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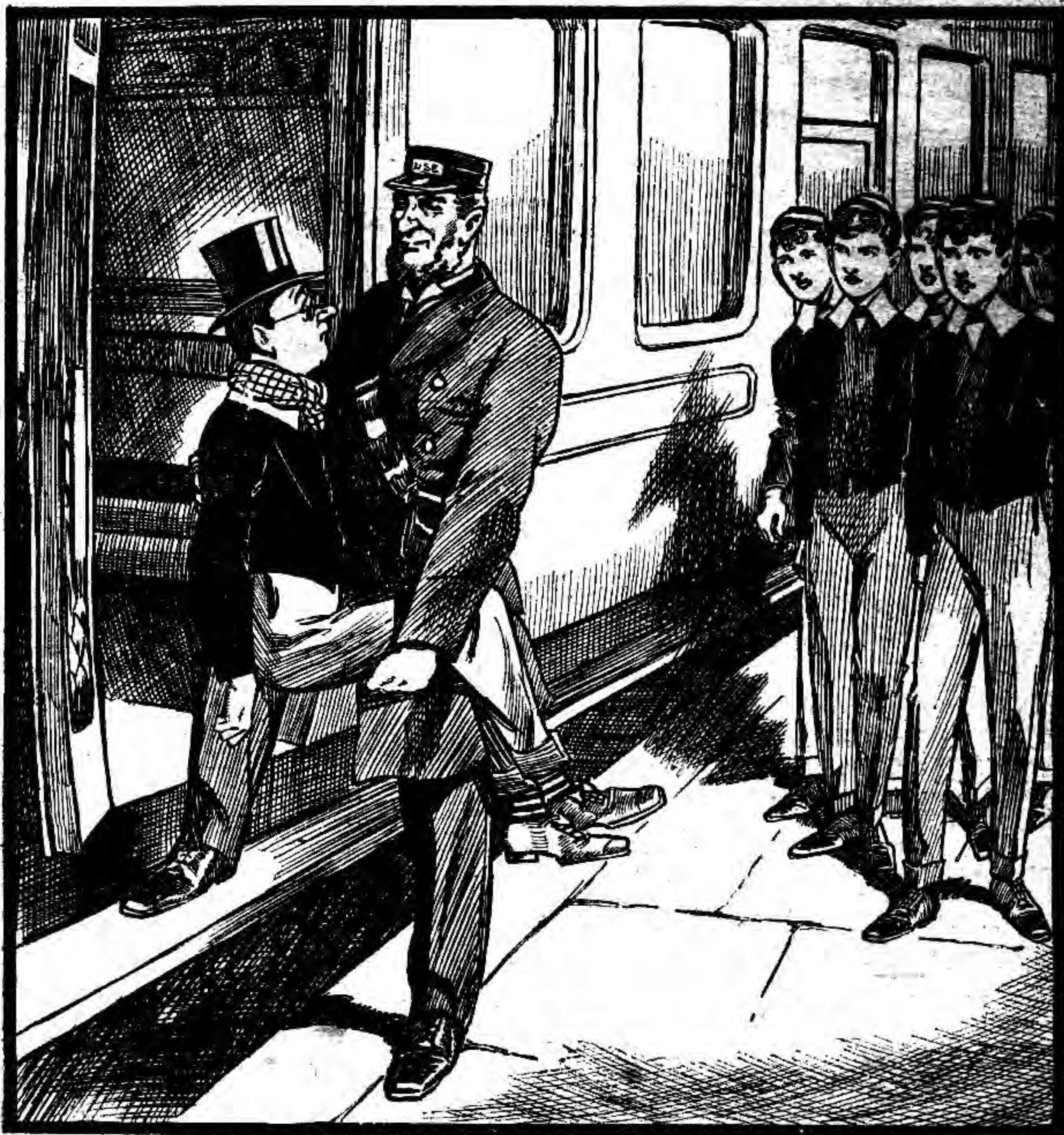


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20 PAGES.



THE JAPE OF THE TERM!



THE NEW BOY ARRIVES!

(A Remarkable Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)



ENCORE BUNTER!

There never was a time when Billy Bunter was not being inquired about—not since the far-off days when the interesting fat person first loomed on the staircases at Greyfriars and listened at doors. But there is sympathy for him. I am in receipt of a note from a reader who asks why Mr. Frank Richards is so hard on Bunter. "This year of 1920, let someone else get the blows."

Yes, that sounds all right enough. But suppose someone else does not deserve the punishment, and the porpoise does? "Bumpum qui merrit," etc., as the office-boy would say. Besides, there is not much occasion for sympathy. Bunter has a tough skin, and a podgy, indiarubbery sort of temperament which makes him quite safe, thank you, from sarcasm and the darts of satire.

All the same, I am tremendously obliged to "Weekly Reader" for his nice thought.

ANOTHER TRIBUTE.

A valued and learned correspondent in far-away Devon writes: "Let me tell you how I first met the Companion Papers. It was a winter's night in Stromness, Orkney, where I lived for three years. I wanted to see a man who ran a bookseller's shop. He was expected in soon, and I whiled away the time with a pile of papers on the counter. A 'Gem' caught my eye. I bought it, and next night came for another dig at the pile. I unearthed a MAGNET, and since then—eleven years ago—I have never missed a week of either MAGNET or 'Gem.'"

My correspondent also knows the "Penny Popular" and the "Boys' Friend," to say nothing of the "Greyfriars Herald." It is an extremely interesting letter he sends me, and I feel that the Companion Papers have much to thank him for, since he has been a whole-hearted supporter all these years.

WANTED!

Will "A Pit Lad," who said he wished for correspondents, kindly write to Dick Isaacs, of 40, Carlton Vale, Maida Vale, London, W. 6, who will be delighted to hear from him?

DO NOT FORGET!

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's great romance, "Rodney Stone," a ripping yarn of the Ring and the old times when the Nineteenth Century was very young indeed, is just starting in the "Boys' Friend." It is one of those things not to be missed. Conan Doyle has a name to conjure with, and he will be always remembered as the author of the stories of Sherlock Holmes.

JOURNALISM.

Another subject I am always being asked about is Journalism. How does one get into it?

Frankly, the question is hard to answer. The good journalist just sort of happens, as it were. Very likely he falls in with the local paper editor and has a shot or two on that periodical. Local papers, however, are not to be regarded as the preparatory schools for professionals. Many locals maintain a standard of literary excellence and efficiency not surpassed by the important dailies in the large cities. But the fellow who has it in him to write will get there. There is a driving force within him. He cannot help himself. He sees journalism in his daily life. He sends contributions to that chum of his who is running an amateur magazine, and so on.

Be it remembered that there is always better to come out of journalism. There are the new ideas to be dealt with, and these, often enough, want new men. But, of course, it is difficult. It wants doing. A witty article may strike the public fancy, and then everybody wants stuff from the writer. The surprise element is one of the fascinations of journalism.

The public is always willing to be amused and helped with bright suggestions. Of course, it is not only wit—not wit alone—though wit—or, rather, a keen sense of humour—is required pretty nearly all the time. There are new interpretations to be brought forward, new readings of what seems like commonplace and is not, while the true journalist has a very high function, since he has the chance to assist his fellows, not by preaching at them, but just by making a good display of factful things.

And this age stands in need of all that. I suppose every age did in its time. Heaps of mistakes are made, myriads of cruel things are done, not from stupidity or bad faith so much as because those who err have never had a chance of grasping the essentials of the subjects in hand.

HUMOUR IN JOURNALISM.

I am reminded of that every day of my life. There is the man who writes what he thinks is his best, and he gets told by some reader that his stuff is dry and boring and most unsuitable for the paper. A downright opinion always has its value, because, I reckon, it is downright—just that! But the writer who draws off for the little discouragements of the route, snacks across the face which are inevitable, will never get far. He has to dismiss all such damaging considerations when he starts again.

Certainly, it is the nervy, somewhat sensitive, party who often does the most telling stuff. He feels what he is writing. It is in him to set it down. I have

sympathy with such a fellow, when he comes a cropper.

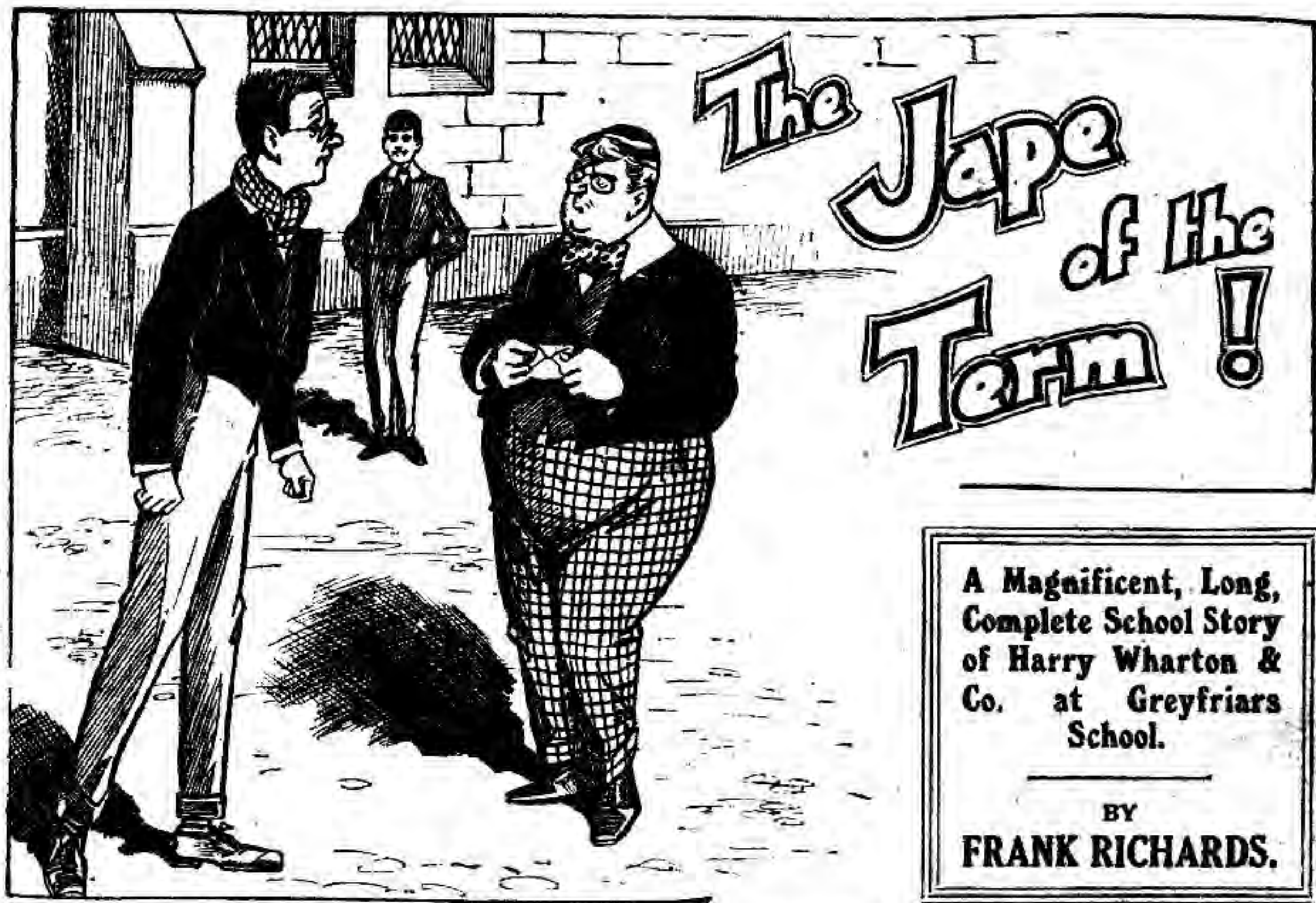
But, whatever you do when you write, try and feel it. Picture what you are writing in that eye of the mind which sees such a lot more than the common or garden eye. If you see it all, your reader will see it, too. That is good enough. The journalist has his own world. He can imagine images out of space, and win the esteem of his public. That is the top man, naturally. But the humble writer of paragraphs can reach the high level, though there may be moments when his work seems useless.

I knew a writer who was always employing the longest words he could think of. The sub-editor took them all out! There was another case which comes to my mind—it was on a Paris daily—where the proprietor asked one of the staff whether he, the writer, was satisfied with his morning's article. This article, by the way, was inclined to be wooden. The reply was in the affirmative. "Very glad you like it," said the proprietor suavely, "but it is the last you will ever do for me!"

Well, every trade has its ups and downs, and journalism has plenty of downs as well as ups. It is no manner of use being wooden, or giving facts in a dull, prosy style. You had far better sell cheese—and that wants doing, especially with some cheese!—or clean boots. But to the end of the chapter there will be this about journalism—its power for good. No pen could write, and no tongue could say, the mighty things, fraught with immense public good, which some of the master-minds in modern journalism have wrought.

There are periods of unrest when the journalist who has the goods, and is inspired by the counsel of the thinker above him, can ease the strain of controversy, bring folks back to a balanced state of thought, and so save a State from much anguish. The journalist who is backed with imagination can achieve these things—has achieved them—and often enough his readers do not know his name, though he has advised Ministers of the Crown, shown public speakers what the right line was, and where it was to be found. But the journalist just tramps to his office—you would never take him for a journalist if you chanced to meet him—sits down, and puts his soul into the business, and then goes home to tea. Not that he wants to be known! He has served the great profession to the best of his ability, and that is good enough for him. When his call comes he will lay him down with a will and be glad.

Your Editor



The Jape of the Term!

A Magnificent, Long,
Complete School Story
of Harry Wharton &
Co. at Greyfriars
School.

BY
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Fragile—With Care!

BLESS my soul! How many more times am I to be distracted from my studies by that appalling din?"

The headmaster of Greyfriars was feeling very annoyed. And he looked it.

The telephone-bell was clanging loudly in Dr. Locke's study.

It had been clanging, on and off, all the morning.

First, the Vicar of Friardale had telephoned, requesting the pleasure of Dr. Locke's company at dinner that evening.

The Head had declined the invitation. The Vicar of Friardale was a bore, and Dr. Locke was feeling sufficiently bored already.

Shortly after this conversation the bell had clanged again.

This time it was the captain of the Courtfield Athletic football team who spoke. He had been put through to the Head in error, his business being with Wingate of the Sixth.

It had taken the worthy doctor about ten minutes to convince the football captain that a mistake had been made. And by the time the Head replaced the receiver he was feeling quite limp.

If Dr. Locke had hoped to resume his study of Greek mythology without interruption he was soon to be disillusioned.

On two further occasions the telephone-bell had clanged, and each time the Head went to the hated instrument the operator said:

"Sorry, sir! I rang you in error."

Small wonder that, in these circumstances, Dr. Locke was looking and feeling annoyed. He was contemplating having his telephone removed, lock, stock, and barrel, from the study.

And now came a further interruption.

"If my hair were not grey already," murmured the Head, "it would speedily become so! I shall really have to speak very severely to that careless operator!"

Dr. Locke took off the receiver, and almost bellowed into the transmitter:

"Madam, this is the third time this morning that you have allowed my telephone-bell to ring without cause! These constant and unnecessary interruptions are goading me to anger!"

The Head would have been more correct to say that they had already goaded him to anger.

Dr. Locke expected an apologetic feminine voice to reply to his outburst. Instead of which, he was surprised to hear a man speaking.

"My dear sir, you appear to be under the impression that you are addressing the operator!"

"Dear me!" gasped the Head. "Who is that?"

"I am Mr. Traddles, sir, of London."

The name seemed familiar to the Head. He tried to recall the speaker's identity.

And then he remembered that Mr. Traddles was a rather eccentric old gentleman, who had intended to send his son to Greyfriars at the beginning of the term, but had apparently thought better of it.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Traddles!" said the Head. "Do you wish to speak to me?"

There was a snort from the other end of the wire.

"I do, sir! Otherwise I should not have rung you up!"

"You have no occasion for rudeness, Mr. Traddles!" said the Head coldly.

"Rudeness, sir! What do you mean? Do you suggest, sir, that I am talking like a person addicted to rudeness?"

"Most emphatically you are!" said the Head. "However, pray come to the point. I have wasted a good deal of time at this instrument already—"

There was a chuckle this time from the other end of the wire.

"In that case, Dr. Locke, I can understand why you are hasty-tempered and inclined to be rude—"

"I—rude?" gasped the bewildered Head.

"Certainly! However, we won't waste time in jumping down each other's throats. I am anxious to return to my business, and you to your own."

The Head calmed himself with a great effort.

"On what subject do you wish to speak to me, Mr. Traddles?"

"On the subject of my son, sir—my son Tony. I wish to send him to Greyfriars—tomorrow, if possible."

"Bless my soul! This is extremely short notice," said the Head. "I understood that you had abandoned the idea of sending your son to Greyfriars?"

"That is so. I hoped to find him a satisfactory tutor, but my hopes have not been realised. I have decided, therefore, to pack Tony off to school with all speed. Will it be convenient for him to come to-morrow?"

The Head hesitated.

"As I remarked, it is extremely short notice," he said.

"Oh, come, sir! Surely you can treat this as a special case! It is not as if I am a stranger to you. I consulted you some time ago, you remember, in the matter of my son."

"Very well," said the Head. "It is a pity you could not have sent him at the beginning of term. These mid-term arrivals are awkward. However, I will make the necessary arrangements for your son to take his place in the Remove. That was the form which he was to have entered, I believe?"

"Yes. You have taken a great load off my mind, Dr. Locke. I am finding Tony rather a handful at home."

"Is he troublesome?" asked the Head, in some alarm.

"Oh dear, no! As mild and gentle as a lamb! But he is a very delicate lad, requiring constant nourishment and attention. I am hoping, however, that the healthy conditions at Greyfriars will be the means of building up his constitution. I should like you to take a

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personal interest in Tony, and to see that he has every care and consideration."

"I can promise you that, Mr. Traddles, though, of course, I shall not see a great deal of the boy myself. But I will instruct his Form-master to make due allowance for his frail constitution."

"Splendid!"

"What time will your son arrive?"

"By the train reaching Friardale at three-thirty to-morrow afternoon."

"Very well. I will make arrangements for him to be met at the station."

"That is very good of you, Dr. Locke. I shall rest happy in the knowledge that Tony—bless his heart!—will be well cared for. There will be no 'ragging,' I trust, on the part of his Form-fellows?"

"No, no! I will instruct the boys that there is to be no horseplay. At the same time, Mr. Traddles, I should like you clearly to understand that I cannot go to the lengths of mollycoddling your boy. As I said before, he shall receive every care and consideration; but should he transgress in any way, he must be punished in the usual manner. I can make no exceptions."

"No, of course not, Dr. Locke! If Tony offends, he must pay the piper, as the saying is. But you will find him quite harmless. He would not dream, for instance, of striking another boy—except under grave provocation. On the whole, I think I may say that Tony is the best-behaved child of my acquaintance."

"As you are his father, it is only natural that you should speak well of the boy," said the Head.

"Perhaps so. Well, well, I won't keep you any longer, Dr. Locke. Thank you so much for allowing Tony to come at such short notice. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" said the Head.

And the telephone conversation, which had started in such a stormy manner, finished on quite a friendly note.

Dr. Locke went back to his desk, but he did not plunge immediately into his Greek mythology. He despatched Trotter, the page, for Mr. Quelch.

A few moments later the Remove-master arrived.

"You wish to see me, sir?" he inquired.

"Yes, Quelch. A new boy—a rather extraordinary type of new boy—is due to arrive by the three-thirty train to-morrow afternoon. His name is Traddles, and he will enter the Remove Form. I trust there is sufficient accommodation in the Form-room for an additional pupil?"

"In the Form-room, yes. But I am not certain what can be done in the matter of a study. The apartments in the Remove passage are already crowded to overflowing. It is really almost as bad as the housing problem."

"Traddles is a slim lad, by all accounts," said the Head, with a smile. "Doubtless he can be squeezed in somewhere?"

Mr. Quelch smiled, too.

"I will see what can be done, sir," he said.

The Head nodded.

"I have just been speaking to Mr. Traddles on the telephone," he said. "It appears that his son is in delicate health, and I have given an undertaking that there shall be no horseplay on the part of his Form-fellows. Would you be good enough, Quelch, to see that that promise is observed?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"And would you also be good enough, some time to-morrow, to detail a party of boys to go to the station to meet Traddles?"

"Yes, sir. I will send Wharton and his friends. They will soon put

Traddles at his ease, and make him feel at home."

"I think that is all," said the Head. "I have promised that Traddles shall have every care and consideration, on account of his delicate constitution; but if he misbehaves in any way he must, of course, be punished in the ordinary way."

"I quite understand, sir," said Mr. Quelch.

And he quitted the study, leaving the Head to ponder once again over his Greek mythology—if the telephone permitted.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Furious Five!

GREYFRIARS revelled the next day in the freedom of a half-holiday.

The Famous Five of the Remove met together in Study No. 1, after dinner, for the purpose of deciding what to do with the afternoon.

There was no football fixture down for decision, and when Frank Nugent suggested a "scratch" game he was promptly howled down.

"We've had sufficient footer to last us for weeks," said Harry Wharton.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. "That match with Highcliffe fairly knocked all the stuffing out of me. Ye gods! What a game!"

"Ninety minutes' hard labour!" said Johnny Bull. "Still, we won, and that's all that matters."

"We're playing Highcliffe again next week," said Wharton. "What's going to happen then?"

"Why, we shall lickfully smash them to an esteemed pulp!" said Hurree Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should think the Highcliffe fellows are feeling pretty sick by this time," said Frank Nugent. "We've licked them at footer, and we've spoofed them at the rate of one successful jape per day. They've never had such a shaking-up in all their little lives!"

"When the Famous Five get on the war-path," said Bob Cherry, "there's not much hope for the opposition!"

"No jolly fear!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were in high feather.

They had brought off a number of daring and highly successful "japes" against the rival school, and Frank Courtenay & Co., of Highcliffe, had been made to look very small.

It was not usual for the Famous Five to gloat to any extent over their achievements, but they now felt that they had some excuse for so doing. They had reduced their rivals of Highcliffe to a state of impotence.

"The Caterpillar vowed," said Johnny Bull, "that he'd have revenge."

Harry Wharton chuckled.

"I expect he anticipates licking us next week at footer," he said. "Considering the match will be played on our own ground, though, I don't think Highcliffe will stand an earthly."

"Of course they won't!"

"Blow Highcliffe!" said Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Blow them, by all means—to smithereens, if you like!" said Wharton.

"The question is," said Bob, "what are we going to do with ourselves on this perfectly good half-holiday?"

"I propose," said Johnny Bull, as if struck by a brilliant inspiration, "that we go for a spin on our motor-scooters."

"Ass!" growled Wharton. "How can

we go for a spin on things we don't possess?"

"My maiden aunt——"

"Bless your aunt!"

"Has promised to send me a motor-scooter——"

"And you want us to wait in this study till it turns up?" said Nugent, with crushing sarcasm.

"No; but——"

"I should think not, as it won't arrive until next Christmas! Next suggestion, please."

"I propose a spin on our bikeful jiggers," said Hurree Singh.

"But there are only four bikes," said Wharton. "Bob's is in dock for repair."

"He can ridefully travel on my esteemed step."

"Not much!" said Bob Cherry. "If I started that game, I should probably travel into the esteemed and slimy duck-pond!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," said Harry Wharton. "Let's put on our best bibs and tuckers, and invite ourselves to Cliff House to tea."

Bob Cherry clapped his chum on the back.

"The very thing!" he exclaimed. "You've hit it, Harry!"

"And so have you!" grunted Wharton. "Your hand comes down with the force of a sledge-hammer!"

"The Cliff House suggestion is a nailing good one," said Johnny Bull. "It's not often we go self-invited; but the girls haven't seen us for ages, and they ought to be awfully bucked."

"They ought to be," said Nugent; "but whether they will be is another matter. They'll have five hungry mouths to feed, and their supplies of tuck might be low."

"Never mind," said Wharton. "We'll go over, and chance it."

But it was a case of juniors proposing and Form-masters disposing.

At that moment Billy Bunter rolled into Study No. 1, looking very knowing and important.

"I say, you fellows," he remarked, "Quelehy wants you."

"Quelehy!" gasped Wharton. "What for?"

"He, he, he! Your guilty consciences are beginning to worry you!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "Quelehy's going to lam you!"

"You fat young fibber——"

"He is. He's got his cane ready for action, and he was frowning like the very dickens when I left him!"

"Oh, come on!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll soon see what Quelehy wants."

And the Famous Five brushed their way past Billy Bunter, and went along to the Form-master's study.

The Owl of the Remove followed up, intending to catch as much of the conversation as he could by glueing his ear to the keyhole.

Harry Wharton tapped on the door of the study, and, in response to the Remove-master's "Come in!" the five juniors entered.

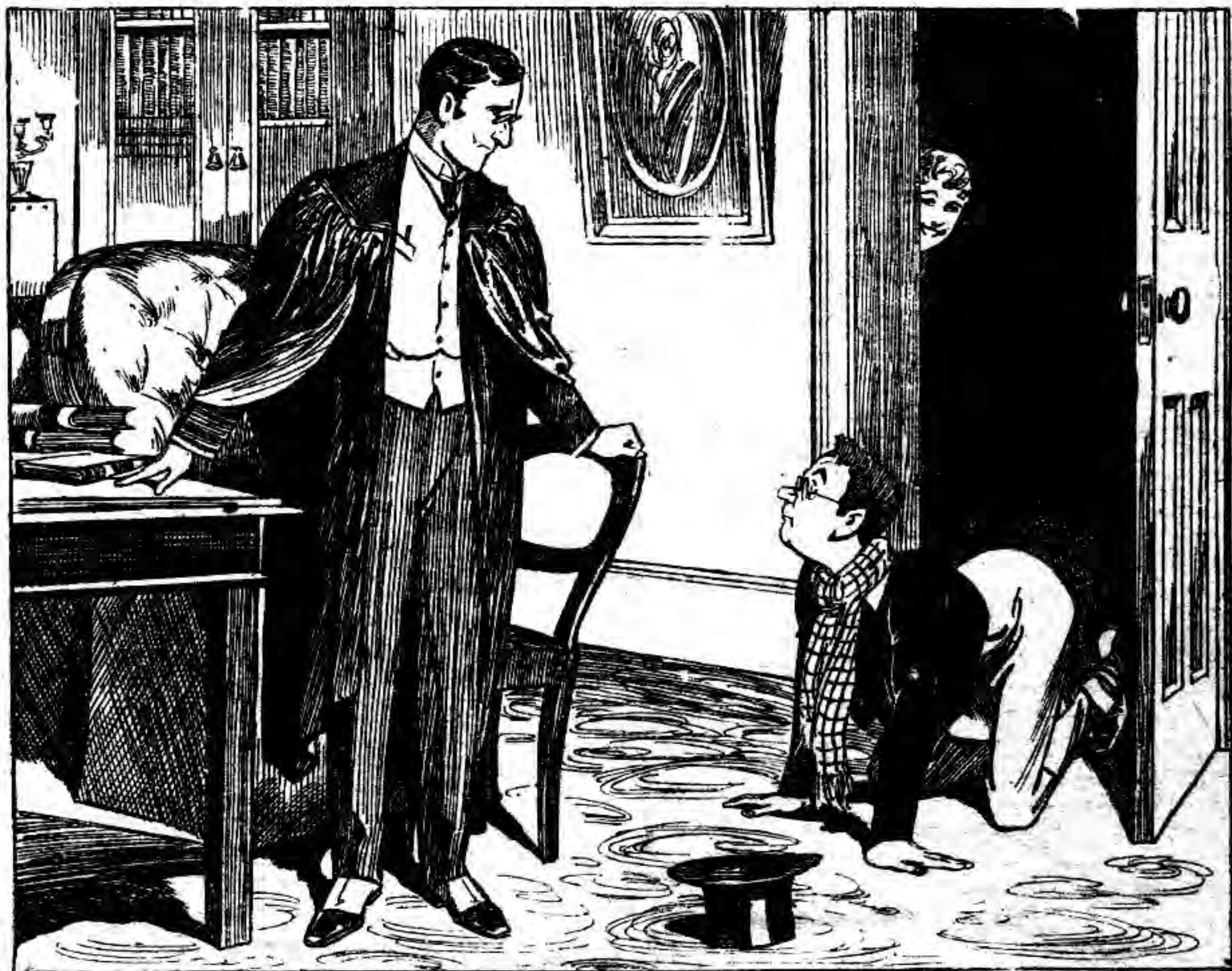
They were relieved to see that there was no sign of a cane, neither was there a frown on Mr. Quelch's face.

"I sent for you, my boys," said Mr. Quelch kindly, "to request a favour of you."

The Famous Five plainly showed their surprise. They were not accustomed to being asked favours by their Form-master.

"The fact is," said Mr. Quelch, "a new boy is expected to arrive this afternoon——"

The juniors could have groaned in chorus.



"Bless my soul!" Mr. Quelch uttered the exclamation in amazement. Traddles had just been propelled into the Form-master's study by the Famous Five, and he had landed on all fours on the carpet. (See Chapter 4.)

They knew only too well what was coming. Would they be good enough to go to the station and meet the new-comer? Would they kindly take him in tow, and show him the ropes? Would they make the dear little chap feel at home?

Oh, yes, they knew only too well what was coming!

"The boy in question," said Mr. Quelch, who may or may not have noticed the expressions of dismay on the faces of the Famous Five, "is a frail and delicate youth. His name is Traddles—Tony Traddles. His father is most anxious that he shall be comfortable at Greyfriars, and not become the victim of 'japes,' as you call them. I should like you boys to meet the three-thirty train, and escort Traddles up to the school. I should also like you to shelter him as much as possible from boys of the Bolsover type. I have no wish to disparage Bolsover in any way, but he is—ahem!—inclined to be heavy-handed. He may do Traddles an injury, either by word or action, without realising the extent of the injury. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, sir," said Wharton. "We'll take the new kid under our wing as much as possible. Of course, we can't guarantee to be always at hand to protect him——"

"Of course not, Wharton."

"But we'll do our best to see that he's made comfortable in the Remove, sir."

"Thank you, my boy! I do not think

there is anything further to add. I have no doubt you will find Traddles a nice boy, and willing to be friendly."

The Famous Five quitted the Form-master's study in a dismal procession.

Their half-holiday was ruined. The tea at Cliff House, to which they had been eagerly looking forward a few moments previously, was now off.

As they emerged from the study the juniors bumped into Billy Bunter, who had heard the whole of the conversation.

"I say, you fellows!" said the fat junior, forgetting for the moment that he was in close proximity to the Remove-master's study. "I think old Quelch's a perfect beast, mucking up your half-holiday like this!"

"Shurrup, you ass!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"I'll tell you what!" continued Bunter. "I'll take on the job of meeting this new kid, while you go off and enjoy yourselves!"

The reason for this sudden burst of generosity on Bunter's part was only too obvious. He wanted to "borrow" a substantial sum from Tony Traddles.

"Is it a go?" asked Bunter. "Shall I go to the station in your place?"

Before the Famous Five could reply, the door of Mr. Quelch's study opened suddenly, and a stern voice exclaimed:

"Bunter!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped the fat junior, blinking at Mr. Quelch through his big spectacles.

"Come into my study, Bunter!"

"W-w-what for, sir?"

"It is my intention," said Mr. Quelch grimly, "to punish you for a dual offence!"

"But—but I haven't been having a duel with anybody, sir!"

"You utterly absurd boy! You have mistaken my meaning, as usual! By dual offence, I mean a double offence. You referred to your Form-master in terms of the grossest disrespect, and you have been listening to a conversation not intended for your ears!"

"Oh!"

"Come into my study immediately!"

Very reluctantly Billy Bunter followed Mr. Quelch into the apartment. He felt much the same as the fly must have felt on being invited into the spider's parlour.

Mr. Quelch selected a cane from his cupboard, and instructed the fat junior to hold out his hand.

"Which one, sir?" inquired Bunter innocently.

The Form-master nearly choked. He seized Bunter's right hand, and placed it in a convenient position, palm upwards. Then he administered three cuts with the cane, which made the Owl of the Remove dance a jazz on the study carpet.

"Now the other hand, Bunter!"

"Yow! I—I've had enough, sir!"

"I am the better judge of that, boy!" said Mr. Quelch drily. "I will endeavour to teach you that listening at keyholes, and speaking of your Form-master as 'a perfect beast,' are offences which cannot be countenanced for a moment!"

Swish, swish, swish!

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The came bit into Billy Bunter's fleshy palm, and he performed another jazz—or, rather, a variation of it this time.

"Now you may go," said Mr. Quelch. And Billy Bunter made his exit, squirming and groaning.

Meanwhile, the Famous Five were engaged in letting off steam.

"It's rotten!" said Bob Cherry.

"Reastly!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Blow Traddles!" said Wharton irritably.

"A frail and delicate youth, by Jove!" said Nugent, in contempt. "Anybody would think that Greyfriars was a home for incurables!"

"This fairly puts the kybosh on tea at Cliff House!" said Bob Cherry dolefully.

"Why couldn't this fellow Traddles choose some other time of arrival?" grunted Johnny Bull.

Hurree Singh was the only member of the party whose spirits were not totally damped by Mr. Quelch's untimely request.

"Cheer up, my worthy chums!" he said. "It is quite possible that we shall extractfully get some fun out of the ludicrous Traddles!"

But the others mourned, and would not be comforted. They could not get over the fact that this sudden and unexpected advent of Tony Traddles had spoilt their half-holiday.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Meeting Traddles!

"TIME we started!" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes—confound it!"

Three o'clock had sounded from the old clock-tower, and in half an hour the frail and delicate Tony Traddles was due to arrive at Friardale. And Harry Wharton & Co. had promised Mr. Quelch that they would take him in tow, show him the ropes, and protect him from heavy-handed fellows of the Bol-sover major type.

It was a tall order, but the Famous Five intended to do their best.

The juniors did not dress up for the occasion. As Bob Cherry said, they were not going to meet Royalty. They simply donned their caps and coats and sauntered out of the school gates.

On their way to the railway-station they passed their old rivals, Frank Courtenay and the Caterpillar, of Highcliffe.

The two Highcliffe juniors appeared to be in high spirits. They nodded cheerfully to the Famous Five, and they chuckled to themselves as they passed on.

"What's the joke, I wonder?" said Johnny Bull.

"Ask me another!" said Bob Cherry. "Dashed if I know why those fellows should be so amused! After all the drubbings we've given 'em lately, it's a wonder they're not weeping!"

It was not until Frank Courtenay and the Caterpillar were out of sight that the sound of their laughter could no longer be heard.

The Famous Five, greatly wondering, went on their way. When they stepped on to the little station platform they found that the train was signalled.

A few moments later a puff of smoke heralded its approach, and as it slowed up, and carriage-doors were thrown open, the Greyfriars juniors kept a sharp look-out for the new boy.

For some time they saw nothing of him.

And then Frank Nugent pointed in astonishment to the guard's van.

The guard was engaged in gently lifting a slim youth in Etons on to the platform.

"My only aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"That's Tony!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Take him up tenderly, lift him with care!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tony Traddles was a meek-looking specimen. He certainly appeared to be both frail and delicate; and a pair of enormous spectacles did not add to his personal attractiveness. He wore a muffler round his neck, and a sleek and shiny silk topper adorned his head.

After bestowing a substantial tip upon the guard, this extraordinary youth blinked along the platform. On seeing Harry Wharton & Co., he advanced towards them with a bright smile.

"Ha! You are from Greyfriars, I perceive."

Bob Cherry bowed.

"At your service, Tony," he said solemnly.

The new boy looked surprised.

"How did you know my name?" he asked.

"Quelch told us. Quelch's our Form-master, and he's sent us to meet you. Where are your traps?"

"Eh?"

"You've brought some luggage, I suppose?" said Wharton.

"Yes—one trunk. I have instructed a porter to send it up to the school."

"Good!"

Tony Traddles blinked at the Famous Five.

"Might I know your names?" he asked.

"Certainly!" said Bob Cherry. "This is Harry Wharton, captain of the Remove. This is Frank Nugent—one of the best. This is Johnny Bull—another of the best. This is Hurree Singh—commonly called Inky—ditto and likewise one of the best. And I'm Bob Cherry. Lump us all together, and you have the Famous Five—the most select community at Greyfriars!"

"Dear me!" murmured Traddles. "Would you mind, my dear fellows, if I sat down for a moment?"

"N-n-not at all!" said Harry Wharton. "I hope you feel all right?"

"On the contrary, I feel all sixes and sevens. A railway journey always reduces me to a state of physical prostration."

So saying, Tony Traddles lurched towards the nearest seat and sat down. The Famous Five stood looking at him in some concern.

"Do you often feel like this?" asked Nugent.

Traddles nodded.

"My health is not of the best," he said. "To begin with, my heart is a most erratic organ. Every now and again it misses a beat. And when I am excited it palpitates so violently that it can be heard at a great distance."

"My hat!"

"Then, of course, I am subject to nervous spasms—"

"Oh!"

"And I frequently have fearful fits—"

"Great Scott!"

"And I have never been able to expunge the influenza germs from my system."

The Famous Five backed away in alarm. They were brave enough in the ordinary way, but they were quite pale now.

The prospect of having to live, move, and have their being with such a dangerous person as Tony Traddles quite appalled them.

"This is awful!" muttered Bob Cherry. "I can see the whole Form being laid up with flu inside a week!"

"A fellow who's got one foot in the grave ought never to be sent to a public school!" murmured Wharton.

Frank Nugent turned to Traddles.

"Are you suffering from flu at the present moment?" he asked.

"No, my dear fellow. But I have no doubt I shall be visited by an attack very shortly."

"Gee!"

After resting on the seat for a few moments, Tony Traddles rose to his feet and tottered a few yards.

"I feel much better now," he said, "except that I am very weak. May I lean on your arm, Wharton?"

"Certainly!" said the captain of the Remove; not very eagerly, however.

"You see, I omitted to bring my crutches—"

"Your what?" shouted Bob Cherry.

"I find it less exhausting to go about on crutches," explained Traddles. "But my pater said that crutches would not be fashionable at Greyfriars."

"I should think not!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"I suppose you never use a bathchair, by any chance?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, yes!" said the new boy. "I find a bathchair very restful and comforting."

Out on Friday, February 6th.

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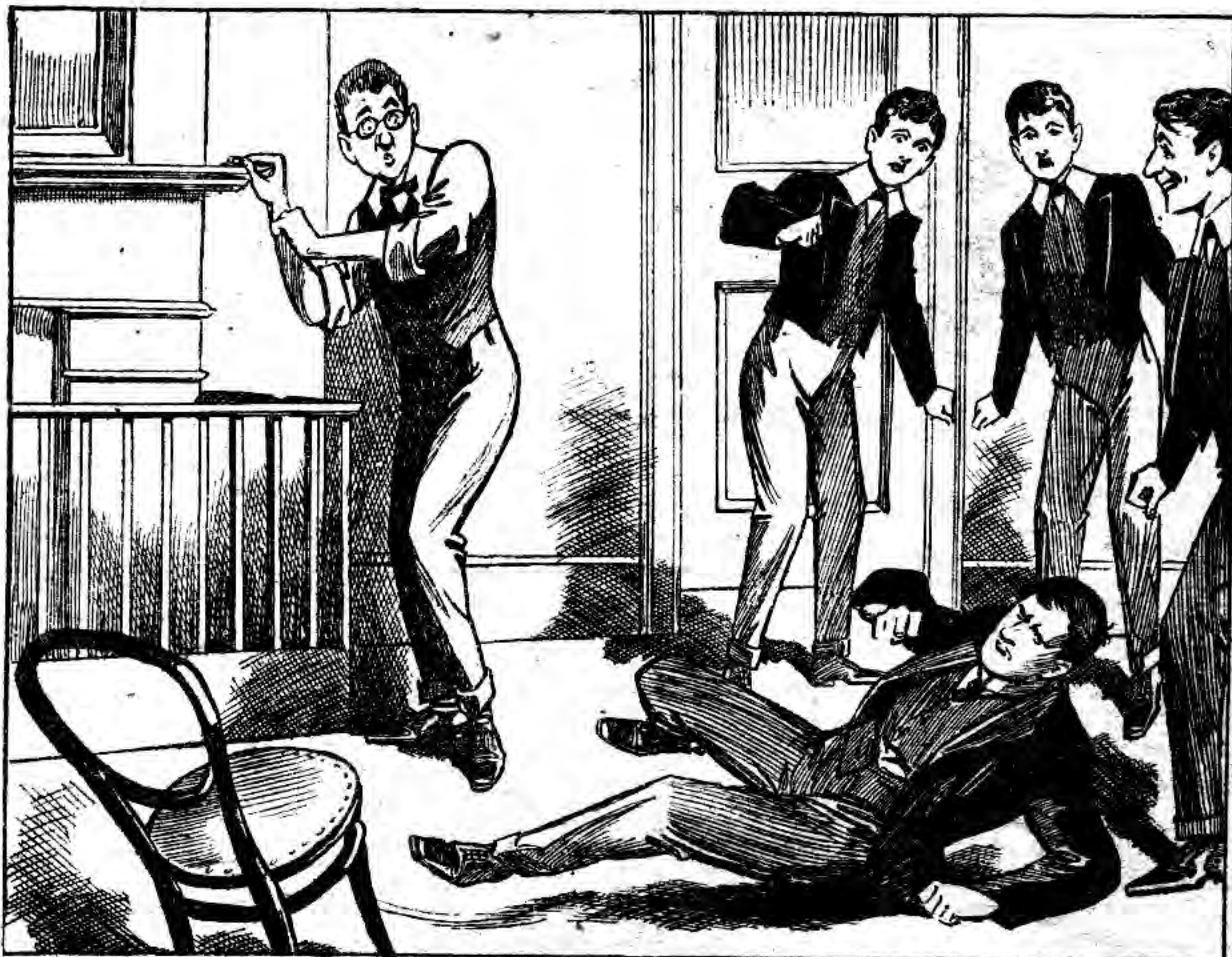
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Traddles clung to the mantelpiece for support. He was very white, and his breath was coming and going in great gasps. But he had the supreme satisfaction of seeing his opponent crash to the floor, amid a loud murmur of astonishment, admiration, and awe. (See Chapter 5.)

"Well, I'm jiggered!"

Leaning heavily on Harry Wharton's arm, Traddles was escorted to the waiting cab. His trunk had already been placed on board.

"Greyfriars, please!" said Traddles.

"Yessir!" answered the cabby.

As the vehicle rumbled on its way the new boy bombarded the Famous Five with questions concerning Greyfriars. What was the school like? What were the fellows like? Were the masters kind and considerate? and so forth.

Traddles punctuated his questions with violent sneezes, and the Famous Five felt decidedly uncomfortable. They began to think that the correct destination of the new boy should be the Cottage Hospital—not Greyfriars.

"I am glad to learn," said Traddles at length, "that the Remove fellows have studies. Which is your study, Wharton?"

"No. 1."

"Then I think I will share it with you."

Harry Wharton shuddered.

"That's quite impossible," he said quickly. "We're packed to overflowing already. You see, my study is also the editorial office of the 'Greyfriars Herald,' and the members of the staff assemble there to write their stuff."

"But couldn't I be a member of the staff?"

"Well, we might make you our medical correspondent," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact is," said Traddles, pulling himself together after another violent attack of sneezing, "I am anxious to share a study with a number of quiet, well-mannered boys like yourselves."

"Then you'd better give No. 1 a wide berth," said Wharton. "We're a most ferocious mob when we're at home!"

"That's so," said Nugent. "Hooligans and Bolsheviks aren't in it when we start scripping! If you came into No. 1, kid, you'd have a terrible time!"

"Simply awful!" said Johnny Bull.

Traddles failed to take the hint.

"I am quite determined," he said, "to come into Study No. 1. How many of you share the apartment at present?"

"Only two, officially," said Wharton. "The study belongs to Nugent and myself. But Johnny and Bob and Inky are constant visitors, and there really isn't room for another addition."

"Besides, it's not a place that we'd willingly ask an invalid to share," said Nugent. "It's a horrible, pokey, draughty hole—isn't it, Harry?"

"Yes, rather!"

But Traddles still refused to take the hint.

The cab turned in at the gateway of Greyfriars, and the juniors alighted in the Close.

The arrival of the new boy created quite a sensation. The crowd that had collected fairly gasped when they caught sight of Tony Traddles.

"Who—what is it?" gasped Bolsover major.

"Surely it was intended for a freak museum, and it's come to Greyfriars by mistake?" said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The new boy's trunk was deposited in the hall by the cabby, who was lavishly tipped by Traddles. Then the latter was escorted into the building by the Famous Five.

The crowd followed, eager to get some fun out of the amazing new boy; but Harry Wharton & Co. successfully protected their charge from the tender mercies of the crowd.

"You'd better go along and see Quelch, kid," said Harry Wharton. "We'll show you his study."

"Thank you!"

Traddles was taken along to the Form-master's study, and Bob Cherry rapped on the door.

"Come in!" said Mr. Quelch.

The new boy was bundled into the study by the Famous Five, who fairly staggered away to their own quarters.

"Carry me home to die, somebody!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Did you ever?"

"No, never!" said Johnny Bull solemnly. "Traddles is something new in new kids, and no mistake!"

Harry Wharton gave a shiver.

"I'm certain I've got an attack of flu coming on!" he said.

"Same here!" groaned Nugent. "That kid was sneezing all the way up to the school. It's awful!"

The Famous Five were feeling quite
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limp by the time they reached Study No. 1.

"Talk about a perfect half-holiday!" said Bob Cherry, with a groan.

And his chums groaned in chorus.

It was the universal opinion of the Famous Five that Tony Traddles would be more in his element in a home for incurables than in the Greyfriars Remove!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Traddles Comes to Stay.

"LESS my soul!"

Mr. Quelch uttered the exclamation in amazement.

Traddles had just been propelled into the Form-master's study by the Famous Five, and he had landed on all fours on the carpet.

Picking himself up, the new boy flicked the dust from his garments, and blinked at Mr. Quelch through his big spectacles.

"Good-afternoon, sir!" he said. "I must apologise for my somewhat precipitate entry, but—"

"Who—who are you, boy?"

"My name is Traddles, sir—Tony Traddles!"

"Oh!"

Mr. Quelch regarded the new boy in alarm and dismay. He was reflecting that this frail youth, in spite of the protection of Harry Wharton & Co., would have rather a rough passage in the Remove.

"Sit down, Traddles!" said the Remove-master. "I am relieved to see that you have arrived safely! Dear me! You look quite ill!"

"I'm no worse than usual, sir," replied Traddles cheerfully.

"You appear to be far from robust," said Mr. Quelch. "I am surprised that your father should send you away to school in such circumstances, though, of course, it is not for me to criticise his actions. Were you met at the station by Wharton and his friends?"

"Yes, sir, and I was very favourably impressed by them. They are nice, gentle boys. In fact, nothing would please me better than to be allowed to share their study!"

"Do you mean Wharton's study?"

"Yes, sir!"

"I see no reason why that should not be arranged. Wharton is captain of the Remove Form, and I shall feel less anxious about you if you are under his protection. I will now give you a few tests, Traddles, in order to ascertain if you are qualified to enter the Remove Form."

Mr. Quelch then cross-examined Traddles at some length concerning various subjects.

The new boy was not caught napping once, and the Remove-master was more than satisfied.

"Whatever your physical shortcomings, Traddles, there is nothing wrong with you intellectually!" said Mr. Quelch. "I think that is all! You may go!"

"To Study No. 1, sir?"

"Yes! Tell Wharton that you have my authority to become a permanent occupant of the study!"

"Very well, sir!"

Traddles rose to his feet and took his departure.

As he turned into the Remove passage he encountered a plump youth in spectacles.

"Oh, here you are!" said Billy Bunter. "I've been hunting for you high and low! Look here, Traddles, we've decided to celebrate your arrival in the usual manner!"

"What do you mean by that, my corpulent friend?"

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"It's the usual thing to stand all new kids a first-rate spread!" explained Bunter.

Traddles beamed.

"How jolly!" he said.

"It will cost about a fiver," Bunter went on. "All the fellows whip round, and give according to their means."

"Or their meanness, I suppose?" said Traddles.

"That's it!"

"Well, go ahead!" said Traddles cheerfully. "Have the whip round and cook the fatted calf! I shall be pleased to be the guest of honour!"

"Ahem! I was thinking it would save a lot of time and trouble if you would advance me the fiver now, and we could leave the whip round till afterwards!"

Traddles did not seem in the least surprised at Billy Bunter's impudent suggestion.

New boys who met Bunter for the first time usually fell victims to his wiles,

No. 41.—GEORGE BLUNDELL.



The captain of the Fifth Form. A thoroughly good fellow in every way; a very similar type of fellow to Harry Wharton. Does not figure so prominently in the stories, as they deal most particularly with Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove. A valuable man in the school cricket and footer elevens. (Study No. 1.)

but Traddles had no intention of being victimised.

"In the language of the classics," he said, "there's nothing doing!"

"Eh?"

"I am afraid—nay, I am certain—that if I were to advance you five pounds, as you suggest, you would squander the money on yourself, and forget all about the promised whip round!"

"Why, you—you skinny scarecrow!" spluttered Billy Bunter, clenching his plump fists. "That's as good as saying I'm dishonest! I've a jolly good mind to wade in and slaughter you!"

"You're welcome to try!"

Traddles no longer spoke nor acted like the frail, languishing youth whom Harry Wharton & Co. had met at the station. He squared his shoulders, clenched his fists, and threw himself into a fighting attitude.

Billy Bunter was not a fighting-man, but he anticipated no difficulty in dealing with Traddles. He fondly imagined that he could make shavings of the new boy. And, with this object in view, he rushed to the attack.

The next moment the Owl of the Remove had the surprise of his life.

He endeavoured to dash his fist into Traddles' face, but he dashed it into the wall instead, Traddles having ducked very neatly.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

And, before he had sufficiently recovered to resume, a hard and bony fist smote him on the nose with an impact which caused his spectacles to leap into the air.

"Will you have some more?" asked Traddles politely.

"Yow! Gerraway, you beast!"

The new boy passed on, leaving Billy Bunter to apply first-aid to himself.

The Famous Five were about to begin tea when Traddles came into Study No. 1.

"Hallo!" said Wharton. "Seen Quelch?"

Traddles nodded.

"A very kind and estimable gentleman!" he said.

"My hat!"

"How did you get on?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Splendidly! Mr. Quelch expressed himself as being quite satisfied with my intellectual attainments, and he also allotted me to a study."

The juniors looked uneasy.

"I—I suppose he said you were to go into No. 7, with Toddy?" remarked Nugent.

"No!"

"Is it No. 10 you're going into?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"No!"

"Then what the thump—"

"I'm coming in here!" said Traddles.

"Oh, help!"

The Famous Five exchanged sickly glances.

"Are you sure Quelch didn't make a mistake?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Quite sure, my dear fellow! He told me, with as clear and distinct an enunciation as possible, that I was to take up my abode in this study. I trust I shall be causing you no inconvenience?"

"N-n-none whatever!" stuttered Nugent.

"I hope you've got over your sneezing fit!" said Johnny Bull anxiously.

"Yes, thanks!"

"Well, that's a blessing, anyhow!"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet.

"If you're coming in here," he said, "we'd better go and bring your trunk along."

"Thank you so much!" said Traddles. "I would give you a hand, only I get shooting pains in the small of my back whenever I try to lift anything!"

"My hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Is there any sort of pains you don't get?"

"I think I'm familiar with all the ills that flesh is heir to," said the new boy. "May I sit down?"

"Certainly!" said Wharton. "Take my seat! I'll borrow another chair from Toddy's study!"

Wharton quitted the study with Frank Nugent, and they returned shortly afterwards with Traddles' trunk.

Peter Todd came to the rescue with another chair, and then Bob Cherry poured out the tea.

Although he was supposed to be nursing a frail and flower-like constitution, Traddles possessed a healthy appetite. He helped himself liberally from the pile of toasted scones on the table, and he made quite an inroad into the plum-cake.

The Famous Five watched him curiously.

They could not quite make Traddles out. He was supposed to be weak and ailing and delicate, and yet his appetite was almost Bunterian.

The sneezing fit, too, had ceased very suddenly; and the juniors began to wonder if Traddles had been indulging in a little leg-pulling at their expense.

Moreover, now that they came to inspect him closely, he was not nearly such a freak as he had at first appeared to be. Indeed, if the hideous muffer were removed from his neck, and his spectacles taken off, he would have looked quite presentable.

The juniors began to feel slightly suspicious concerning Tony Traddles; but they said nothing.

When tea was finished Traddles made himself comfortable in front of the fire, and Harry Wharton handed him some copies of the "Greyfriars Herald" to read.

"By Jove!" said Traddles, turning over the pages. "This is jolly good, for a children's paper!"

"A what?" gasped Wharton.

"An infantile production," said Traddles calmly.

"Look here, kid," said Bob Cherry. "we don't want to do any damage, but if you say things like that we'll give you such a jolly good bumping that you'll need those crutches you were talking about!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Sorry," said Traddles. "I didn't mean to be rude. By the way, who writes the editorial each week?"

"The editor, of course!" said Johnny Bull. "You don't suppose the printer's devil writes it, do you?"

"It's good stuff," said Traddles thoughtfully. "Pity nobody ever reads it!"

"What!" shouted Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter from the other members of the Famous Five. It was a well-known fact that Wharton's words of wisdom were often overlooked by the majority of readers, who preferred something more exciting.

"Dry up, you asses!" growled Wharton. "Blessed if I can see what you've got to cackle about!"

"Who draws this cartoon on the first page?" inquired Traddles.

"I do, fathead!" said Nugent. "Can't you see my name against it?"

"H'm! Not bad, for a novice!" said Traddles.

"Novice?" hooted Nugent. "Why, I was drawing cartoons before you were breeched!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Traddles turned his attention to the police-court news.

"You don't really hold a police-court in the Remove, do you?" he asked.

"Yes," said Bob Cherry. "Only a mock one, you know, but it's not very pleasant for the prisoners at the bar! If you don't stop criticising our paper, you'll be brought up at the next sitting of the Woodshed Assizes!"

Traddles ventured on no further criticism, but he seemed very interested in the feud between Greyfriars and Highcliffe, details of which appeared in the issue he was reading.

"Where's Highcliffe?" he asked.

"It's a lunatic asylum for juvenile madmen, and it's situated about a mile away," said Johnny Bull.

"You seem to be at daggers drawn with the inmates," remarked Traddles. "I notice you've played heaps of japes on them, and you've licked them at football."

"That's so," said Wharton. "Highcliffe can't hold a candle to the Remove. We've licked them all along the line."

"The Remove must be a wonderful crowd," said Traddles solemnly. "By the way, you haven't introduced me to the other fellows in the Form yet."

"We'll introduce you now, if you care

to step along to the Rag," said Bob Cherry.

"The Rag! What's that?"

"The junior Common-room. You'll pick up these items of information as you go along."

"Oh, do conduct me to the Rag!" said Traddles. "I'm longing to be introduced to my future playmates."

"This way, then!" said Frank Nugent.

And the Famous Five escorted the amazing new boy to the junior Common-room.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Astonishing!

"H A. ha, ha!"
 "Here he comes!"
 "Here's the merry freak!"
 These and similar scornful epithets were hurled at Tony Traddles

No. 42.—ARTHUR WOODHEAD CARNE.



Chum of Loder, and only inferior to him as an utter rotter. Plays the gay dog. Also plays cricket and footer with ability, but very much over-values himself. Was once a prefect; is so no longer. So far has escaped expulsion, but his turn may come.

as he entered the Rag with the Famous Five.

"Stow it, you idiots!" said Wharton irritably. "A fellow can't help his looks!"

"Well, if I had a face like that new kid," said Skinner, "I'd either pawn it or go on the music-halls and make a fortune!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tony Traddles blinked at the crowd of juniors, but he did not appear to be disconcerted at the taunts which were levelled at him.

"That's right, kid," said Nugent. "Don't take any notice of 'em! New kids generally get a pretty hostile reception, unless they show that they're useful with their fists, in which case the fellows respect them. Pity you're not a fighting-man. I should like to see you wipe up the floor with somebody."

Traddles smiled.

"Your wish may be realised before long," he said.

"What I want to know is," said Bolsover major, in his booming tones,

"what's Greyfriars coming to? There used to be quite a select lot of fellows here—"

"Until you came!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover scowled.

"You needn't try to be funny, Cherry!" he said. "You know jolly well that Greyfriars used to be quite a superior sort of school, until it became a dumping-ground for freaks and paupers and factory cads!"

There was a storm of protest at once.

It was felt that Bolsover had gone too far. The expression "paupers and factory cads" was intended as a slur upon such fellows as Dick Penfold and Mark Linley—fellows who, by their own energy and industry, had entitled themselves to the privilege of a public school education.

"Shame!"

"Dry up, Bolsover!"

"Are you looking for a thick ear?"

The bully of the Remove levelled his forefinger at the new boy.

"Just look at it!" he said scornfully.

"There's a prize freak for you! Goodness knows how it managed to get to Greyfriars! I suppose its pater was a beastly war-profit—"

At this stage, there was a sudden commotion in the Common-room.

Tony Traddles literally tore himself away from the Famous Five, and advanced towards Bolsover major.

"You cad!" he exclaimed. "You howling cad!"

The crowd gasped, and so did Bolsover major.

"Come back, Traddles, you idiot!" shouted Harry Wharton. "Do you want to be knocked into the middle of next week?"

"No," said Traddles. "And neither does Bolsover—but I'm afraid he's going to be!"

So saying, the new boy divested himself of his jacket and rolled up his sleeves.

The keen observers noted that Tony's arms were by no means as scraggy as his slim form would suggest.

Bolsover major did not move. He stood rooted to the floor in blank amazement.

"What the thump—" he began.

"Off with that coat!" said Traddles sharply.

It was a new Traddles speaking now—a complete stranger to the Famous Five, who could not reconcile him with the meek, demure youth whom they had met on the station platform.

Bolsover gave a gasp.

"Do you mean to say—" he began.

"That I'm going to fight you? Precisely! And you'd better put a jerk in it. I'm not going to wait your pleasure, you know!"

Harry Wharton darted forward.

"Traddles, you duffer!" he said.

"You can't possibly fight him! It's jolly plucky of you, and all that, but you'll be smashed to a pulp!"

"He called my pater a beastly war-profit—"

"Yes, I know; and he deserves to be licked. But let one of us do the licking."

Traddles shook his head.

"I'm the fellow who was insulted, so it's up to me to avenge it," he said. "Stand aside, there's a good fellow!"

Harry Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, if you get the licking of your life don't blame me!" he said.

And he turned and rejoined his chums.

Meanwhile, Bolsover major had recovered in some measure from his astonishment. He was more amused than

astonished at the idea of Traddles wishing to fight him.

"I'm ready," he said, with a coarse laugh. "There's no need for me to take my coat off! Why, you silly young ass, I can lick you with one hand!"

"We'll see!" said Traddles grimly.

And the couple squared up to each other.

"Don't be too hard on him, Bolsover!" sang out Skinner. "One gentle tap on the cranium ought to polish him off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The fellows crowded round to witness the fight.

Most of them were amused, and some were anxious. They didn't want to see Tony Traddles carried out on a stretcher.

"Go it, ye cripples!" said Stott.

Bolsover major lunged forward, with the intention of finishing the fight with a single blow.

But, somehow, that intention missed fire.

Bolsover certainly aimed a blow at the new boy's head; but Traddles skipped nimbly to one side, with the result that the bully of the Remove overbalanced, and crashed to the floor.

The crowd shook with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Bolsover!"

"This is a fight—not an acrobatic turn!"

Traddles lowered his hands while his opponent scrambled to his feet.

"Come on, Bolsover! Put your beef into it!" urged Billy Bunter. "You ought to have licked the kid by now! I licked him myself just before tea, and it only took me a few seconds!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover's face was livid. He hated being made a fool of, and Traddles was obviously making a fool of him now.

Out shot the bully's right, straight from the shoulder; but Traddles seemed to be able to anticipate every movement on the part of his opponent, for once again he dodged to one side, and the blow sailed harmlessly by.

And then the new boy took it into his head to attack. He broke through Bolsover's guard, and beat a merry tattoo on the bully's ribs, to the consternation of Bolsover's friends, and the delight of his enemies.

The Famous Five looked on in wonder.

Bob Cherry was rubbing his eyes, and Johnny Bull was pinching himself to make sure he was awake.

"Can this really be Traddles?" murmured Nugent.

"The fellow who's got a weak heart, nervous spasms, and goodness knows what!" gasped Wharton.

"The frail and delicate youth whom we were to protect from Bolsover major!" blurted out Bob Cherry.

"My only aunt! Looks as though it's Bolsover who needs protection!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

Traddles continued to hammer at his opponent's ribs, and Bolsover was struggling for breath. He realised only too keenly the humiliation of his position; and the fact that even Bunter was taunting him goaded him to fury.

Breaking away from the persistent Traddles, Bolsover shot out his left; and this time the new boy was taken by surprise, and was too late to dodge the blow.

Traddles received the full benefit of the bully's fist on his jaw, and went down like a log.

"Poor kid!" said Peter Todd. "That's finished him, I reckon!"

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But it hadn't!

Traddles was up again in a moment, his face flushed, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles.

"Good!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"He's still game, by Jove!"

A cheer went up on behalf of Traddles. And a good many of those who had at first sneered at him joined in the cheer.

Then followed five minutes packed with thrills—five minutes of fierce, desperate fighting.

There was very little dodging and ducking now on the part of Traddles. He stood his ground like a man, hitting out right and left.

But Bolsover was hitting out, too; and Bolsover's sledge-hammer blows were not things to be laughed at.

Once again the new boy went down, felled by a blow in the chest which, had his heart really been weak, would have been attended by serious results.

"Afraid his number's up this time!" said Johnny Bull.

But Traddles was nothing if not game.

He scrambled to his feet—though not with the same alacrity as before—and faced his man.

But the new boy was obviously not in a condition for further fighting.

Harry Wharton stepped up to the two combatants.

"This has gone far enough!" he exclaimed.

The crowd, resenting Wharton's interference, howled him down.

"Stand back!"

"Let 'em have it out!"

Wharton had no choice in the matter, for the next moment the combatants were at it again, hammer-and-tongs.

Traddles was very much the worse for wear, but Bolsover was in little better case.

There was a brisk bout of in-fighting; and then Traddles, realising that he could not go on much longer, crowded all his energies into one final smashing blow.

Having delivered that blow, Traddles clung to the mantelpiece for support. He was very white, and his breath was coming and going in great gasps.

But he had the supreme satisfaction of seeing his opponent crash to the floor, amid a loud murmur of astonishment, admiration, and awe.

If Bolsover survived that blow, and went on fighting, Traddles knew that all was lost.

But Bolsover didn't survive it. Not until he had been counted out, anyway. And then he slowly tottered to his feet, utterly dazed.

He—one of the heftiest fighting-men in the Remove—had been licked. And by a new boy—by a fellow who looked as if he couldn't say "Bo!" to a goose!

"M-m-my hat!" was all he could manage to stutter.

As for the spectators, they were making a terrific commotion.

"Good old Traddles!" they yelled.

"You've won! You've licked him!"

"Hurrah!"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent ran to the aid of their new study-mate.

Traddles was indeed the victor; but he looked more like the victim at that moment, for he had received very heavy punishment from Bolsover major's fists.

By sheer strength of will Traddles had won that fight. It had been a triumph of mind over matter.

"Feeling groggy, old chap?" asked Wharton kindly.

Traddles pulled himself together with a great effort.

"I'm all right!" he said stoutly.

"Come along to the study," said Nugent, "and we'll see if we can patch you up a bit."

The new boy donned his coat, and Wharton and Nugent escorted him from the Common-room. The other members of the Famous Five followed. And the crowd cheered Traddles as he went.

When his face had been sponged, and he was able to take his ease in front of the fire, Traddles speedily recovered. And he became quite cheerful.

"Well, you've served up a giddy surprise this evening, and no mistake!" said Harry Wharton. "There wasn't a fellow in the Remove who thought you had a dog's chance against Bolsover. And yet you licked him!"

"It was a sight for the gods!" said Bob Cherry. "Look here, Traddles! That yarn you pitched us about the crutches and the bathchair was all bunkum, wasn't it?"

Traddles grinned.

"P'r'aps it was," he admitted.

"And you haven't got a frail and delicate constitution, either!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, yes, I have! I shall feel the effects of this scrap for weeks! I shall suffer from insomnia, nervous spasms, and gnawing pains!"

"My hat!"

Traddles said no more, but amused himself for the remainder of the evening by going through the copies of the "Greyfriars Herald."

Harry Wharton & Co. regarded him with growing perplexity. They were usually able to size up a new boy within half an hour of his arrival at Greyfriars. But Tony Traddles had them beaten!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Night Attack!

TIME we got our own back on the Fifth!

It was Bob Cherry who spoke.

The Remove had just been shepherded up to their dormitory by Wingate of the Sixth, and, with one exception, they were in the act of undressing.

The exception was Traddles, who was seated fully dressed on his bed listening to the conversation.

"The Fifth scored over us the other day," continued Bob Cherry, "and we've not got even with them. They took us by surprise in the Close, and snowballed us."

"Well, we can't snowball them in return," said Squiff, "for the simple reason that there's no snow!"

"It's not necessary to pay them back in kind, fathead!" said Bob Cherry. "There are more ways than one of killing a cat! What about raiding their dorm, and socking it into 'em with pillows?"

"My son," said Harry Wharton, "that's a very practical and warlike suggestion! I agree with you that it's high time we made Coker & Co. sit up!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll teach the Fifth that they can't snowball us with impunity——"

"Well, they didn't try," said Peter Todd. "They did it with snowballs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Toddy will have his little joke, bless him!" said Bob Cherry. "Now, who's in favour of a midnight raid on the Fifth?"

"I am!"

The exclamation was practically universal.

"I say, Cherry," said Billy Bunter, "I think it would be a much better idea to raid their tuck——"

"And it would be a better idea still if



The Caterpillar advanced towards Traddles with outstretched hand. "That was a great performance, my dear fellow," he said. "Simply stunnin'! Shake!" Traddles smiled modestly as he shook hands. (See Chapter 7.)

you went to sleep!" said Bob. "You're dead in this act! Dry up!"

"Are you coming on active service with us, Traddles?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"Well, I'm suffering at the moment from chronic Bolsoveritis!" said Traddles. "But I'll take a hand!"

"Good!"

"Why don't you get undressed, fat-head?" exclaimed Nugent. "Wingate will be along in a jiffy to see lights out."

Even as Nugent spoke the captain of Greyfriars entered the dormitory with his athletic stride.

Those juniors who had not yet turned in promptly scuttled to their beds, with the solitary exception of Traddles.

Wingate frowned as his glance fell upon the new boy.

"What's your name, kid?" he demanded.

"Tony Traddles. And yours?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A ripple of laughter went up from the juniors, and Wingate's frown deepened.

"None of your cheek, Traddles!" he said sharply. "Why aren't you in bed?"

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Traddles meekly.

"No; it's a straightforward question, and I want a satisfactory answer at once!"

"The fact is," said Traddles, "I'm not used to sleeping on a hard, crude, uncomfortable bed of this sort."

Wingate stared.

"What have you been used to, then, for goodness' sake?"

"A nice, soft, feather bed."

"That's a luxury I'm afraid you'll have to dispense with at Greyfriars," said Wingate. "Get undressed at once! If you're not in bed in two minutes there'll be trouble!"

Traddles sighed, and started to undress. He was in bed before the two minutes were up.

"Good-night, kids!" said Wingate, putting out the light.

"Good-night, Wingate!"

The captain of Greyfriars retired, and the juniors propped themselves up on their pillows with the intention of remaining awake until midnight.

A deep groan came from the bed occupied by Traddles.

"What's up, Traddles?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Groo! This bed, my dear fellow! It's as hard as a plank!"

"You'll soon get used to it," said Bob cheerfully. "Besides, it'll help you to keep awake."

Long before midnight the majority of the juniors had dropped off to sleep.

But Harry Wharton contrived to keep his eyes open until the first stroke of twelve sounded from the old clock-tower.

"You fellows awake?" inquired Wharton, sitting up in bed.

The only response came from Traddles.

"The others appear to be in the arms of Morpheus!" yawned the new boy. "I was nearly there myself, but your voice roused me. Is it time for the entertainment to commence?"

"Yes," answered Wharton. "You might give me a hand, Traddles, at waking these lazy slackers!"

Between them the two juniors succeeded in rousing everybody in the dormitory, with the exception of Billy Bunter and Lord Mauleverer.

"I fear," said Traddles, "that nothing short of an earthquake or a whizz-bang will awaken these two."

"Oh, they don't matter!" said Wharton. "They'd be no use to us, anyway. Tumble out, you fellows, and line up!"

Now that the time for carrying out the raid had actually arrived, the promoter of it—Bob Cherry—was not quite so keen.

"Rather a cold night!" he observed, with a shiver.

"Never mind!" said Wharton cheerfully. "You'll soon be as warm as toast!"

In the gangway between the two rows of beds the Removites lined up, armed with pillows and bolsters.

The majority of the fellows were only half-awake, but they knew that Harry Wharton would give them no respite. The raid on the Fifth had been unanimously agreed upon, and it would have to be carried out.

The captain of the Remove ran his eye along the row of warriors.

"Pull yourselves together!" he said briskly. "There's a raid on, not a funeral! Now, are you ready?"

"Ready, ay, ready!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Follow your leader, then, and don't make a row!"

The juniors trooped out of the dormitory in a silent procession.

Many of them were shivering, and they were anxious to get warm. They would shortly have an excellent opportunity.

Mounting a flight of stairs, Harry Wharton noiselessly opened the door of the Fifth Form dormitory.

It was very dark, but the beds and the slumbering forms of Coker & Co. could be faintly distinguished.

Harry Wharton gave the signal for attack, and the next moment pandemonium reigned in the dormitory.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

Pillows and bolsters did tremendous execution, and it was a rude awakening indeed for the Fifth, who were taken completely by surprise.

"Pile in, you fellows!" sang out Wharton, now that there was no further need for silence. "Let 'em have it hot!"

Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, sat up in bed with a dazed expression on his face.

"Who—what——" he gasped.

"It's a raid!" shouted Coker. "Those cheeky Remove fags——"

Biff!

Coker's utterance was checked by a mighty swipe from Johnny Bull's pillow.

The Remove had matters all their own way—at first.

Gradually, however, the Fifth-Formers succeeded in scrambling out of bed and snatching up their pillows.

To their intense dismay, Harry Wharton & Co. found themselves being beaten back towards the door.

What dismayed them even more was the peculiar conduct of Tony Traddles.

The new boy was wielding his pillow with astonishing vigour. But instead of raining his blows upon the Fifth, he was smiting his own Form-fellows hip and thigh.

"Traddles!" panted Bob Cherry. "Chuck it, you idiot! Have you suddenly gone potty?"

For answer Traddles continued to hit. His fierce, whirling blows scattered his own men like chaff, and the Fifth-Formers promptly took advantage of the situation by driving their opponents on to the landing.

Here a pitched battle raged for some moments; but with Traddles obstructing the movements of his own side the Remove had no chance. They retreated before the fierce onrush of the Fifth, and were finally driven down the stairs and back to their own quarters.

Harry Wharton made several desperate attempts to rally his men, but Traddles always contrived to get in the way and to break up the movement.

Coker & Co. delivered a final smashing assault; then they retired to their dormitory, chuckling.

The Remove's raid had ended in a dismal failure.

"Licked!" panted Bob Cherry.

"Dished and done!" groaned Nugent.

"And all through Traddles!" said Johnny Bull wrathfully. "The mad idiot! He was bowling over his own men!"

"What do you mean by it, Traddles?" demanded Harry Wharton. "Explain yourself, you burbling chump!"

"My eyesight," murmured the new boy, "is rather faulty, especially in the darkness. If I inadvertently caused any damage to my own men, I'm sorry!"

"Bless your sorrow!" growled Bob Cherry. "You've caused us to be licked! Coker will be crowing over us."

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for the rest of the term—thanks to you!"

"Oh, bump him!" said Peter Todd in exasperated tones.

Traddles backed away in some alarm as his indignant schoolfellows surged towards him.

"Hold on, my dear fellows!" he said. "Remember my frail and delicate constitution——"

"Frail and delicate coke!" growled Johnny Bull. "You let us down, and you're going to pay the piper!"

"Yes, rather!"

There was no escape for Traddles. He was seized by many hands, and bumped without ceremony on the floor of the dormitory.

Three times he descended on to the hard floor with an impact which shook every bone in his body.

And then the Removites, having relieved their feelings to some extent, got back into bed, leaving Tony Traddles to sort himself out.

presently it grew too strong altogether for Billy Bunter.

"I'll just have a peep," muttered the fat junior. "I can easily seal up the envelope again."

Bunter was in the act of inserting a fat thumb in the flap of the envelope when a hand fell upon his shoulder, and he spun round with a guilty start.

"You fat poacher!" exclaimed Traddles. "Hand over my letter!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the new boy through his big spectacles.

"Certainly, old chap!" he said. "Matter of fact, I was on my way to deliver this letter to you!"

"You were going to open it, you prying worm——"

"I wasn't!" said Bunter indignantly. "I should never dream of opening another fellow's correspondence——"

"Hand over that letter!"

Bunter obeyed, but he was still unable to restrain his curiosity.

"I notice that the postmark's Friar-dale," he said. "Who writes to you from the village?"

"Mind your own business!" snapped Traddles.

"I suppose it's the landlord of the Cross Keys, or some other shady pal of yours!" sneered Billy Bunter, retreating to a safe distance.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, coming on the scene with the Famous Five. "What's all the merry rumpus?"

Billy Bunter pointed a fat forefinger at Traddles.

"There's a mystery about that chap!" he said. "He's just had a letter from somebody in the village!"

"Nothing mysterious about that, is there?" said Wharton.

"If there isn't," retorted Bunter, "why doesn't Traddles open the letter?"

"I dare say he will in a jiffy!" said Nugent.

But Traddles didn't.

Instead, he thrust the letter into his pocket and strolled away.

The Famous Five exchanged significant glances.

"I don't believe Bunter's very far from the truth for once," said Wharton. "Traddles is certainly mysterious. He seems to have something to hide."

"He's a queer card altogether!" said Bob Cherry. "We shall have to keep an eye on him. There are lots of things about Traddles that have puzzled me. To begin with, he made out that he was a confirmed invalid, but a confirmed invalid couldn't have licked a hefty brute like Bolsover major. Then there was the pillow-fight last night. Why on earth he wanted to slosh his own men I can't imagine!"

The Famous Five decided to keep Tony Traddles under close observation.

Without going out of their way to spy upon him, they took note of his actions during the next few days, but nothing occurred to arouse their suspicions.

Traddles made himself quite at home in Study No. 1, and he was equally at home in the Form-room.

The juniors, for the most part, treated him with civility and respect. A fellow who could knock out Bolsover major was preferable as a friend than as an enemy.

The next item of importance on the Remove's programme was their return football fixture with Highcliffe, to be played on the Greyfriars ground.

The Remove had won the previous match, and they resolved to make a double-event of it by winning this one also.

No. 43.—EDWARD FRY.



Upper Fourth Form. Shares Study No. 2 with Temple and Dabney. Jibs at times against Temple, the captain of the Form, and has rather more of a will of his own than Dabney. On the whole plays "follow-my-leader" pretty cheerfully and consistently.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Yet Another Surprise!

BILLY BUNTER halted in front of the post-rack the next morning, and scanned it in vain for a letter.

Evidently Bunter's titled relations had forsaken him. They probably needed all their spare cash in order to pay the instalments on their furniture.

"No luck!" grunted the fat junior. "Hallo! Here's a letter for Traddles!"

Billy Bunter was very inquisitive on the subject of the new boy, and he wondered who this letter was from, and what it was all about.

The envelope was bulging a little—a fact which suggested that there was a remittance inside.

The Owl of the Remove calmly appropriated the letter and rolled away.

"I'll deliver this to Traddles myself," he murmured.

As he crossed the Close; however, the desire to see what was inside that envelope grew stronger and stronger. And

On the morning of the match the following announcement appeared on the notice-board in hall:

"NOTICE!"

"The Remove will be represented this afternoon by the same eleven that defeated Highcliffe last week—namely:

"Goal, Bulstrode; backs, Bull and Brown; half-backs, Cherry, P. Todd, and Linley; forwards, Hurree Singh, Nugent, Wharton, Field, and Vernon-Smith.

"Non-players are expected to rally round and give their support.

"Mouth-organs, tin-whistles, and other stimulants to success will not be objected to.

"Note.—A special feed will be held in Study No. 1 to celebrate the Remove's victory.

"(Signed) HARRY WHARTON."

Exactly eleven fellows were satisfied with this announcement—the eleven whose names figured on it.

The remainder of the fellows—particularly the cads of the Remove—had plenty of criticism to bestow upon Harry Wharton's selection.

"It's a dud team," said Bolsover major, "and it deserves to go under!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Where's my name?"

"And mine?"

"Faith, an' where's mine?"

Traddles was among the crowd that hustled and jostled in front of the notice-board.

"What I like about this notice," he said, "is the tail-end of it. 'A special feed will be held in Study No. 1 to celebrate the Remove's victory.' Sounds all right. But supposing there's no victory to celebrate?"

"That's just it!" said Skinner. "Wharton takes a jolly sight too much for granted. He forgets the words of Kipling—'Pride goeth before a fall.'"

"Those aren't the words of Kipling, ass!" said Stott.

"Never mind. They fit the case, anyway. It will serve Wharton right if the Remove comes a cropper."

"Hear, hear!"

Perhaps, for once in a way, Harry Wharton was being a little too cocksure. But, having beaten Highcliffe once, he saw no reason why this eleven should not repeat the performance.

A large crowd flocked down to the football field after dinner.

Although many of the fellows were indignant at having been left out of the team, they were sportsmen enough to come and cheer the Remove eleven.

Harry Wharton & Co. indulged in some preliminary practice; and then a brake rumbled up with the Highcliffe eleven on board.

The members of the visiting team looked very fit and confident as they clambered from the vehicle.

Frank Courtenay was there, of course, and the immaculate Caterpillar and Flip Derwent and Smithson. And there was an expression on the faces of the Highcliffe juniors which seemed to suggest that the Greyfriars Remove would have a hard nut to crack.

"Welcome, little strangers!" said Bob Cherry. "Hope you've got your shooting boots on, because you'll need 'em!"

"Well, we don't anticipate being beaten by more than a dozen goals to nil," said the Caterpillar, with a grin.

"In fact, we don't anticipate being beaten at all," said Frank Courtenay. "You fellows are going through the mill!"

"Rats!"

Gwynne of the Sixth, who was to act as referee, signalled to the teams to line up.

"Play up, Friars!" came an enthusiastic shout from the touchline.

The game was set in motion, and the Highcliffe forwards raced away at the start.

But in the first minute misfortune overtook them.

Derwent, who was playing on the wing, was charged off the ball by Johnny Bull—quite a fair charge—and he went sprawling.

Instead of rising to his feet, however, Flip Derwent remained on the ground.

The game was held up at once, and the players rushed up to the Highcliffe junior.

"Anything wrong, old chap?" inquired Frank Courtenay.

"Yes; I've twisted my beastly ankle."

"Oh!"

"What rotten luck!"

"I'll play on, though," said Flip pluckily.

No. 44.—WILLIAM WALTER DABNEY.



Fry's closest chum in the Upper Fourth. Has more common-sense than Temple, the other occupant of Study No. 2, but does not always find it sufficient to restrain him. A useful athlete, but the standard of athletics is not particularly high in the Upper Fourth.

"You jolly well won't!" said Frank Courtenay. "Why, you can hardly stand!" he added, as Flip Derwent was assisted to his feet.

The injured player was assisted to the touchline, where a chair was provided for him.

It was obviously no use for Derwent to continue playing. He would have been little more than a passenger.

"This means that we've got to go right through the game with only ten men," said Smithson.

"Not at all!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll lend you one of our fellows. Let me see. There's Dick Penfold, Micky Desmond—"

"Lend them Traddles!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Caterpillar, to the utter amazement of the Greyfriars fellows, took Bob Cherry's remark seriously.

"Yes, lend us Traddles!" he said. "That will do rippingly!"

"You silly chump!" exclaimed Harry

Wharton. "Do you happen to know who Traddles is?"

"He's a new kid, isn't he?"

"Yes; that merchant standing over there with a face like a chimpanzee: I doubt if he's ever kicked a footer in his life!"

"Never mind," said Frank Courtenay, "we'll borrow him, if we may."

Wharton gasped.

"You mean to say you prefer Traddles to Penfold or one of the others?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm jiggered!"

Bob Cherry made a megaphone of his hands, and shouted to Traddles, who came up at a gentle trot.

"Highcliffe are a man short," explained Wharton. "Derwent's crooked. Would you care to turn out for Highcliffe?"

"Delighted!" said Traddles.

"Then you'd better change into Derwent's togs, and he can get back into Etons."

Flip Derwent was assisted to the dressing-room, and Traddles followed.

When the new boy emerged, in football garb, a yell of laughter went up at his expense.

Traddles certainly looked a peculiar figure, clad in a jersey and shorts.

"Let 'em laugh, kid!" said Frank Courtenay. "They'll be laughing on the other side of their chivvies presently!"

"Oh, I don't mind, I assure you," said Traddles.

And he exchanged a knowing wink with the Caterpillar—a wink which passed unnoticed by the Greyfriars players.

The game was resumed, and Highcliffe set up a determined and persistent attack.

Very little was seen of Traddles at first. Like the man in the poem, he stood remote from all.

But presently the Caterpillar swung the ball across to him, and Traddles fastened on to it like a torrier.

The next moment the new boy proved that he was as good a footballer as he was a fighting-man. He put in a magnificent cross-shot, which Bulstrode could not possibly have saved; but the ball hit the cross-bar and rebounded into play.

"My only aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I begin to see now why Traddles was preferred to Dick Penfold and Micky Desmond. He's a giddy marvel!"

As the game went on Traddles became more and more in evidence. He covered the ground with the speed of a hare, and his tackling and passing were worthy of a master.

Although he was such a slim and far from robust-looking youth, Traddles more than held his own on the field of play.

As in the case of the fight with Bolsover major, it was a triumph of mind over matter.

The crowd had laughed at first at the idea of Traddles being "spare man" for Highcliffe. But they were not laughing now.

The game was twenty minutes old when the first goal came. And it was not the Remove that scored.

The ball whizzed in from the foot of Frank Courtenay, who had snapped up a splendid pass from Traddles.

"Goal!"

The faces of the Greyfriars fellows were as long as fiddles.

Highcliffe had drawn the first blood, and the outlook was not promising for the Remove.

"Buck up, you fellows!" said Wharton desperately. "This won't do at all!"

The Remove rallied, and Vernon-Smith sent in a spanking shot, which went just wide.

Shortly afterwards Frank Nugent headed over the bar; and then Harry Wharton, from close range, crashed the ball into the net.

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

The prospect was brighter now, and the Removites, stimulated by their success, played up manfully. They failed to add to their score, however, and half-time arrived with the two teams on level terms.

"Think we'll pull it off, Harry?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"We simply must!" answered Wharton. "It would be too awful for words if we were licked after what I said about celebrating our victory!"

The Greyfriars players stood together in a group, discussing their plan of campaign for the second half.

Meanwhile, Tony Traddles was being made a great fuss of by the Highcliffe fellows. He was strolling between Frank Courtenay and the Caterpillar, who each had an arm linked in his.

"Anybody would think," said Peter Todd, "that they were old pals!"

"That fellow Traddles is the biggest surprise packet I ever struck!" declared Bob Cherry. "He looks a freak, but he doesn't act like one, by Jove! He'll need careful watching in the second half."

"Yes, rather!"

The game was resumed in dramatic fashion.

Vernon-Smith broke away on the wing, and after eluding a number of opponents, he lobbed the ball across to Wharton.

The captain of the Remove could not quite get to it, but Squiff pounced upon it and drove it into the net, amid a volley of cheers.

"Two to one for us!" chortled Tom Brown. "That's tons better!"

For nearly half an hour the Remove stuck to their lead, and then a complete change came over the game.

The Highcliffians set up a perfect bombardment, and Bulstrode, in the Remove goal, had his hands full. He was for ever fisting out shots, and at length he was beaten by a fast, low drive from the Caterpillar.

Two goals to two! And only five minutes to go!

The crowd fully expected to see the game end in a draw; but the crowd's expectations were not realised.

Traddles, who had played a cool and brainy game throughout, sent in a shot from twenty yards out.

Bulstrode made no attempt to get to the ball, which he imagined would go over the cross-bar. But, to his utter dismay, it curled in under the bar and entered the net!

"Goal!"

Bulstrode fished out the ball with a look of blank bewilderment on his face.

Highcliffe had taken the lead; and as there were only three minutes to go, it was not likely to be wrested from them.

Harry Wharton & Co. attacked desperately in the closing stages, but with no result.

And then, in the last minute, the irrepressible Traddles broke away, and scored from close range with an unstoppable shot, thus giving Highcliffe the victory by four goals to two!

As the teams came off the field, Harry Wharton fervently wished that the ground would open and swallow him up.

He had advertised his intention of celebrating the victory; and, behold, there was no victory to celebrate!

Traddles, the new boy—the most freakish-looking fellow in the Form—had been lent to Highcliffe, and he had won the match for them!

It was a black moment for the Greyfriars Remove, and a very joyous one indeed for the Highcliffians.

The Caterpillar advanced towards Traddles with outstretched hand.

"That was a great performance, my dear fellow," he said. "Simply stunnin'! Shake!"

Traddles smiled modestly as he shook hands.

"It was nothing to make a song about," he said.

"Wasn't it, by Jove!" said Frank Courtenay. "If you hadn't played for us, we should never have won!"

"I insist," said the Caterpillar—"in fact, we all insist, that you come along to Highcliffe to tea!"

"Yes, rather!"

Traddles accepted the invitation with thanks; and the Greyfriars fellows watched him depart with Frank Courtenay & Co. in their brake.

"There's something jolly fishy about that new kid," said Peter Todd. "It almost seems as if he's hand-in-glove with the Highcliffe fellows!"

"It really does!" said Harry Wharton. "We shall have to keep an eye on Master Traddles, and find out what his little game is!"

The defeated footballers trooped back to the building, to the accompaniment of loud groans from the disappointed crowd.

And the proposed celebration of victory was conspicuous by its absence.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Exit Traddles!

LETTER for Traddles!"

For the second morning in succession Billy Bunter made that remark.

Once again the fat junior had drawn blank, his titled relations having left him in the lurch. But Traddles seemed to be in luck's way.

Bunter took down the new boy's letter and examined it.

This letter, like its predecessor, bore the Friardale postmark; and Bunter was curious—very curious indeed—to know whom Traddles was in communication with in the village.

The Owl of the Remove disliked Traddles intensely, and nothing would have pleased him better than to be able to expose the new boy as being a visitor to the Cross Keys, or some other disreputable haunt.

Like Moses of old, Billy Bunter looked this way and that way, and there was no man.

"Good!" he murmured. "I regard it as my duty to open this letter, in case that beast Traddles is up to some shady game or other!"

Having eased his conscience by telling himself that he was acting from a sense of duty, Billy Bunter stealthily opened the envelope, and drew out the missive that was inside.

The next moment his little round eyes fairly glittered behind his spectacles.

"Oh, my hat!" he exclaimed. "An impostor, by Jove!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry's sudden ejaculation caused Bunter to spin round with a guilty start. He found that the Famous Five were watching him with grim expressions on their faces.

"What have you got there, porpoise?" demanded Wharton.

"A—a letter," said Bunter feebly.

"I can see that it's a letter, ass! The question is, whom does it belong to?"

"Me, of course!" said Bunter ungrammatically. "It's from one of my titled relations, you know—"

"Titled coke!" growled Johnny Bull. Then, catching sight of the envelope in Bunter's hand, he added:

"Why, it's addressed to Traddles!"

The expressions on the faces of the Famous Five grew grimmer than ever.

"You fat young thief!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton! The—the fact is, I found this letter lying on the floor, and it was open. And I say, you fellows, I've made a jolly important discovery! Traddles is an impostor!"

"What!"

"He's no right to be at Greyfriars at all!"

"What!" shouted the Famous Five, louder than before.

"This is a jape on the part of those Highcliffe bounders! We've been spoofed, diddled, dished, and done!"

"My only aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry. "If there's any truth in what Bunter says, I think we're entitled to read that letter!"

"Yes, rather!"

The fat junior handed over the letter, and Harry Wharton proceeded to read it aloud to the others.

"Dear Cousin Tony,—Now that your week at Greyfriars is up, I should like to congratulate you on having carried the jape through successfully. You had to take all sorts of risks, but you have played your cards splendidly."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" gasped Nugent.

"To begin with, the way you rang up the Head on the telephone and mimicked your pater's voice was simply top-hole. Fancy Dr. Locke not smelling a rat!"

"It was a jolly clever wangle altogether, and when you were telling us at Highcliffe last night how you managed to give your tutor the slip at Brighton, and come on to Greyfriars, we thought we should burst!"

"You seem to have made good use of your time at Greyfriars. You licked the biggest bully in the Remove; you caused Wharton & Co. to be licked in their pillow-fight against the Fifth; and, most important of all, you played for Highcliffe yesterday and won us the match. Tony, my son, you're a marvel!"

"I was glad to hear that the information I had given you about the Greyfriars fellows, and so forth, stood you in good stead."

"It was jolly decent of you to undertake this jape on our behalf, and I do hope that when you get home you will be able to satisfactorily explain away your week's absence to the pater."

"The Highcliffe fellows are simply delighted, and it has been the outstanding jape of the term!"

"Best of luck to you, Cousin Tony!"

"Ever yours,

RUPERT."

"Rupert!" echoed Bob Cherry. "That's the Caterpillar!"

"And Traddles is his cousin!" exclaimed Nugent.

"And this was a put-up affair from the beginning!" gasped Harry Wharton. "It seems impossible! Fancy a fellow having such amazing nerve! And yet—"

"It is true enough, my worthy chum," said Hurree Singh. "Traddles has been japefully pulling our esteemed legs."

"I can see how Traddles worked it," said Johnny Bull. "He rang up the Head, said he was Mr. Traddles speaking, and asked if he could send his son to Greyfriars."

The others nodded.

"Traddles was supposed to be spending a week at Brighton, under the care of his tutor," continued Johnny Bull. "But he gave his tutor the slip, and came here. He got himself up like a prize freak, and those huge spectacles he wore were merely a part of his make-up. He's spoofed the Head, and Quelch, and us—and the whole school, for that matter. And now his week's up, and he's going home again!"

The Famous Five were amazed and dismayed.

Accustomed though they were to japes of all sorts, they had never before been japed on such a gigantic scale.

They had suspected Tony Traddles, in a vague sort of way, of playing a part; but they had never supposed that he was an agent of the rival school—sent by the Highcliffe fellows to spoof them!

Silence fell upon the Famous Five for some moments—the silence of stupefaction.

Billy Bunter was the next to speak.

"I say, you fellows," he said, "Traddles has spoofed us all along the line; but, thanks to my discovery of the jape, we shall have the laugh of him at the finish!"

"How do you make that out?" growled Johnny Bull.

"Why, we can collar him, and kick him out of Greyfriars, of course! We can

make him feel jolly sorry he ever carried out this jape!"

The juniors brightened up a little.

As Bunter remarked, they would have the laugh at the finish. They would, at least have the satisfaction of speeding the parting guest by throwing Traddles out on his neck!

"Come along!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll soon square our account with this humorous merchant!"

And the Famous Five went in search of Traddles.

But although they searched high and low, and far and near, there was no sign of the Caterpillar's cousin. He was not in Study No. 1; nor was he in the Remove dormitory or the junior Common-room.

At length Harry Wharton & Co. made the discovery that something else was missing besides Traddles—namely, his trunk!

"He's gone!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Cleared out!" gasped Nugent. "He evidently guessed what was coming!"

Whether that was the case or not, Traddles had certainly made himself scarce.

Gosling, the school porter, on being questioned, informed the Famous Five that a cab had arrived at the school, shortly after rising-bell that morning; and when the cab rolled away Traddles and his trunk were inside it!

"He's half-way to London by now," said Johnny Bull. "Afraid we sha'n't be able to have revenge—not on Traddles, anyway."

"But we'll take it out of Highcliffe later on!" said Wharton grimly.

"Yes, rather!"

"After all, Traddles isn't the biggest offender," said Bob Cherry. "The Caterpillar was the prime mover in this affair. Traddles was merely the instrument employed by Highcliffe so that they could turn the tables on us."

"And they've succeeded, too!" said Nugent dolefully. "We shall never hear the end of this. They'll be gloating over it for whole terms!"

The news of Highcliffe's stupendous jape spread like wildfire through the Remove.

Most of the fellows were incredulous, at first; but when they discovered that Tony Traddles had performed the vanishing trick, they realised only too well how completely they had been spoofed.

And throughout the Greyfriars Remove there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

At the breakfast-table that morning Mr. Quelch asked for Traddles. But he asked in vain.

"This is extraordinary!" murmured the Form-master. "Does any boy know where Traddles is?"

Billy Bunter rose to his feet with the intention of telling Mr. Quelch the true facts concerning Tony Traddles; but Bob Cherry jerked the fat junior back into his seat.

"Not a word, porpoise!" he muttered. "We've got no love for Traddles, but



This is a small line drawing of the Plate to be Given Free. Actual size of Plate with engraving is 7½ inches by 10 inches. The title of the picture is "Boy, 1st Class, JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL, V.C. The Battle of Jutland, May 31st—June 1st, 1916. From the Picture by F. O. Salisbury, painted for the Admiralty on board H.M.S. Chester." The closing date of this offer will be published in this paper in a week or so. No application will be accepted after that date.

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WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO SECURE A BEAUTIFUL ART PLATE :: :: ::

We reproduce here a small line drawing of a magnificent coloured plate which every reader of THE MAGNET has an equal chance of securing. All you have to do is to secure the names and addresses of SIX of your friends who are non-readers of THE MAGNET. When you have done this, write them down on a postcard and post them to the Editor of THE MAGNET, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4. All postcards should be marked "Free Plate" in the top left-hand corner. Names and addresses of regular or occasional readers must on no account be sent, otherwise your application for a Plate may be rejected. Before sending in your list, make sure that the names are of non-readers.

Only one plate will be sent to any one reader.

we're not going to give him away to Quelch!"

Mr. Quelch was very perplexed at the absence of Traddles. And his perplexity increased when he found that Tony was absent from morning lessons.

"Bless my soul! Where ever can the boy be?" he exclaimed.

In the middle of the morning, the Head came into the Remove Form-room. He was looking rather bewildered.

"I have just received an extraordinary communication, by telephone, from the father of that boy Traddles!" he said, addressing Mr. Quelch. "It appears that the boy in question, finding the rough-and-tumble life of a public school unsuited to his frail and delicate constitution, has run away."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "He has returned, I trust, to his home?"

The Head nodded.

"According to his father, he has just arrived."

"Do you propose to recall him, sir?"

"No," answered Dr. Locke. "I am glad to be relieved of the responsibility of having him here. He appeared to be in very feeble health, and had he remained here it is possible that he might have been the means of spreading influenza, or some other epidemic, through the school. On the whole, I am indeed thankful that the boy has gone, Quelch."

"Quite so, sir," said the Remove-master.

The Head withdrew shortly afterwards, leaving the Form-room in a flutter.

"Well, if that isn't the giddy limit!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Traddles has played his part right up to the hilt! He must have imitated his pater's voice again on the 'phone! Did you ever?"

There was no doubt that Tony Traddles had carried out his astounding jape with great thoroughness.

Whether the amazing deception would ever come to the Head's knowledge remained to be seen. If it did, there would be a warm time in store for Tony Traddles.

For the remainder of that day Harry Wharton & Co. writhed and squirmed to think how completely they had been spoofed.

But they consoled themselves with the reflection that sooner or later they would effectively turn the tables on the rival school.

As Bob Cherry briefly remarked, those who laughed last laughed longest!

But it was likely to be a long, long time before the name of Tony Traddles was forgotten by the Greyfriars Remove.

THE END.

Another grand long, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled: "Smouldering Fires!"

Order your copy EARLY.

READERS' NOTICES.

BACK NUMBERS WANTED, ETC.

R. C. Reynolds, 22, St. Willbrod's Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, has a number of back numbers of the Companion Papers for sale.

E. B. London, 10, High Street, Sutton, Surrey, has for sale "Magnets" and "Gems" from 50 to current issue, 1d. each.

Clifford F. Hale, 83, Bell Hill, St. George, Bristol, wants "Bob Cherry's Barring Out" and "Bunter the Boxer." Write first.

A. Dillon, Kiama, 43, Jackson Street, St. Kilda, Melbourne, Australia, wants "Gems" Nos. 397, 399, and 207; the "Boys' Friend" 4d. Libraries. "Tom Merry & Co." and "After Lights Out."

F. Folds, 6, Dalton Street, St. Albans, Herts, has for sale "Magnets" Nos. 437-600; "Gems" 432-583; "Boys' Friends" 736-838, and "Penny Populars"—old series—218-286 (bound in two volumes).

E. Seager, 41, George Lane, Lewisham, S.E. 13, has for sale a number of Companion Papers.

Miss L. Espley, 26, Linhope Street, Dorset Square, London, N. 1, has for sale "Gems" 592-607. Will sell lot for 2s. 8d.

Henry Burcombe, 24, Bedford Street, Newtown, Stockton-on-Tees, has for sale "Gems" 506-606, at 1½d. each; Penny Populars—new series—2-8 and 10-35, at 1½d. each; also bundles of old Companion Papers, 25 for 2s. 6d.

L. C. White, 125, Stewart Road, Bournemouth, Hants, wants "Magnet" Christmas No. 1914, 3d. offered; also "Nelson Lee Libraries" 1-4, 1½d. each.

N. Clarkson, 16, Bedford Street, Newtown, Stockton-on-Tees, has for sale a large number of the Companion Papers, 5 for 6d.; "Boys' Friends" 853-953, at 1d. each.

P. Hollier, 89, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, has a number of Companion Papers for sale.

R. Lucas, 17, Fazakerley Street, Preston, Lancs, has for sale "Boys' Friends" Nos. 847-946; 7s. 6d. the lot.

E. Moody, Ford Cottage, Victoria Avenue, Didsbury, near Manchester, wants double numbers of the Companion Papers before 1916; 3d. each offered.

E. Goldin, 65A, Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, South Africa, has for sale Christmas Numbers of the "Magnet," "Gem," "Boys' Friend," "Penny Popular," "Union Jack," and "Nelson Lee" for 1917.

F. Francis, 5, Whitegate Lane, Wrexham, has for sale a large number of the Companion Papers.

J. Bermingham, 2, Clément Terrace, Meath Road, Bray, Ireland, has "School and Sport," and will exchange for Nos. of the "Magnet" or "Gem."

Leslie R. Smith, 20, Greenbank Road, Devonshire Park, Birkenhead, Cheshire, wants the first twelve numbers of the "Gem" containing the St. Jim's Gallery; 2d. each offered. Write first.

Edmund Qaulter, 12, Murton Street, Harpurhey, Manchester, has for sale a large number of the Companion Papers.

E. Bliss, 30, Keith Grove, Shepherd's Bush, London, W., offers 40 "Boys' Friends" and 50 "Gems" for 7s. 6d.

M. Long, 10, Bishop Street, Dublin, wants the "Coming, Taming, and Making of Harry Wharton"; 1½d. each offered. Write first.

L. H. Jameson, 11, Pershore Road, Manor Park, E. 12, wants "Magnets" Nos. 157 and 159; 3d. each offered.

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A. P. Glennon, 28, Nun's Island, Galway, Ireland, has for sale a number of the Companion Papers.

James S. Cook, 26, Foxhall Road, Ipswich, wants "Bob Cherry's Barring Out," "Magnet" No. 8, "Gems" Nos. 1 and 2, and "Nelson Lee Libraries" Nos. 1-10.

T. Satchell, 31, Rendell Road, Tidal Basin, Victoria Docks, E. 16, wants "Rivals and Chums" and "School and Sport"; 1s. offered.

Alan Crawford, Corryong, Upper Murray, via Fallangatta, Victoria, Australia, wants "Boys' Friends" from 300-400.

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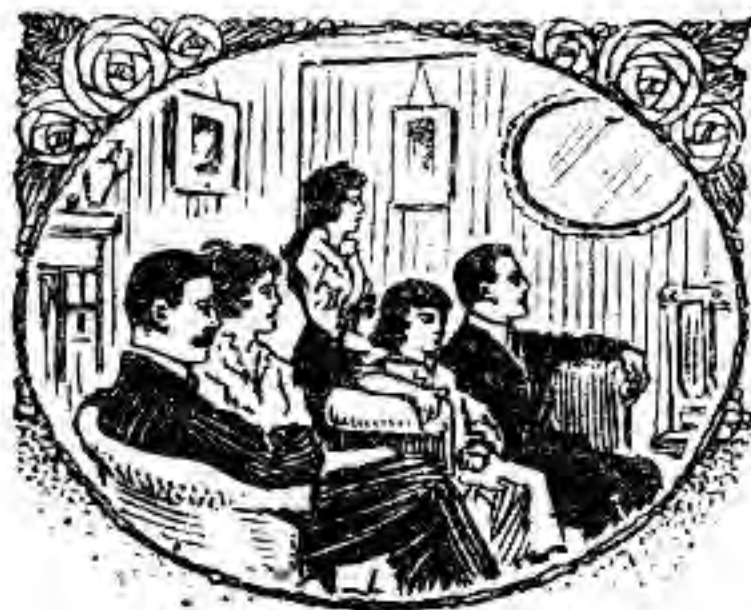
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SAFE SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS.

AMUSING TRICKS WITH SIMPLE APPARATUS.



TO many boys and girls who have acquired at school some knowledge of Science, the mere mention of the words "Scientific Experiments" recalls memories of experiments far from amusing, for the science of the laboratory is more often than not accompanied by some of the innumerable little worries of school life.

When, however, experiments are conducted at leisure in the home the work assumes a totally different aspect, and much pleasure may be derived from it.

The aim of this chapter is, then, to place before you a series of interesting and instructive experiments which may be performed for the amusement of yourselves and friends on occasions when outdoor recreation is impossible.

A MATCH TRICK.

The first very interesting experiment is that performed with an ordinary match, a bottle, and a coin.

Bend in two an ordinary large match, thus partly breaking it, in such a manner that the two parts held together by a few fibres of wood.

Place it, thus broken, on the neck of a bottle, and then on the match place a sixpence or any other small coin.

Having done this, ask a friend if he can make the coin fall into the bottle without touching the coin, the bottle, or the match. You will find that he will search in vain for a solution to this seemingly impossible task, which, however, may be overcome in a very simple manner, as may now be seen.

Dip your finger in a glass of water, and, placing it above the angle formed by the match, allow one or two drops of the liquid to fall on this angle (Fig. 1).

Immediately the fibres of wood, swollen by the moisture, try to straight them-

selves, and you will see the angle of the match increase, little by little, until the match no longer supports the coin, which then drops into the bottle (Fig. 2).

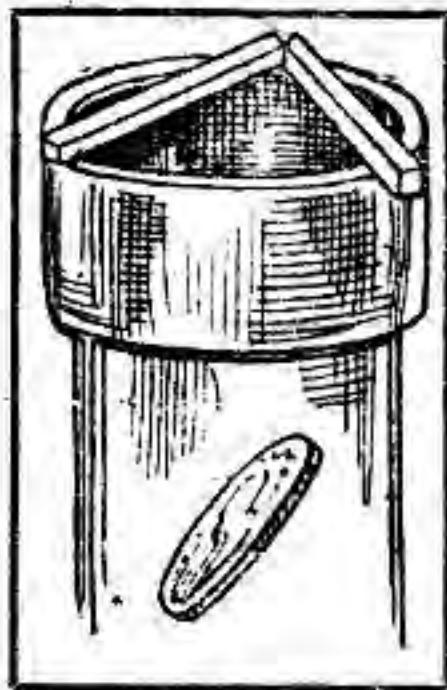


Fig. 2.—Coin leaving match and dropping into bottle.

PIERCING A COIN WITH A NEEDLE.

This is one which, at a casual glance, seems impossible to perform.

To pierce a halfpenny with a needle, especially if the needle is thin, seems indeed a tremendous task. It is, however, very simple.

The apparatus necessary consists of a cork, a needle, and a hammer.

Stick the needle through the cork in such a manner that the point only just protrudes, and with a pair of pincers cut off the head of the needle remaining above the cork.

Then, having placed the coin and cork as shown in the diagram, hit the cork vigorously with the hammer (Fig. 3). The needle, being unable to bend in any direction owing to the cork keeping it rigid, will pierce the coin quite easily, since we know that the steel of which the needle is composed is harder than the copper of the coin.

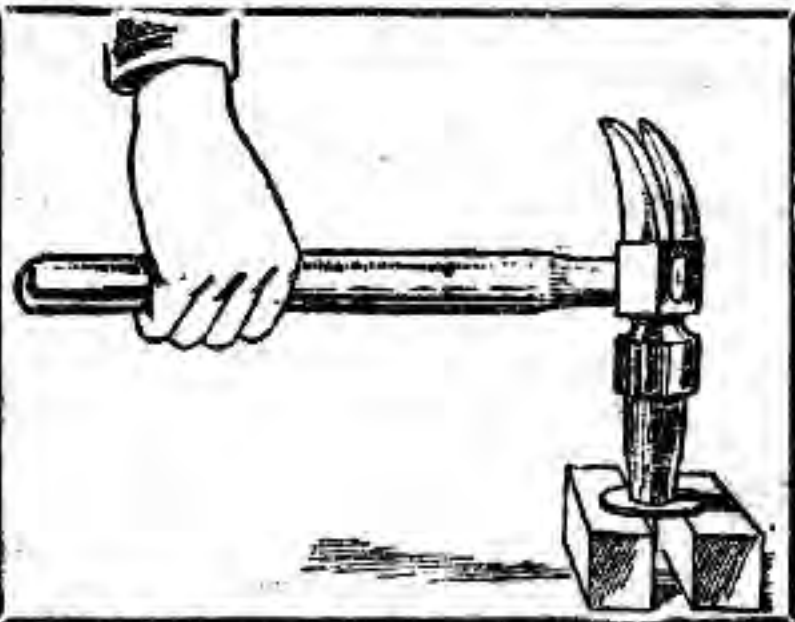


Fig. 3.—Coin-piercing Extraordinary.

CHANGING WATER INTO WINE.

Fill two tumblers (A), or wine-glasses, of equal diameter, with water, by completely immersing them in a basin of that liquid, standing one upright, and the other upside down upon it. When they are both completely full, with not

a bubble of air in either, join their rims and remove them from the basin. Now place them upright on a dish, and, if their rims fit accurately upon each other, the water will remain in them. It is now necessary to place on the top of the upper glass a third glass (B) containing wine, or, better still, spirits of wine in which is dissolved a little aniline dye.

Now announce to your friends that without touching any of the glasses you will cause the wine to pass from the glass (B) into the upper (A) glass without a drop entering the lower (A) glass.

Take a strip of wool or cotton, moisten it with the liquid contained in the top glass (B), and hang it over the edge of this glass, with one end completely immersed in the liquid.

This forms an excellent siphon, for it allows the liquid in the top glass (B) to flow away in drops which fall on and run down the glass underneath until they reach the junction of the rims. Here they are drawn in by capillary attraction, and, the wine being lighter than the water, they rise to the top of the upturned glass (A), displacing the water contained therein by causing it to flow out between the rims, after which it collects in the dish below.

This action will go on until the top glass (B) is empty, when the whole of its contents will find their way into the upturned glass, whilst the lower one (A) remains perfectly clear (Fig. 4).

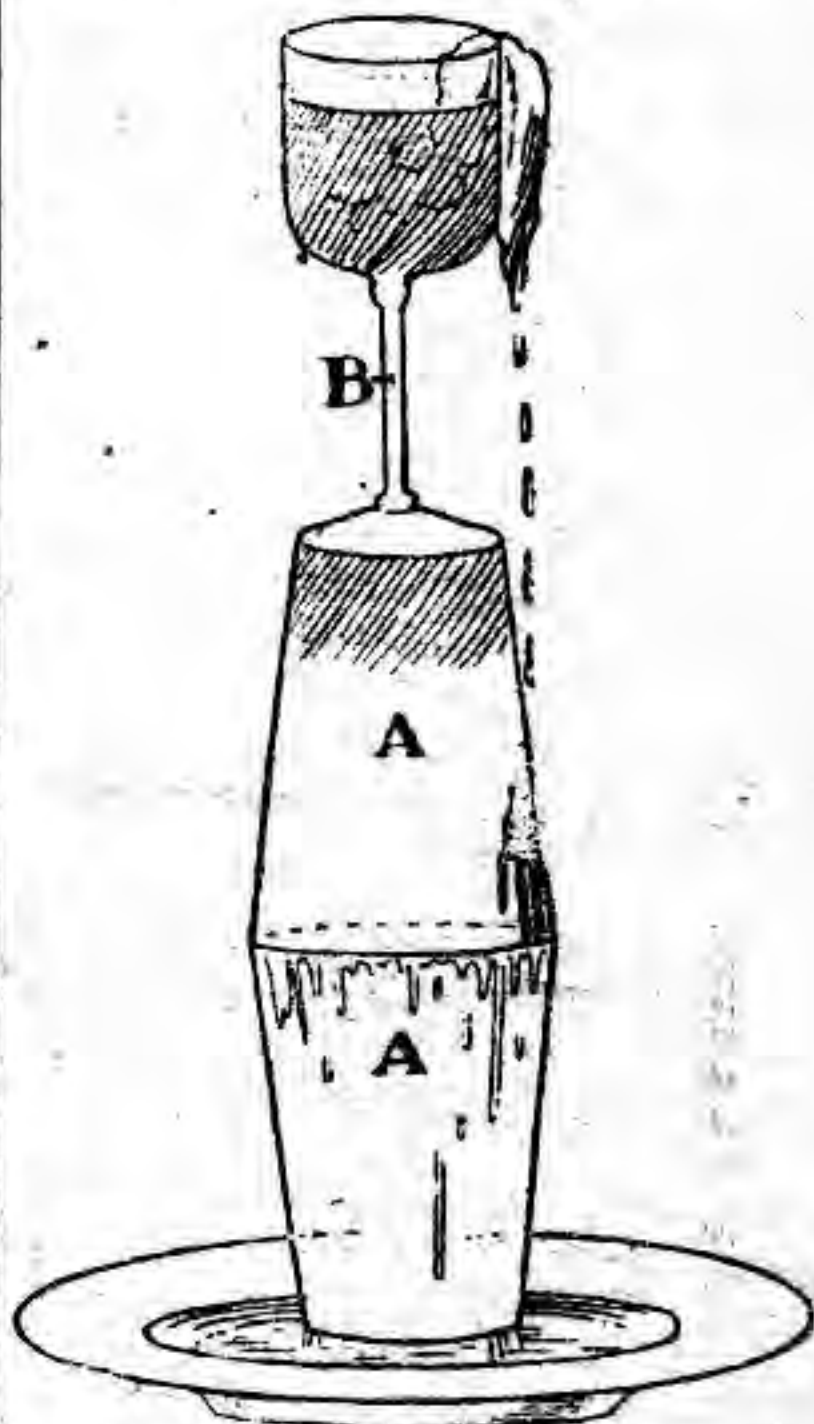


Fig. 4.—Changing Water into Wine.



Fig. 1.—A Match Trick.



THE MINERS' CHAMPION

A Stirring New Tale of the Ring.
By PERCY LONGHURST.

SYNOPSIS.

Harry Rhodes, a miner and amateur boxer, of Loxborough, a mining village, meets Joshua Martin, the manager and principal backer of Anthony Hanna—"Cast-Iron Tony"—a wonderful Scottish light-weight boxer, who had come to Loxborough to train. Harry lives with an uncle, James Rhodes, who has trained him, and who had himself been a boxer years before. He had left the Ring through some tragedy of which Joshua Martin knows the facts, much to James Rhodes' alarm.

Hanna, who is a thorough scoundrel, becomes Harry's sworn enemy.

Bertram Godfrey, a friend of Mr. Durham, the owner of the mine at which Harry worked, interests himself in Harry Rhodes.

Harry learns that James Rhodes is his father, and that he was responsible for the death of a boxer some years previously.

Harry, his father, and Bertram Godfrey go to London, where Harry defeats Jules Meunier, Parisian light-weight champion, in a private contest, which is witnessed by a Royal Prince. An attempt to kidnap the Prince afterwards is frustrated by Harry.

Harry is matched to meet Jules Meunier at the National Boxing Club.

An attempt by the kidnappers on Harry's life fails.

(Now read on.)

Hanna Again!

THE sporting papers, beyond the fact that he was the son of the once well-known Jimmy Rhodes, neither knew nor could find out anything about Harry Rhodes.

Those to whom the secret was known shuddered immensely.

Few of them but meant by hook or by crook, being present at the match.

One member of the club, Mr. Joshua Martin, was frankly bewildered. He knew about Harry all right, but he kept his knowledge entirely to himself. Harry might have whipped Cast-Iron Hanna, but Hanna, at his best, hadn't been in the same street with Meunier, and Martin firmly believed Harry was in for a sound hiding.

And within himself he gloated over the prospect. It would be one way of getting even with Harry, and James Rhodes, too, for the injury done him.

Naturally, Martin knew nothing of the private show Lord Shorthill had arranged.

Wagering on the match became keen. There was money galore for the Frenchman, but, to the general amazement, every bet offered was accepted. This, of course, added to the excitement and deepened the mystery.

Who could it be that had such faith in a boxer wholly unknown as to be will-

ing to put down thousands of pounds on his chance of beating Jules Meunier?

What was this "unknown" that his chance of winning was regarded so highly?

These were questions nobody could answer.

Bertram Godfrey had put his money about freely, but to the other members of the club this meant nothing. The young man was known as reckless, always wildly confident. His open support of Harry carried with it no conviction. Even Joshua Martin, shrewd as he was, and rendered still more suspicious by recent events, attached no significance to Godfrey's confidently expressed opinions, and his readiness to back them up with money.

One other peculiar feature of the match was the shortness of time between the signing of articles and the date of the contest. The difference of no more than a fortnight was unheard of. It seemed unaccountable.

Only the French champion himself and Adrien Delahaye could have made clear the fierce eagerness of Meunier for so early a date; for the earliest possible opportunity of avenging the defeat suffered; of wiping out the blot upon his reputation.

Could Jules Meunier have had his own way, the fight would have taken place the night following the making of the match, so hotly was he burning for the chance of proving to himself that his defeat had been nothing but an accident. He had even suggested as much to Bowman, but the manager had scouted the idea.

Frantically eager was the Frenchman to vindicate himself. He fretted and fumed during the short period of training, and his sparring-partners had a busy and a painful time of it.

Harry Rhodes was in no such state of excitement. He went about his work as cool as the proverbial cucumber, showing so little evidences of anxiety that some of the men who came to see him at Highgate voted him a stolid person.

Nothing of the kind! Harry was simply confident. Having beaten the Frenchman once, he believed in his ability to repeat the performance. But such belief did not breed in him over-confidence, nor make him under-rate his opponent. He had found Meunier a tough handful before; at the second meeting he looked forward to finding him a yet tougher. With defeat to avenge, Jules Meunier was going to be a more formidable opponent than on the

first occasion. Very thoroughly did he realise the test before him was a more than ordinary one.

So that although he appeared to be taking his training easily, in reality he omitted nothing to his advantage. As a matter of fact, he did not work hard, as hard as he might have done, because he could not. In spite of the careful attentions of Sir Harvey Fisher, his bruised shoulder bothered him considerably, so much so that his father could not but feel anxious, although he said nothing to Harry about it. Experience had taught the old fighter that even Harry could afford to give away but little to such a man as Meunier, and in his secret heart he worried considerably lest at some crucial part of the contest that damaged shoulder should give way.

How correct or otherwise were his forebodings, time was to show.

James Rhodes had other troubles. The attempt of the unknown man to destroy Harry by means of the miniature bombs concealed in the boxing-gloves had made a deep impression on him. He feared a repetition of the attempt, though in another form. And with it he connected Tony Hanna, though of him nothing had been seen or heard since their last night in Loxborough.

Had the old fighter been aware that Hanna was in London his anxiety would have been unendurable. Had he known that Hanna and his former manager were again together his suspicions that something would be done to prevent Harry winning would have been a certainty.

Strolling through Soho one evening, Joshua Martin had been accosted by a ragged street-merchant selling matches.

"Box o' matches, guv'nor? Won't yer have a box?" the fellow had asked.

"No, no!" replied Martin impatiently.

And then something caused him to glance sharply under the peak of the dirty golf-cap that shaded the mendicant's dark face.

"Hanna!" he exclaimed with surprised wonder.

Snarling, the beggar looked up swiftly, and Martin knew that he wasn't mistaken.

"Why, what're yer doing 'ere?" demanded Martin in surprise.

"Doing? S'pose ye think I'm doing this for a bit o' amusement—eh?" returned the other, with savage irony. "You ain't looking none th' waur, if I am!"

"Strewth! But this is a surprise!"

said Martin, looking nervously about him. "Hard up, Tony?"

"Oh, no; not a bit!" sneered the expugilist. "Don't look like it, do it, gov'nor? Why"—he spat viciously—"I'm down 'n' out; that's what I am!"

A sudden inspiration came to Martin. His fat face beamed, and his gloved hand fell encouragingly on the other's shoulder.

"Down an' out!" he repeated heartily. "You ain't, Tony! Not while old Josh Martin's got a bob in 'is pocket, you ain't! 'Ere, feelin' hungry, Tony?"

Hanna laughed harshly. Hungry? He had not known for three days what a decent meal meant. He looked at the well-clad Martin and scowled fiercely. The contrast between the manager and himself angered him. That only himself was to blame for his present condition—that he had voluntarily severed connection with Martin—was forgotten.

"Hungry? When I ain't seen a silver coin for a week!" he cried. "I'm starvin', an' you—you—"

"Not for five minutes longer, Tony," interrupted Martin hastily. "You 'n' me've got to go in together again, my son! Oughtn't t' 'ave run away from me in th' first place. An' now I 'ave found yer again—'Ere, come on, Tony, ol' son; I've got something in yer line, I've an idea! We'll talk about it over some grub, 'n' without wastin' no time, neither. You come along—"

"What d'ye want?" demanded Hanna suspiciously.

"To queer Harry Rhodes' pitch, me son!" hissed the other, bringing his lips close to the Scotsman's ear. "That's what I want, 'n' I guess you're the fellow that c'n help me do it better'n anyone else. Fergot Harry Rhodes?"

"What ye going t' do?"

"Something that'll be good for me 'n' good for you—put money in yer pocket, 'n' help you back to where you was before, Tony!" answered Martin glibly.

Hanna went with him.

The Return Match!

OUTSIDE the very plain entrance to the National Boxing Club a mighty crowd had gathered, and the four police-constables on duty were finding plenty to do to keep order and regulate the traffic of the seemingly endless string of private motor-cars and taxicabs that turned into the little street.

Through the massed crowd, which wasn't going within the swing-doors—had no hope of getting in—and had gathered simply because of the excitement of the fight to be decided that evening between Jules Meunier and the "Novice," as one sporting scribe had dubbed Rhodes, men in evening-dress industriously shoved a passage for themselves, to the accompaniment of cheers and comments, humorous or otherwise.

Never, so the doorkeepers said, had there been such a gathering of members, not even on the historic occasion when Joe Jeffson, the coloured champion of the world, had met his Waterloo at the hands of the herculean challenger from the back-blocks of Australia.

On the pavement were gathered men of the boxing world and its hangers-on, roughs and rowdies, and pocket-picking and attempted ticket-snatching were a prevalent pastime. Now and again voices rose high, fists were clenched, and more than once a uniformed arm hauled a fellow out of the crowd for handing

over to a comrade for conveyance to the near-by police-station.

Within the great hall, warm and brilliantly lighted, the seats were filling rapidly. Members of Parliament rubbed shoulders with bookmakers, officers of the Services sat alongside hotel-keepers, men well known in the City of London exchanged opinions with actors, literary men, and others who had no occupation at all.

Love of sport had brought all these together—love of the game of fisticuffs which is the birthright of all true Englishmen—and all were prepared for thorough enjoyment of the evening.

Well it was for their ease of mind, their good humour, that no one of the many hundreds had the slightest notion how sadly his hopes were to be disappointed. Well it was that the startlingly-dramatic issue that Fate had decided should be the termination of the battle between Harry Rhodes and Jules Meunier was hidden from all.

As it was, men sat back comfortably in their chairs, talking eagerly and confidently, awaiting the entry into the ring of the two athletes whose names had been on the lips of all sportsmen for a fortnight past.

Yet one of those two, when he did make his appearance, appeared to be little affected by the surroundings amid which he found himself.

Almost unnoticed, Harry Rhodes slipped along the gangway, and he had been in his corner for a good ten seconds before a sudden cessation of the hum of voices in all parts announced that one of the two men who had brought together this remarkable gathering was on view.

The target of every eye, Harry sat in his chair, wrapped in a big dressing-gown, every muscle relaxed, his smooth features and clear, bright eyes telling of a perfect physical fitness.

To him it was a curious sight to look upon, and he was thinking that he preferred the big, natural theatre outside Lexboro', where the first pitched battle of his career had taken place.

"It is a bit dazzling and confusing, but you'll forget all about it once you get to work," Bob Durham was whispering in his ear.

Durham had been down to Highgate more than once to spar with him during the brief period of training, and if one man's good wishes could have secured the verdict for Harry, he was already the winner.

Frankly, the deeply-interested men gathered about the ring, their eyes on Harry, were disappointed, though what any man had expected to see he could not easily have explained.

"Why, he's no more than a boy!"

That was the criticism that sprang to the lips of the vast majority, and it indicated disappointment.

A tall, swarthy-faced man—he was a titled man, an M.P., and a noted world-traveller and big-game shot—turned to his neighbour, and said curtly:

"Have you seen Meunier in the ring?"

"Yes," came the answer; the speaker Lord Shorthill.

"So have I. Well, this lad hasn't the ghost of a chance with the Frenchman," was the confident assertion.

"You think not?" asked Lord Shorthill quietly.

"I don't think—I am convinced!" the other said emphatically.

Lord Shorthill allowed himself to smile faintly.

"Oh, I don't know! I'm willing to back my countryman, anyway!"

"Then you must want to lose your money."

"Not particularly." And his lordship laughed.

"There's Meunier!" interjected the other.

Lord Shorthill nodded. He waited until the wild burst of cheering that had greeted the Frenchman's intentionally delayed entry—that was Adrien Delahaye's idea—had somewhat subsided, then continued:

"You see," he drawled, "I believe it is quite possible for this 'boy' to beat Meunier, because—well, for one thing, he has done it once."

Sir William Berryford stared as if unable to believe his ears.

"Er—you—er—said—"

"That Harry Rhodes has already beaten Meunier once." And Lord Shorthill smiled. "Fact, I assure you! Not at liberty to tell you more, but it happened."

In other parts of the great hall men were explaining to one another what a hopelessly impossible task had been set the "boy," how preposterous the notion that one so young, a boxer without experience, a novice, should have any chance against such a master, such a fighter as Jules Meunier.

There was even a tiff of bitterness against the management expressed that so large and important a gathering had been called together upon what one man roundly declared a "fool's errand."

"Fancy putting that up against Jules!" he said indignantly. "It's a fraud, a fake! I'll tell Bowman so. Why the contest'll be over in one round!"

The speaker was not aware how true a prophet he was to prove.

From two of the back seats a couple of men looked down upon the ring, and their faces, coarse, hard—the one leering, the other scowling—were not pleasant.

"Guess we had all our trouble for nothing," said the frowning one in a whisper.

And in an equally low voice, his companion answered:

"I dunno. He's no chance, I believe myself, but—well, accidents 'ave 'appened before now, Tony, me lad, an' there's no 'arm in the circumstances in takin' care there ain't no accidents going t' spoil things this time—eh? You fixed it up all right?"

Hanna nodded.

"Though it's waste o' time," he grumbled. "That Froggie'll kill him!"

"Well, that'll be all right, won't it?"

"No," snarled the other. "I wanted t' do that myself!"

Meanwhile, the preliminaries had been taking place, the men getting ready for the encounter. Each had thrown off his wrapping, standing revealed in all the pride and symmetry of superb muscular development and training.

Out of his clothes, his fine shape and make-up visible, Harry made a better impression. It was admitted he was of the ideal boxer's make, that his muscle looked good and plentiful, without overloading; that it was in the right place. But the original feeling was too strong to be greatly affected. He was "only a boy." He was a novice against the tough and wiry Frenchman. He would not have the smallest chance.

In the corner James Rhodes was coaching Harry.

"You'll let him do the fighting, Harry," he was saying anxiously. "He means business, lad, if ever he did in his life, and it'll be no quarter for you. Keep away from him."

"I'll try," Harry replied.

"Feel nervous, Harry?" inquired Bertram Godfrey, who had not yet gone to his seat.

Harry laughed.

"I'm not noticing it. But look at Meunier. He's nervous, if you like! Why, I can see the perspiration on his forehead!"

And it was true. Meunier was quivering like a leaf; he could not keep his feet still, nor his eyes fixed, so eager was he to begin. For it was anything but the nervousness of fear from which the highly-strung Frenchman was suffering. To him his manager was chattering volubly, and he was answering with impatient shakings of the head. He sug-

gested a fidgety horse at the starting-post.

The referee walked briskly into the ring, the seconds made ready to go out, and a deep, still hush fell upon the hall as all awaited the sounding of the gong that would announce the commencement of the fight.

It came startlingly abrupt and clear, and like a panther Meunier was out of his chair, and half-way towards the centre before the phlegmatic English youth was well upright.

They met. Their gloves touched. The fight had commenced.

Like an arrow from a bow, like a snake striking, Meunier darted forward to get in the first blow. He crouched noticeably, elbows in at his ribs, head sunk. As he launched himself, his left glove whizzed through the air, to be followed immediately by his right.

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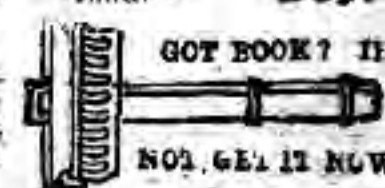


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