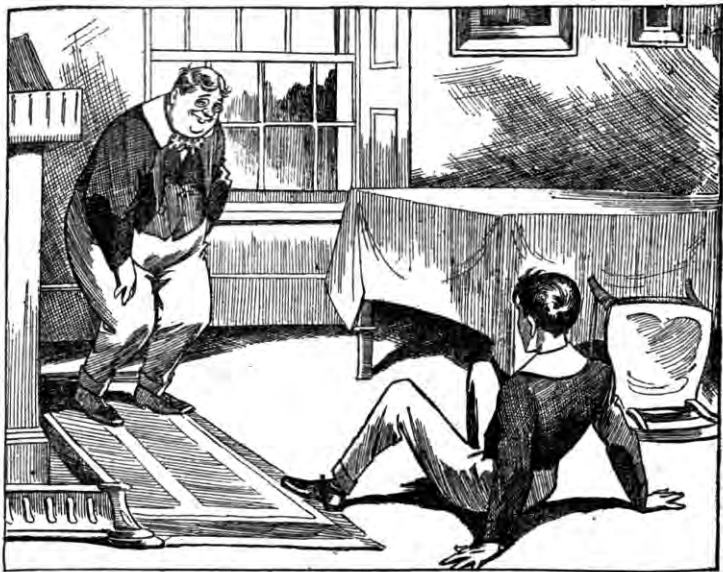
It was more than the orator's patience could bear. He made a ferocious rush at Bob Cherry.

The next moment five pairs of hands were on Coker, and Coker was sitting on the ground, gasping. Once more the great Horace had bitten off more than he could masticate.

"I—I—I—I'll smash you!" gasped Coker.

"I—I—I—I'll Yarcooch!"

Coker rolled on the hard, unsympathetic ground in the grasp of the



"He, he, he!" chorled Bully Bunter, as Skinner sat up, gasping. "I say, Skinner, you do look a sight! He, he, he!" (See Chapter 3.)

Famous Five. His speech was crammed down his back, and then the chime of the Remove left him. Coker of the Fifth sat up, spluttering, and for some time he was making frantic attempts to extract his oratory from the back of his neck. And Harry Wharton & Co. sauntered away cheerily to watch the Head's car start.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Told on the Telephone!

"W HARTON!"
Harold Skinner called to the captain of the Remove as he came out into the quadrangle after dinner that great day.

The Famous Five and their comrades had given the finishing touches to the preparations for Larry.

It was expected that the Head's car would return about three or four in the afternoon, so there was now some time to kill before Larry arrived.

Harry Wharton glowered round rather impatiently. He did not want to talk to Skinner.

True, that youth had been much more amenable to reason of late on the subject of the returning hero. He had not indulged in sneering remarks, as was his wont; in fact, he had been very cheerful and smiling. But his earlier attitude had not been forgotten.

"Well!" said Harry curtly.

"I understood that the Head had gone

to London, to meet Mr. Lascelles there," said Skinner.

"That's so."
"They're lunching in town, along with some of Larry's Army pals, and then Larry's coming home in the car," said Frank Nugent. "That's what we've heard, at any rate."

"Then it's jolly queer," said Skinner, looking puzzled.

"Where 'is the queerfulness, my esteemed Skinner?" asked Hurree Singh. "There's a man asking for you on the telephone in the prefects' room, Wharton," said Skinner.

"Oh, is there!" exclaimed Harry, in surprise.

"Yes. I happened to be in the room, to speak to Loder, and I heard the bell ring. Loder took the call," said Skinner.

"Then I don't suppose he'll let me answer it," said Harry. "Wingate would, but Loder—"

"The queer thing is that the man on the 'phone said he was Mr. Lascelles."

"What!"

"And he wanted to speak to you, Wharton. Loder says you can come."

"Well, my hat!"

"Jolly decent of old Larry to ring us up!" said Bob Cherry. "It must be a trunk-call from London. I should have thought the Head was with him by this, though."

"Perhaps the Head's mentioned about our reception, and all that," suggested Nugent.

"Ahem! Perhaps!"

"The perhapsfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Singh.

Harry Wharton hurried into the house, a little surprised, but very pleased, at being called up on the telephone by Lieutenant Lascelles. He entered the prefects' room, and found Loder of the Sixth standing at the telephone with the receiver to his ear. He was chatting away over the wires as Wharton came in.

"We shall all be jolly glad to see you, sir. Won't know you? Oh, yes, we shall know you all right! Sorry to hear that your face has been hurt—very sorry indeed. Hallo! Here's Wharton!"

Loder held out the receiver to the captain of the Remove with quite a gracious nod. Even the bully of the Sixth was a little under the influence of the general rejoicing caused by the Greyfriars hero's safe return.

"It's Mr. Lascelles, Wharton," said Loder. "He seems to have missed the Head, somehow, and he wants to speak to you."

"Oh!" said Harry.

He put the receiver to his ear. A voice came through which did not seem very much like Mr. Lascelles's tones as Wharton remembered them. It was a little husky; but allowances had to be made for the lapse of time, and for the rough experiences Mr. Lascelles had been through. Wharton was prepared to find some changes in the fighting school-master.

"Is that you, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir. Is that Mr. Lascelles?"

"Yes, my boy. Your old friend Larry," came the reply. "You have not forgotten me, Wharton?"

"Oh, no, sir! We were all jolly glad to hear that you were coming home," said Harry. "It's the best news we've had since the peace."

"You are very good to say so, my boy. I shall be delighted to see Greyfriars again!"

"We shall all be delighted to see you, sir. We've taken the liberty to— to arrange a bit of a reception, sir," said Harry diffidently.

"Good man! That's really pleasant to hear!"

"I'm glad you say so, sir," said Dr. Locke mentioned it to me, Wharton."

"Did he, sir? You've met the Head, then?"

"Yes; and I'm sorry to say that the Head was taken ill in the car—nothing very serious—and was compelled to remain in London. Mr. Quelch is staying with him. And he particularly desires that nothing shall be said about it to Mrs. Locke, as it is merely a slight attack, and he hopes to return to the school by early evening."

"Oh, sir! Then you'll be coming late!" exclaimed Wharton, in great disappointment.

"Not at all, Wharton. I thought of remaining with the Head at first; but he considered the disappointment of the boys who had been preparing for my arrival, and we decided that I should come on by train."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Harry. "You are not speaking from London, then?"

"Not at all, I'm speaking from Courtfield."

"Good!"

"Do you hear me distinctly, Wharton?"

"Quite, sir."

"I find it a little difficult to use the telephone, owing to the bandages."

"Bandages!" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes. You knew I was wounded?"

"I did not know it was on the face, sir."

"Yes; the Huns succeeded in spoiling my beauty a little, Wharton. And the worst of it is that a stumble the other day reopened the wounds, and I am bandaged up nearly like an Egyptian mummy. I'm quite ashamed to show myself at Greyfriars in such a state."

"Oh, sir," said Harry, in a moved voice. "We shall feel more proud of you than we did before, if possible."

"That's very kind of you, Wharton; but a man hates to be disfigured. But it can't be helped. No good groaning. Now, I'm at Courtfield, my boy, and I can't get a cab here. I'm not quite up to a long walk in this hot weather. The Head told me to telephone to Gosling to bring the trap, but I thought of telephoning to you instead. I've not forgotten, my boy, what friends we used to be. I suppose you're playing cricket?"

"No, sir; just waiting for you to come."

"Then suppose you come along to Courtfield and meet me. Gosling will let you have the trap, and one or two of your friends could come with you."

"Yes, rather, sir! We'll be delighted!"

"Then I'll start walking, and you can meet me on the road."

"I'll get off at once, sir."

"Good man!"

"We were going to ask you to tea in the Rag, sir," murmured Harry, "if you'd honour us, sir."

"Delighted, my boy! I shall be ready for some refreshment when I get in. I've cultivated a healthy appetite in the trenches."

"We'll start immediately in the trap, sir."

"Then I'll meet you. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, sir!"

Harry Wharton hung up the receiver. Loder of the Sixth looked at him very curiously. He had heard Wharton's half of the conversation.

"Queer thing that Mr. Lascelles should call you up instead of one of the masters or one of the Sixth," he said.

"Possibly. I dare say Mr. Lascelles knows best, though!" retorted Harry.

And he left the prefect's room in high feather.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Meeting Larry!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What about Larry?"

"What's the news?"

Four voices questioned the captain of the Remove eagerly, as he rejoined his chums in the quadrangle. Skinner looked on and listened while Harry Wharton explained to the Captain.

"Poor old Larry!" said Bob. "It was a good-looking chap. It's a rotten shame if the Huns have disfigured his chivvy."

"We'll make all the more fuss of him," said Johnny Bull. "Let's see about the trap at once. We don't want Larry to have to walk far."

"Only two of us can go in the trap, if there's to be room for Larry," said Wharton. "The others had better get the spread ready in the Rag. Larry will have tea with us as soon as he gets in. Loder seemed a bit edgewise because Larry rung me up instead of one of the Sixth. I don't see it. Larry always got on with the Remove."

"Yes, rather!"

"It is a bit queer, though, in a way," said Johnny Bull thoughtfully. "The Head and Quelch are away; but he might have rung up Mr. Proust, or old Hacker, or Wingate of the Sixth. It's a big compliment to us."

"The Head's mentioned to him that we've been preparing a reception, you see."

"Blessed if I thought the Head knew about it!"

"Oh, the Head's a downy old bird! He sees things!" said Bob Cherry. "Anyhow, Larry has selected us, and we're going to play up. Let's go and get the trap."

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry hurried away to see Gosling. Johnny Bull and Nugent and Hurree Singh repaired to the Rag to prepare for tea. And as the news spread that Larry was at Courtfield, and would soon arrive at Greyfriars, there was a buzz of excitement in the Remove. As a matter of fact, the juniors were quite as well pleased that Larry was coming by himself, and not in the stately company of Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch. It gave more freedom to the reception. And it was distinctly complimentary to the Remove for Larry to pick them out in this way.

Gosling demurred at first to allowing Wharton and Bob Cherry to take the trap; but Mr. Lascelles' name vanquished him. The trap was led out, and adorned with a couple of Union Jacks. Harry Wharton took the reins, and was about to start, when Coker of the Fifth came racing up.

"Hold on!" panted Coker.

"Well, what is it? Quick!"

"I hear that Mr. Lascelles is at Courtfield!"

"Yes, yes!"

"You're taking the trap to meet him, then?"

"That's so!"

"Well, it's like your thundering cheek to do anything of the kind!" said Coker. "I'll take the trap! Jump down!"

"You cheeky ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Go it, Harry!"

Harry shook the reins, and started.

Coker stared after the trap, apparently having expected his lordly order to be obeyed on the spot.

"Wharton!" he shouted.

"Go and eat coke!"

"Stop at once!"

"Rats!"

The trap rattled off, and Coker, with a snort of wrath, rushed after it. He caught it behind, and hung on.

"Now stop, you cheeky sweeps!" he gasped.

"Let go, you ass!" rapped out Bob Cherry.

"Stop, I tell you!" howled Coker, as his boots dragged along in the dust behind the trap.

"Shift that silly chump, Bob!" said the captain of the Remove, without looking round.

"You bet!" answered Bob cheerily.

Horace Coker was essaying to pull himself into the trap from behind. Bob reached out and took Coker's nose between a finger and thumb.

"Ger-rooough!" came from Coker, in a splutter.

"Say when!" said Bob.

"Groooch! Led do by dose!" stutered the Fifth-Former.

Instead of letting go, Bob Cherry compressed his grip, and there was a suffocated wail of anguish from Coker.

He released one hand to punch at Bob Cherry, and hung on by the other, trailing behind the trap. Bob Cherry kindly released his nose then, and gave him a gentle tap on the head. Coker dropped, and sat in the dust as the trap bowled on.

He sat there, brandishing a furious fist, and Bob Cherry waved a hand back to him. Then the trap swung round a turning, and Coker of the Fifth vanished from sight.

Harry Wharton drove on at a good rate, keeping his eyes open for Lieutenant Lascelles, whom he was to meet on the road, according to what he had been told on the telephone.

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

On a seat under one of the plane trees by the roadside a figure was seen resting. The juniors looked at the bandaged face, and Wharton drew in the horse.

Bob Cherry jumped down.

"Mr. Lascelles!" he exclaimed.

There was a note of interrogation in Bob's voice. He was not sure that the stranger was Larry Lascelles, so greatly was he changed from the aspect the juniors remembered of him.

The man was in a lieutenant's khaki uniform, which was considerably the worse for wear, being extremely seamed and frayed. His face was more than half-hidden by bandages. He looked about Mr. Lascelles' height and build, and that was all the resemblance.

He rose to his feet as Bob raised his straw hat.

"My dear boy!" he exclaimed.

"You—you are Mr. Lascelles!"

"Of course. Did you not know me?"

"You—you've changed a little, sir," stammered Bob.

"The trenches change us, my boy," said the man in khaki sadly, shaking hands with Bob. "But only outside—only outside, my young friend. The

heart remains the same. My dear Wharton, I'm glad to see you again!" And he reached up and shook hands with Harry.

"Jolly glad to see you, sir!" said Harry Wharton. "Jump in, sir!"

The man in khaki jumped in. Wharton wheeled the trap round, and the juniors started back to Greyfriars. A podgy figure came treading heavily up the country road; it was that of Mr. Tozer, the police force of Friarsdale. The constable glanced curiously at the bandaged face in the trap.

"It's Mr. Tozer, sir," said Harry, slowing down. "Would you like to speak to him?"

"Drive on, please—quickly!"

"Oh, certainly!"

The trap fairly rushed past Mr. Tozer, who stared after it.

For reasons best known to himself, the returning warrior emphatically did not wish to speak to the village policeman. The juniors were rather surprised: for the fat old constable who had heard that Mr. Lascelles was expected home, would have liked to welcome him. But it was evident that Mr. Tozer did not recognise the bandaged man as the handsome mathematics master of Greyfriars. He stared after the trap very curiously, however, before resuming his stolid tread towards Courtfield.

"Greyfriars!" said Bob.

With the Union Jacks fluttering gaily in the breeze, the trap rushed up to the school gates. Half Greyfriars seemed to have gathered in the road. There was a roar of cheering as the trap dashed up and halted.

"Good old Larry!"

"Welcome home, sir!"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip-hip-hurrah!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Surprising Hero!

"HURRAH!"

"Good old Larry!" Seniors and juniors surrounded the trap, waving caps and hats, and cheering. Coker of the Fifth was feeling desperately in all his pockets for his celebrated speech; only to discover that he had left it indoors. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, shook hands with the man in khaki over the side of the trap. He was startled, and pained, by the sight of the thickly bandaged face—he had not expected to see the young officer return like that. The bandaged face went straight to the hearts of the Greyfriars fellows.

"My dear young friends!" said the returning warrior. "My dear young fellows! This is a delightful moment! You—"

"Bravo!"

"Good old Larry!"

The lieutenant stood up in the trap, his eyes glimmering through the bandages. He placed one hand on his breast.

"Gentlemen—" he began.

"Good, dear!"

"Gentlemen, you do me proud."

"Eh?"

"What?"

The cheering died away, in the astonishment that the hero's remark caused. Certainly nobody at Greyfriars had ever expected to hear Mr. Lascelles express himself like that.

They might have expected it of Mr. Montgomery Snooks—if they had even remembered the existence of that dilapidated gentleman—but certainly not of Lieutenant Larry Lascelles.

But the gentleman in khaki ran on, unconscious of any such amies.

"On my honour, gents, you do me proud. Fresh from the trenches, fresh

from my glorious deeds against the unspeakable Hun—"

"Oh!"

"I return once more among you, as to a beloved home!" pursued the bandaged gentleman. "I have roughed it in the Army—"

"Hurrah!"

"I have served my country—"

"Bravo!"

"With credit in every field—with glory on all sides. As for the affair of the captain's watch— I—I—I mean—"

The gentleman in the bandages stammered. "I—I should say, I am deeply stirred, gentlemen, by this glorious reception. I will not deny that I deserve it. That would be false modesty. Gentlemen, there have been days when crowded houses rose as one man to cheer me, but those glorious moments were as nothing to this! Gentlemen, I thank you!"

And the returned hero alighted and walked in with Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry, leaving the Greyfriars crowd stupefied.

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They had intended to get a speech out of Larry. But certainly they hadn't expected a speech like that.

"Is he—is he—is he potty, bedad?" murmured Gwynne of the Sixth.

"He can't have been drinking, surely!" muttered Potter.

The crowd trooped in after the juniors and the man in khaki in a wondering mood.

Larry had returned; but undoubtedly he had changed during his absence. There was not the slightest doubt about that.

"Wounded in the head," murmured Greene of the Fifth. "It's possible that—that— Poor old Larry!"

Wharton and Bob Cherry were rather silent as they marched their prize in. They did not quite know what to make of Larry. They were proud of him—as proud as ever, but—but— It was impossible to suspect that the hero of Greyfriars had been drinking. But how were his extraordinary remarks to be accounted for otherwise?

But the hero was quite affable and talkative.

"These familiar scenes—these grey old walls!" he said. "It is great—simply great—to be back among these familiar scenes of childhood—"

"Childhood!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Of innocent infancy!" said the hero.

"Ha! This is Bunter! How do you do, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter rolled up, and insisted upon handing the returned hero a very fat hand. The hero gave it a grip that made Bunter wince.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"Fat as ever, my blooming boy!" said the hero.

"Fat as ever!" And he walked on with Wharton and Bob Cherry, leaving the Owl of the Remove blinking.

"And here is Skinner!" said the hero as they came up to the School House. "You remember me, Skinner?"

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Skinner, with a grin. "Knew you at once, sir. You've been away a long time, Mr. Lascelles. We've all missed you."

"I particularly wished to see you, Skinner."

"You are very kind, sir!" said Skinner, with a rather uneasy, peering look at the bandaged face.

"You have a good memory, I think, Skinner."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"You remember that the day before I left Greyfriars to join up, Skinner, you were in need of money—"

"Was—was I, sir?"

"You were, Skinner, and you asked me to oblige you with the loan of a sovereign."

"I—I—I—"

"I shall be glad, Skinner, if you will return that loan, as I think it is a bad thing for a boy to remain in debt."

Skinner's face was almost green.

He had not bargained for this.

Sharp as he was, it had not even occurred to him that Mr. Montgomery Snooks might turn the situation to his own advantage in this way.

"I—I—I—" Skinner gasped. "You—you're mistaken, sir—"

"Come, Skinner!" said the gentleman in khaki sternly, while a crowd of juniors looked on in curious silence. "I have not referred to the details of the affair. Do you wish me to explain in public?"

Skinner gritted his teeth.

"N-n-no!" he gasped. "I—I remember now—"

"Then kindly settle that very old debt at once!" said the bandaged gentleman severely.

Skinner's hand went into his pocket. He dared not refuse. His little joke on the Remove was quite humorous in Skinner's eyes; but he knew what to expect from the Removes if they discovered that he had "spooed" them with a rascally impostor in the place of the gallant soldier they were expecting.

Skinner's last pound note passed over to Mr. Montgomery Snooks. His eyes followed it, as it disappeared, hungrily.

And as the "lieutenant" walked in with Harry Wharton & Co. Skinner was left rooted in the doorway, with feelings that could not have been expressed in words.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

'Simply Awful!'

"WELCOME home, sir!"

"Bravo!"

"Hurrah!"

Somewhat or other, the enthusiasm of the juniors had been considerably damped. But they found enthusiasm enough to cheer as the returned hero was led into the Bag.

The bandaged gentleman was placed

at the head of the table, the place of honour reserved for Lieutenant Larry Lascelles. His eyes roamed hungrily over the well-spread board. It was probably a long time since Mr. Montgomery Snooks had gazed upon such a festive scene.

The juniors vied with one another in attending to his wants.

The bandages that swathed his face did not seem to interfere very much with his gastronomic powers.

Mr. Snooks had a considerable vacancy to fill, and he proceeded to fill it most liberally.

Even Billy Bunter, at the other end of the table, hardly did better than the bandaged hero.

Skinner had come in now, and he was grinning. The loss of the sovereign—instead of the ten shillings he had intended to pay the impostor—But for his services—wondered Skinner. But he felt that this was, after all, worth it.

The celebration was being held—the feast was being demolished—the rousing welcome was being given—and all the while the real Larry was in the Head's motor-car, unsuspecting of what was happening as he bowed on towards his old school.

Before he could arrive Mr. Snooks was to make some pretext for clearing off—that was arranged. Skinner had no doubt that Mr. Snooks would keep to that part of the bargain very carefully. Otherwise, he would be in danger of coming into violent collision with the head of the gentleman whose name he had borrowed.

The sight in the Rag consoled and comforted Skinner.

It was an occasion for unlimited hospitality, and Skinner—even Skinner—was allowed to squeeze in at the festive board. He had not contributed to the fund for the feast, but he contributed most heartily to clearing the board. He felt that this was some compensation for the unexpected expense he had been put to by Mr. Snooks' unscrupulous trick.

And Skinner fairly chortled over the feed.

What the Remorives would feel like when the genuine Larry arrived, and they discovered that they had been taken in by an impostor, was an interesting question to Skinner.

Certainly the rogue of the Remore had

succeeded in his object—which was to "muck up" the great occasion for the Remore.

The returned hero had certainly cultivated a great appetite, whether in the trenches or elsewhere.

But as yet all was calm and bright. The juniors were delighted to see it, and they thoroughly enjoyed seeing the distinguished guest enjoy himself.

The bandaged gentleman was enjoying himself, there was no doubt about that.

He hardly spoke a word till he had eaten enough for three hungry troopers. Then he relaxed, and became chatty.

His thirsty glances roved over the table several times, as if in search of something that was not there; and at last he beckoned to Wharton. Harry hurried to him, as he saw Mr. Snooks leaning back in his chair with a faint look.

Mr. Lascelles, what—

The bandaged gentleman gave a slight groan.

"Brandy!" he whispered.

"Wha-at?"

"My—my old wound, my boy! Whenever—whenever it gives trouble, the doctor has ordered me to take a nip of brandy—"

"Oh, sir!"

"Not much—not more than a pint—a mere nip, in fact—"

"But we—we—" stammered Wharton.

"Perhaps the housekeeper," suggested the bandaged gentleman, winking over the bandages in a way that nearly made the captain of the Remore fall down, so astonished was he. "You know these housekeepers—they generally have a little supply somewhere! Ha, ha!"

"I—I—I will see!" gasped Wharton.

He ran out of the Rag in an almost dazed condition.

He came back in a few minutes with a bottle in his hand. Mrs. Kebble had turned up trumps. She had a small quantity of the precious fluid, kept in the house in case of illness. And the illness of a wounded warrior was an occasion when it evidently ought to be produced. And it was!

Mr. Montgomery Snooks' eyes brightened over the bandage at the sight of the bottle. It was three-quarters full.

"A—a—a glass here, Bob!" gasped Wharton.

"Here's a tumbler—"

"Here's a wineglass!" exclaimed Squiff.

"The tumbler, please—the tumbler!" said the bandaged gentleman. "I always drink from a tumbler—saves constantly refilling the glass."

"Oh, my hat!"

Wharton began to pour the fiery liquor into the tumbler. He expected the bandaged gentleman to tell him when to stop. But the guest in the Rag only watched him without speaking—the tumbler was filled. Then Mr. Snooks picked it up.

"Gentlemen, your health!"

The juniors watched him as if fascinated.

There was a breathless pause as the hero emptied the tumbler.

He emptied it to the last drop.

In utter horror, the juniors waited to see him roll off the chair.

But he didn't!

He smiled genially.

"I feel better now!" he remarked.

"B-b-b-better now!" stuttered Wharton.

"Oh, sir!"

"Leave the bottle here! I may require another slight nip, if I should feel faint again!"

"Oh!"

How the gentleman in bandages could contrive to sit upright after that "nip" was a mystery to his hosts.

But he did.

And five minutes later he was taking another nip.

He continued to take nips till the bottle was empty.

There was a hush in the Rag now.

Some faces were clouded, and some were anxious; a few, like Skinner's, were grinning.

Evidently Larry had changed during his absence.

There was a chill at Wharton's heart, and his chums looked very sombre. It was evidently impossible to exercise any control over a distinguished guest who was also a master in the school, but it was equally evident that the idolised hero was now very much under the influence of liquor.

"My word!" murmured Skinner. "I shouldn't wonder if he kicks up a shindy!"

And Skinner fairly chortled.

That would be the climax—a boozing "shindy" kicked up by the man whom all the fellows believed to be Larry Lascelles!

"Shut up, Skinner, you cad!" whispered Johnny Bull fiercely.

Skinner winked at him.

"How do you like your giddy hero now?" he inquired.

Johnny Bull did not answer.

"Gentlemen," Mr. Montgomery Snooks was speaking—"gentlemen, I have already remarked that you do me proud!"

"Silence."

"I repeat the remark, gentlemen—you do me proud!"

Grim silence.

"Wharton, my bonnie boy!"

"Ye-e-as, sir!" gasped Harry.

"Is there anything more in the bottle?"

"N-no, no, sir!"

"That's a pity! Perhaps the house-keeper has another bottle."

"I think not, sir."

"I know these house-keepers!" said Mr. Snooks, with a wink over the bandages. "Sly old birds—what!"

"Ah-ho!"

"Let us be merry!" said Mr. Snooks, blinking along the table, which he was now holding by the edges. "Life let us cherish while yet the taper glows! Champagne Charlie is my name!"

Frozen silence.

What to do or say the juniors did not know. Believing that the wretched

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man was Larry Lascelles, they felt only a deep pity for him.

"Wharton!"

"Ye-es, sir?"

"Keep the table still!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You may consider this the proper way, Wharton, to treat a guest—a distinguished guest. I do not. Unless this table is kept still I refuse to sit at it!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I am not accustomed," continued Mr. Snooks, with dignity, "to sitting at tables which take on the uncertain motion of an aeroplane. The floor of this room, too, requires attention. The floor certainly should not heave like the deck of a ship. You see that, Wharton?"

"Oh, sir!"

"I shall now," said Mr. Snooks, rising and holding on to his chair, "depart. I shall shake the dust of the school from my feet."

"D-d-don't go, sir!"

Mr. Snooks wobbled, and looked gravely at Wharton.

"I must go!" he said. "Duty calls! Besides, the other fellow is expected early in the afternoon. I understand!"

"Wha-at other fellow, sir?"

The bandaged fellow winked. "That is a secret!" he answered solemnly. "I shall certainly tell you nothing about the other fellow, Wharton. Probably my young friend Skinner would be displeased!"

"Skinner!" repeated Wharton.

Harold Skinner looked rather alarmed. He began to be afraid of what the egotism of Mr. Snooks might utter next.

Mr. Snooks gave him a benevolent look along the table.

"Fear not, Skinner!" he said.

"Oh!"

"My lips are sealed! The wealth of Gelconda shall not drag the secret from them!"

"I—I don't know what he's talking about, of course!" muttered Skinner, as many eyes turned on him curiously.

"Sit down, sir," said Harry, in great perplexity and dismay.

"I refuse to sit down!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I ask you, my young friend, how can I sit down when my chair is moving round in a circle in that extraordinary manner?"

"I—I—I will hold it for you, sir."

"My dear young friend!" exclaimed the bandaged gentleman, suddenly falling upon Wharton's neck. "Friend of my youth—"

"Yarsoob!"

"Dear youth, I will never part from thee!"

"Oh crumbs! Lend me a hand, Bob, for goodness' sake!"

Three or four pairs of hands seized the hapless Mr. Snooks. He blinked round at the horrified juniors benevolently.

"My legs," he said, "are a little uncertain. My head is clear—perfectly clear. But my legs betray me! Yet it is necessary for me to go. Otherwise, I may meet the other fellow! The meeting would be painful!" Mr. Snooks started suddenly, and glared at Bob Cherry.

"You are the other fellow!"

"Wha-a-at?" stuttered Bob.

"You! You are he! I defy you!"

"Oh dear!"

Smack!

"Yarsoob!" roared Bob, staggering away.

"Ha, ha! So much for Buckingham!" hissed Mr. Snooks. "Ha! A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

Mr. Snooks' voice rang through the Rag. Then it was silent, as the hapless gentleman sank into his chair, and let head fall on the table. A deep, resonant snore resounded.

"He—he's asleep!" gasped Bob.

"Thank goodness for that!" said Harry. "Oh, my hat! What a day!"

"Terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The juniors stood in dismay and horror, watching the slumbers of Mr. Montgomery Snooks. Skinner approached him in great uneasiness. Harold Skinner had not looked for this. It was time for Mr. Snooks to depart—high time. If Larry Lascelles arrived and found him there, it was very probable that there would be a revelation of Skinner's part in the affair. Skinner shook the sleeping man by the shoulder.

"Here, wake up!" he exclaimed.

"Let him alone!" said Harry.

"Wake up!"

Wharton caught Skinner by the collar and swung him away.

"Let him alone, you rotter! All the better if he sleeps till the Head comes home! We don't know what to do with him."

But that was just what Skinner was afraid of.

"He—he said he wanted to go," he stammered.

"He's not going, aa! He's staying here, of course!"

"Look here, Wharton—"

"Oh, shut up!"

Skinner glared at the sleeping beauty in great apprehension. What to do was a puzzle to the juniors; but it was a relief for the distinguished guest to be asleep and quiet. There was the head of a motor-car in the distance, and Skinner started.

Bob Cherry looked from the window.

"The Head's car!" he said. "He's come back early, after all! There's a chap in khaki in the car! Hallo, hallo, hallo! My only hat—"

"What?"

"Larry!" shrieked Bob.

"What?" yelled Wharton.

"Larry!"

And Bob Cherry rushed frantically from the Rag.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Genuine Article!

"LARRY!"

"Mr. Lascelles!"

"Great pip!"

"Larry! Larry!"

It was a roar in the quadrangle of Greyfriars.

The Head and Mr. Quelch had descended from the car, and with them a tall, handsome, up-standing young man in khaki.

One glance at that clear-cut face was enough for the Greyfriars fellows.

They knew Mr. Lascelles again!

"Larry!" panted Wharton, as he rushed out with the rest.

The captain of the Remove felt dazed. Who, then, was the intoxicated man snoring in the Rag?

Harry Wharton & Co. had supposed him to be Larry! And here was Larry, smiling, cheerful, the same as of old, save that his cheeks were deeply tanned.

Lieutenant Lascelles smiled on the cheering crowd, and saluted.

"Hush!"

"Hip-hip, hurrah!"

It was not exactly the reception the heroes of the Remove had planned; but it was a rousing reception, all the same.

"But who's that chap?" exclaimed Wingate, in amazement, as he shook hands with Lieutenant Lascelles.

"Eh?" ejaculated the lieutenant.

"What's that, Wingate?"

"A—a man—you—I mean, not you, of course—a man has come here calling himself by your name—"

"By gad!"

"Wharton brought him in!" exclaimed

Wingate. "Wharton, what do you mean by that? Who—"

"Glad to see you again, my boy!" said Lieutenant Lascelles, shaking hands with Harry. "Now, what's this about some fellow using my name?"

Wharton looked bewildered.

"Did—did—did you telephone to me, sir, to-day?"

"Not at all!"

"Nunno! It was this man, of course! Oh, the awful rotter!" gasped Wharton. "He had his face bandaged up. He said he was you. We—we thought he was. He's in the Rag now! Oh dear!"

Larry Lascelles turned to the Head.

"Perhaps, sir, we had better see this man, who seems to have come here and imposed on the boys in my name!"

"Most certainly!" said Dr. Locke. "It may be necessary to send for the police. Let us see him at once!"

A crowd swarmed after the Head and Lieutenant Lascelles to the Rag. A loud snore greeted them there.

Mr. Lascelles gazed down on the sleeping rascal in disgust.

"Is this the man?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"I am not flattered at such a character being taken for me!" said the young master drily.

Wharton crimsoned.

"He—he told us. We—we were taken in. And—and we were puzzled, sir. And—and—"

"Quite so. You were deceived. I don't blame you, my boy." Mr. Lascelles jerked the bandaged gentleman to his feet by the collar, and Mr. Snooks' eyes opened heavily. "By gad! He is pretty well disguised. Now, my man, who are you, and what are you doing here?"

Mr. Snooks blinked at him.

"My name, sir, is Montgomery Snooks!" he said, with dignity. "Unhand me! You, I presume, are the other fellow?"

"Snooks!" gasped Bob Cherry. "The actor who used to hang about Courtfield. Oh, my hat!"

"If you are the other fellow," resumed Mr. Snooks, with a fishy blink at Larry Lascelles, "I will retire from the scene."

"You will retire in charge of a policeman, my man," said the lieutenant. "You are wearing the King's uniform without permission, and you are an impostor!"

Mr. Snooks' knees knocked together. The mention of a policeman was almost sufficient to sober him. Montgomery Snooks had had many misunderstandings with the police.

"I—I—I—Merely a jest, sir!" he gasped. "The clothes are hired. It was merely a jest! A playful piece of humour, sir! Besides, if a fuss is made, it will not reflect credit on the school. I assure you of that, sir! Master Skinner assured me that it was a harmless joke, sir—"

"Skinner!" ejaculated Wharton. "I catch on now!"

"Master Skinner!" repeated the Head. "What has Skinner to do with it?"

Montgomery Snooks stuttered out an explanation, and the Head's brow grew like thunder.

"Now, let me retire, sir!" gasped Mr. Snooks. "Twas but a jest, upon my honour! The duds were hired, sir. I shall return them this afternoon to the owner. No harm intended, sir—none at all—"

Mr. Snooks jerked his collar away from Mr. Lascelles' grip, and lurched to the door. There he found energy enough to take to his heels.

"Send Skinner to my study, Wharton!" said the Head.

"Yes, sir!"

And Dr. Locke retired from the Rag.

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with Mr. Lascelles. There was a buzz of excitement after they had gone. Skinner's face was pale when he received the summons to the Head's study. He dragged himself to that dreaded apartment with faltering steps. Mr. Montgomery Snooks had shaken the dust of Greyfriars from his feet; but Skinner was not so lucky—he had to stay and face the music.

Dr. Locke bent a stern glance upon him as he entered. Mr. Lascelles, who was with the Head, looked at him curiously.

"Skinner, it appears that you are responsible for the audacious trick that has been played here this afternoon—"

"I—I—I—" stammered Skinner.

"You have dared to induce an impostor to come here, assuming Mr. Lascelles' name—"

"It—it—it was only a joke on the fellows, sir!" groaned Skinner.

"Such a joke is quite unpardonable, Skinner. You will be begged in public to-morrow morning for this insult to Mr. Lascelles. You may go!"

"One moment, sir!" said Mr. Lascelles, with a pitying look at the wretched Skinner as he slunk to the door. "On the occasion of my return here, sir, I venture to ask a favour—"

"You have only to name it, Lascelles."

"May I intercede for Skinner, sir? I

fear that he has acted maliciously, but I—"

Dr. Locke hesitated.

"You have a right to ask me, Lascelles," he said. "It shall be as you wish."

Skinner was staring blankly at Larry Lascelles.

Mr. Lascelles' intercession for him was about the last thing Skinner had expected to hear.

"Oh, sir!" he gasped.

The Head gave him a stern look.

"At Mr. Lascelles' request you are pardoned, Skinner!" he said. "You may go! I trust you will be properly ashamed of yourself! Leave my study!"

Skinner limped to the door.

But there he stopped and turned.

"Mr. Lascelles!" he faltered.

"Well?"

"I—I—I'm sorry, sir! I'm really sorry! I—I—I'll try to prove it, sir!"

And for once in a way Skinner spoke sincerely. Then he dodged out of the study.

"Flogged, you rotter?" asked Bob Cherry, as a crowd of juniors surrounded Skinner in the passage.

"No. Larry spoke up for me!"

"Great Scott!"

"He's a brick!" said Skinner. "I—I'm sorry I mucked up the reception. I

—I never thought Lascelles was such a brick. And—and—and now you can rag me, if you like!"

Harry Wharton looked at him.

"You've acted like a rotten cad, Skinner," he said. "But I believe you're really sorry, and we won't rag you. Even you ought to back up Larry after this, I think!"

"He's a brick!" said Skinner.

"Let's go and give him the chorus!" said Bob. "Under the Head's window—what!"

"Good!"

A few minutes later Dr. Locke's conversation with Mr. Lascelles was interrupted by a roar under the study windows. It was the roar of all the Remove singing "For he's a jolly good fellow!" with all the power of their lungs.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Lieutenant Larry Lascelles smiled.

Lord rang the chorus outside, and it was followed by thunderous cheers. And in the cheering the voice of Harold Skinner was as loud as any!

THE END.

(Don't miss "THE GREYFRIARS TOURISTS!"—next Monday's Grand, Long, Complete Story of Greyfriars School—by FRANK RICHARDS.)



Goggs Grammarian

By Richard Randolph

SYNOPSIS.

Johnny Goggs comes to Kilmombe Grammar School from Frankingham with his chums Trickett, Blount, and Waters.

Goggs is a ju-jitsu expert, a clever impersonator, and the organiser of many brilliant jokes. He leads an expedition of Grammarians to St. Jim's, and accomplishes one of the most daring night raids ever perpetrated.

Gerald Cutts of St. Jim's falls foul of Bingo, the butcher, and after a scrap, in which Cutts is worsted, Bingo picks a quarrel with Goggs.

The fight takes place a few days later in the presence of quite a crowd, Kildare, the St. Jim's skipper, acting as referee.

(Now read on.)

A Hard Tussle!

It could not be said that the general run of the fight was particularly in favour of either. Bingo might seem to be making the running, but Darrel was not the only outlooker who noted that, despite his capital condition, Bingo was certainly taking more out of himself than Goggs; while it was doubtful whether he was taking more out of Goggs than Goggs was out of him.

At the end of the fifth round the butcher was perspiring profusely, and blowing just a little. Goggs hardly looked hotter than most of the spectators—it was a brilliant day—and his breathing apparatus was working as well as ever.

But the sixth round saw the butcher land on top.

Everyone must make a mistake sooner or later, and Goggs made one then.

It let Bingo in, and it resulted in Goggs being taken clean off his feet, to come down with a thump.

"I expected to hear the young bommie's bones rattle, but they didn't!" said Cutts, in a very disappointed tone.

Kildare had not counted three before Goggs began to rise.

The village crowd, and some of the St. Jim's and Kilmombe fellows—Cutts and Kacke and Crooke and Larking and Snipe—roared to Bingo to waste in and finish him.

But Bingo had no mind for that. If he had not learned the lesson of civility before, Goggs had taught him that day.

He dropped his hands and waited.

"Thanks!" said Goggs, with the first smile that had crossed his face since the fight started. For Goggs fought, as he japed, with a solemn countenance.

"There's nothin' to it. You did the same for me," replied Bingo almost surlily.

But there was something in it—something that Goggs was not likely to forget.

It meant more from Bingo than from Goggs. For once had not been trained in the ways of fair play and civility from his childhood as the other had.

There was a brief interchange of blows in the half-minute that remained of the round, and then the combatants fell away from one another, to return to their respective corners, as Kildare called "Time!"

"How do you feel, Goggs?" asked Wagtail anxiously.

"Quite well, I thank you, my dear Waters!" replied Goggs.

The Kilmombe Fourth had clustered round his corner, and Wagtail was not the only one there who was worried.

"I say, you know, Goggs, you mustn't let that happen again!" said Frank Monk.

"And why not, my dear Gorrilla?" returned Goggs.

"Haven't you any blessed feeling?" snapped Carboy.

"Most assuredly I have, Boil. I have a grand deal of feeling. I feel for you very much."

"For me, see? Why for me?"

"On account of your unfortunate face, my cherished Carbuncle!"

And with that Goggs left the knee of Bingo to face the butcher again.

Carboy gasped. It seemed to him that Goggs' face should need more sympathy than his. He did not see that his needed any. Carboy was rather proud of his face, which was really not at all a bad-looking one.

But this at least was certain—that the fellow who was as chipsey as Goggs immediately after taking a knock-down blow was in no danger of going under as the effect of that blow. And Carboy, who was almost as keen on seeing Goggs win as any of his comrades, put aside the slight to his countenance without resentment.

Bingo was lucked by his success in this last round, and he came for Goggs hard now.

But he was met by a defence that seemed impenetrable. And it was not merely defence, either; there was more than that in it. For a full half-minute Bingo would be smashing away at Goggs without any visible effect; then there would come a pregnant second or two in which Goggs got home on Bingo, and Bingo reeled back and looked surprised and pained.

The result of the round, summed up, was that Bingo had done nearly all the attacking.

and Goggs had administered nearly all the punishment.

"The butcher's going downhill!" said Darrel critically.

"Goggles gets a bull every time, and the best hints can manage it an outer," said Jack Blake to those around him, one and all of them keenly interested in the fortunes of Goggs.

"Weally, Goggs is a most upwind fellow! I am almost sure he could lick me!" remarked Arthur Argus.

"You're kidding me, you with both hands tied behind his back!" sneered Horrie.

"There isn't any of us he couldn't lick, except Tommy and Tailor!" said Maquere.

"I am not so sure about me," rejoined Tom Hickey.

"Sanie here!" said Talbot.

The eighth round began, and there were loud cheers from the Grammarians and most of the St. Jim's fellows as it was seen that Goggs was now attacking hard.

"Something seemed to have gone wrong with Bingo. It was not his courage that had failed; it was not his strength or his wind, though he had both tired and blown himself to some extent."

For a second exactly what it was.

But Goggs knew, and so did Darrel.

"Upon Mr. Percival Binks there had come suddenly something like a conviction that he was not going to win."

It was not meant that he would throw up the sponge. He was of the sort that fight to the last gasp.

But he was not used to being licked. He never had been fairly and squarely licked yet. And he did not like the prospect of it.

He was not used to it, and it hurt him to think about it. It hurt him the more because he had been so very sure that this fight was a soft thing for him.

He was badly rattled, and he showed it. There were long faces among the village lads as they saw their redoubtable champion forced back to the ropes by the slim Grammarian, who looked beside him like a greyhound beside a heavy.

At the first time during the fight Goggs was heading out heavy and continuous punishment. Bingo's guard had gone, for the moment, all to pieces. He recoiled unable to do or to dodge anything; he could do nothing but punch back. And his punches were feeble compared with what they had been earlier.

In sheer desperation he clinched. His arms were round Goggs, hugging him as a grizzly maul.

"Back away, there! Break away!" cried Kildare sharply.

Goggs had not struggled, once he felt these strong arms round him. He had simply waited for the clasp to loosen. Now as Kildare put his back to the ropes, his face full of shame, his guard forgotten completely, Goggs might have punched him anywhere.

But he did not punch him at all. He still waited.

"Oh, made in!" roared Carboy.

"Shut up!" snapped Gordon Gay. "Goggles is going to win this fight his own way, and it's no biased good boy howling at him to do it your way."

"And, without saying anything against your way, Carboy, I like Goggs' better," remarked Hagg quietly.

So did most of those who saw. A few might sneer; they could not understand. As for the rest, as Carboy did, that there was no harm in doing what the rules permitted. Goggs himself would not have blamed anyone for hitting Bingo hard then. But he could not do it. There was not in him the slightest ill-feeling towards his opponent. He had started rather liking Bingo than otherwise, in spite of the fellow's swank; and he had come to like him better as the fight wore on.

There was a pause and bewilderment faded from the face of the butcher, and his fist went up again.

But before either combatant had time to strike a blow they heard the call of time from Kildare.

The End of the Fight.

ROUND nine—Goggs still cool and confident—marked here and there by the butcher's flail, but not badly tattered—Bingo, with his rubicund countenance bruised and swollen, his right eye almost closed, and his broad chest heaving, but in better case than at the beginning of the last round.

(Continued on page 16.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:
THE MAGNET, THE GEM, THE BOYS' FRIEND, CHUCKLES, THE PENNY POPULAR.
Every Monday, Every Wed. Every Monday, Every Friday, Every Friday.
YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

TAKE NOTICE!

This is very important. It is great news. I want you to lend me your ears. I said lend, I don't want them for keeps. My news will be kept, it is too interesting. The moment I let it go it will, I know, be circling the world. There, you had better have it straight!

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" IS COMING!

That's it! Just that. The moment before I wrote these lines I was reading a letter from a correspondent at Cardiff, who said he wanted my photograph—I am afraid he can't have it—and then he said, "I am patiently waiting for the reappearance of The Greyfriars Herald, and I hope I am not waiting in vain." Well, my Cardiff chum is not doing that. Let him wait and see! Let him wait a little longer and his expectations will be gratified. We shall have another edition of Great Expectations.

DON'T MISS IT!

Miss the tide, miss the train, miss any old thing—you can catch them up afterwards—but don't, whatever you do, miss No. 1 of "The Greyfriars Herald" (Second Edition). If you do you will be sorry, and I shall be sorry, but there will be no means of putting the matter right, for No. 1 will vanish almost before it is printed. I am not going to have an election on the matter same as last time. There is no need. For months and months past the postman has brought me stacks of letters, and in them all there was the question, "When is 'The Greyfriars Herald' coming out again?" The fact is the voting last time was unnecessary. I asked my friends what they would do, and they all said, "Bring out the merry paper. The answer was in the affirmative."

THE WELCOME "YES."

The votes on that occasion, way back in 1915, were as follows:

FOR "The Greyfriars Herald" 105,726
AGAINST "The Greyfriars Herald" 4

The FORS carried the day!

OCTOBER IS THE MONTH.

I shall have plenty more to say about the matter ere long. I am preparing for a Special Number to appear in the merry month of October.

THE COMING TREAT.

Good as the old "Greyfriars Herald" was—and its memory is still green all over the world over the matter issue will be better. There will be ripping yarns, splendid competitions, articles about life at Greyfriars, and all the Fun of the Fair. But I will say more another time.

THE GOOD NEW DAYS!

They are coming back—no, that's wrong. The new days are new, and though they may remind us of the old days before the war, they are better in many respects. It will be a great relief to me not to have to tell my friends day after day that "The Greyfriars Herald" has not shown any sign of coming back. But, as I said, more anon.

WELL DONE, DAVID!

No, it isn't the Prime Minister this time, but a correspondent at Newport, who sends three verses about the Companion Papers.

Highly commended, too, is Ada, who writes from Tasmania:

"There's a jolly fine author named Richards, At smoky young rosters he hits hard; But for 'dinkum' clean fun, He is surely the one."

So here's a luck to that author, Frank Richards!

Ada says that her friend Gladys told her the Editor writes such nice cheerful letters. Many thanks to both Ada and Gladys.

AN ANONYMOUS POET.

Poetry is one of the finest things possible, and good rhythms are always welcome, whether they are real poetry or not; though, come to that, nobody seems, even now, to have discovered what real poetry is. But anyhow my friend, who did not send his name, has touched off some of the stars. Look at this, for instance:

A mighty man is Peter Todd,
He rules us with an iron rod;
Aloof, gentle, timid, meek,
His heart is good, his head is weak.

There is plenty more, and in the main the poet has hit the target, even with Bunter. But we shall have more about Bunter soon, for I fancy that I mentioned the "G. H." was coming, and before Christmas!

HURLING CRITICISM(?)!

There was a really hearty laugh for those who chanced to see the lines published in a certain weekly about the stories I publish. The writer of the howl, really this-kind-of-thing-is-impossible little article took grave exception to an inkpot which was buried at a meter. Just think of that now! As if anybody else would not do the same! Most indefensible practice! Never bury inkpots at anybody. Besides wasting the ink—well, you might—But there, I will let it go at that. So the offended critics told his readers what they should read, or, rather, what they should buy for their boys to read. Funny thing, but seemingly nobody knew of the chosen paper, or why have troubled to mention it?

ONE MORE WORD!

Now, I am not defending the action complained of. Fustianism is the right sequence for such conduct, but I am defending the yarns I publish in the Companion Papers, for they have been proved. For year after year, when fights were fading, and we wanted to get back to something, we kept up one spirits. I received letters from the many fighting fronts up and down the world—letters from old boys and young men, who told me that they forgot cold and misery and pain and death when they read our up pops of the "Magnet" or "Gem." That's good enough for me.

RHYMING APPROVAL.

And if I was not overlooking the Annual! A correspondent at Barrhead says he likes the notion of the Annual, and he expresses his innermost thoughts in the following style:

"Now for this new Annual scheme (successful may it be),

As with all other readers, it finds firm support in me.

You wrote of Stanley Hooper, your pugilistic friend,

To contribute many boxing tips, I'm sure he'd condescend.

But though this suggestion quite takes away our breath,

To wait from year to year to the next would be quite bare or quite dear.

Time one more suggestion comes from little me.

Why not make it monthly, and glad enough we'd be."

YOUR EDITOR.

For Bingo was learning a lesson that, able to stand him in good stead when fought.

He was coming to the conclusion that defeat is not necessarily disgrace. Anyone is liable to get licked some time. He had only to run up against a better man, and his time has come. Bingo had run up against a better man than himself. He knew that now, and the thought that he would not be disgraced, even if beaten, was helping him to go on to the latter end, and so, if it might, a match victory from the very jaws of defeat.

For it is not the swanker who chortles so proudly his unbeaten record who fights best when he is fairly up against a better man, and the man who knows defeat possible, but knows that he will not be licked while he can hold on.

Bingo's swank was at an end. He would never again be quite so arrogant. But he would not be the less—rather the more—dangerous for that.

And he was not beaten yet. A knock-out is always a chance for the man who is getting the worst of a fight, but still has strength to put in lefty punches.

Bingo meant to knock out Goggs if he could. But he had a strange, half-anxious feeling about it. He would much rather have knocked out someone else—someone he didn't like.

Matters were really pretty even in that ninth round. Both took and gave hard punches, and neither seemed much to mind what he took.

"The butcher's got his second wind," said Enderlin.

"He'll win!" Cutts chortled. "He's not the weight. That whipcracker will take away presently."

"Goggs has his second wind to come yet," remarked Darrel drily. "So far, he hasn't exhausted his first."

"Perhaps that will take some of it out of him," said Larking viciously.

Goggs had staggered before a lefty punch on the chin. But he did not go down, though a fellow less quick on his feet must have done.

"He's like a dashed dancing-master!" growled Carpenter.

"Time!" called Kidare.

"You've got him now, Percy," said Eldred Heavins.

"Aye! I!" snorted Bingo. "I wish I was so bloomin' sure of that as you seem to be, cocky!"

But Heavins was not sure; he was at least only hopeful. And, though he wanted to see Bingo win, he was not at all sure that he wanted to see Goggs lose. He had not forgotten Goggs' friendliness at the open-air ten-party.

Goggs had a way of making friends in apparently unlikely quarters, and that way of his was proving very much to his advantage in the near future.

"Aren't you going to finish this off soon, Goggs?" asked Tricks.

"That depends a good deal upon Bingo, dear boy," replied Goggs. "I should not at all mind leaving off. I am getting warm—unpleasantly warm. Also, when Bingo hits he sometimes hurts—but you wouldn't have noticed that, perhaps."

"Don't lay so much!" said Bags, putting in work with spoon and towel.

"But why not, my dear Bagswain?"

"Oh, well, if you're the wind to spare—"

"I am dumb henceforth, until the end of the fight," replied Goggs.

The tenth round saw Bingo harder at it than ever. If he was to win he must win

quickly, to knock and be cool for the knock-out.

Halfway through the round he really thought he had achieved it. The punch was very near indeed to the point of the jaw, and it sent Goggs fairly flying.

Excitation mingled with something like regret in the boom of Mr. Percival Binks as he saw his opponent flat on his back, and heard Kidare count, in measured tones:

"One—two—three—"

But before "four" had left his lips Goggs lifted his head, and Bingo, who knew the same, knew that he had not done what he had tried for. The fellow who is really knocked out, either by a blow on the mark or one on the point of the jaw—and these are the chief spots of danger—does not lift his head within four seconds. He is dead to the world for longer than that.

Bingo could not be sure, yet, somehow, he could not feel wholly sorry. And again he would not take advantage of Goggs' fall. He stepped right back, and dropped his hands.

"Four!"

"Get up, Goggs!" boomed Wagtail.

"Five—six—"

"He's getting up!"

"Horrah!"

"Seven!"

"Bravo, Goggs!"

"Rush him, Bingo!"

"At him, you fool!"

"Eight!"

Goggs was on his feet.

"Nine!"

Goggs was on his feet.

"Horrah!"

There was even what for the moment surprised everyone.

Staggering, half-frenzied, hardly able to stand, it seemed, Goggs yet dashed in at Bingo, and attacked with what looked like a sudden knock-out.

It was as unlike the cool, good-tempered Goggs that it seemed almost incomprehensible.

But in another moment some of them guessed that there was no real fury in that attack. Goggs did not mind being knocked down; that was all in the game.

He had rushed at Bingo simply because Bingo was standing back waiting for him. He was giving Bingo the chance that the butcher would not take for himself.

Bingo had gone down, and Goggs would not hit him as he rose. Goggs had been on his back once, and the butcher had followed his example accordingly.

Now Goggs had been down again, and Bingo had seemed content to let him get up and go easy to the end of the round, if need were.

But that would not have been fair to the butcher, who by that blow had regained much of what he had lost—if he did but take all he could get out of it.

And Goggs was forcing him to take it!

"Oh, bravo, Goggs!" cried Darrel.

A score of others echoed the cry. And more caught it up when they were told by those who understood what that hot attack meant. Goggs was playing the game, and that mattered more than whether he won or lost.

"Nifty foot!" sneered Snipe Crooke. "The fellow's mad with rage, that's all, by gad!"

"You're right, Gerry!" agreed Blackie.

But Snipe's sneer and the disbelief of such as Crooke and Blackie were testimonies to Goggs. Who would expect those fellows to appreciate such a notion of the square thing?

* Bingo misinterpreted and appreciated. But he knew that he must meet that attack with all the force he still had at his command.

"If you will, 'ave it!" he grunted, as he let drive hard at the face of his opponent.

It was almost a surprise to him when that punch got fairly home, and blood spurted from Goggs' nose. It was hardly as big a surprise when he felt Goggs' fist on his own face, and realised that there was nothing like the powder behind it that there had been.

"Time!"

Goggs' supporters cheered him to the echo as he went back to his corner. But the cheers meant encouragement to stick it out rather than certainty of triumph. For he went back with a gash very different from what it had been after preceding rounds, and the blood was running fast from his nose, and his face showed other marks now.

It was not in resolution that he had weakened, however. He might be weaker in body, but his face was grim now. He did not say a word to his seconds. Bags and Tricks attended to him audaciously, and when he rose again the flow of blood had been stanchd, and he felt much fresher.

Hard at it again! Bingo knew that he must make the pace but if he was to win, And Goggs knew that he was no longer in a condition to play the defensive game and wait his chance to get in a telling blow. That had paid very well in earlier rounds, but the time for it was past now.

He was on the ropes, getting hammered hard, and wondering whether he could ever break away. For a moment he felt so sick and dizzy that he almost fancied the end had come.

But he knew that there was another factor to be considered besides his condition—the condition of his opponent. And suddenly he knew that Bingo was as hard up against it as he was, feeling his legs some ways, his sight defective, the strength ebbing from his arms.

How he knew it he could not have told; but he did know it. And this more he knew—that here cleverness almost told its tale. He believed himself cleverer than Bingo. Quicker, too, though Goggs was quick. And even when he was stalling off that hammering as best he could he was planning for the finish.

He saw his chance, and took it!

Breathing hard, his broad chest heaving, his face crimson, Bingo let up on his rain of blows, gave ground ever so little, but enough to give Goggs room.

Then, as he made in again, Goggs ducked right under his arm, and swung round on the instant to punch.

Only a very slim, very active fellow could have managed that manoeuvre as Goggs did it. He had not an inch to spare, and he had to swing round without the friction of a second's delay.

But he did it, and as Bingo swung round in his turn he punched—right at the point of the jaw, with all the force left in him behind the blow.

Bingo took it, stopped short, threw up his arms, and felt back against the ropes, making a wild clutch at them.

But he missed, and slid down, and by there still.

(There will be another splendid long instalment of this grand school story in next Monday's issue of THE MAGNET. Order your copy in advance.)

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