

CAMERAS, SAILING YACHTS & PENKNIVES! Offered to Readers
This Week!

No. 905. Vol. XXVII.

Week Ending June 13th, 1925.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

Complete School Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY.



ALONZO, THE STRONG MAN!

(A surprising incident from the double-length school story of Harry Wharton & Co.—inside.)



3 CAMERAS, 6 MODEL SAILING YACHTS & 12 TOPPING PENKNIVES MUST BE WON!

THIS issue sets the ball rolling in a new and fascinating WEEKLY competition; the simplicity of which is manifest at a glance. Everybody is invited to join in. NO ENTRANCE FEE is required.

Below is a set of eight pictures dealing with OBJECTS and FEATURES SEEN AT THE SEASIDE, and as the majority of you have been to the seaside at some time or another the competition should offer little difficulty. Even those who have not been fortunate enough to spend a holiday by the sea, know enough to solve the pictures below.

To show you how easy it is, the first picture is solved for you. That gives you a good start. Now, surely, you can find the answers to the remaining seven pictures.

To the three readers whose efforts are correct, or nearest to correct, I will award

3 MAGNIFICENT CAMERAS

made by the famous firm of Kodak, Ltd. To the six next best,

6 TOPPING MODEL SAILING YACHTS

will be awarded. These models are guaranteed to sail. That's a point worth remembering. Last, but by no means least, on the list of prizes come

12 USEFUL POCKET KNIVES.

RULES

(Which must be strictly adhered to.)

Readers must write in the space provided beneath each picture, the name of the object or feature they think the picture represents.

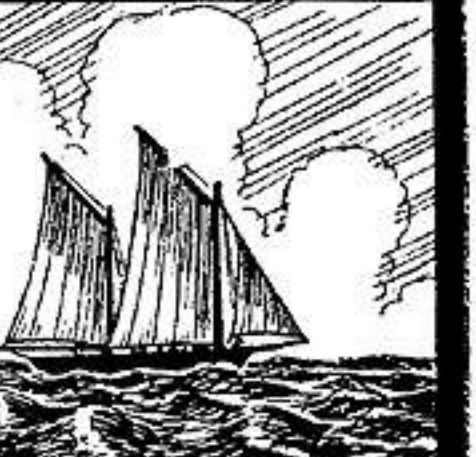
When you have solved the complete set of pictures sign your name and address IN INK on the coupon adjoining the picture set. Then cut out the whole tablet—do not separate coupon from picture—and post the effort to "**What is it?**" Competition No. 1, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4, so as to reach that address not later than Tuesday, June 23rd.

Readers may send in as many attempts as they like, but each effort must be separate and complete in itself, and made out on the proper pictures and coupon.

Entries mutilated or bearing alterations or alternative solutions will be disqualified.

It is a distinct condition of entry that the Editor's decision be accepted as final and binding.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

"WHAT IS IT?" No. 1.			
			
1 Lighthouse	2 _____	3 _____	4 _____
			
5 _____	6 _____	7 _____	8 _____

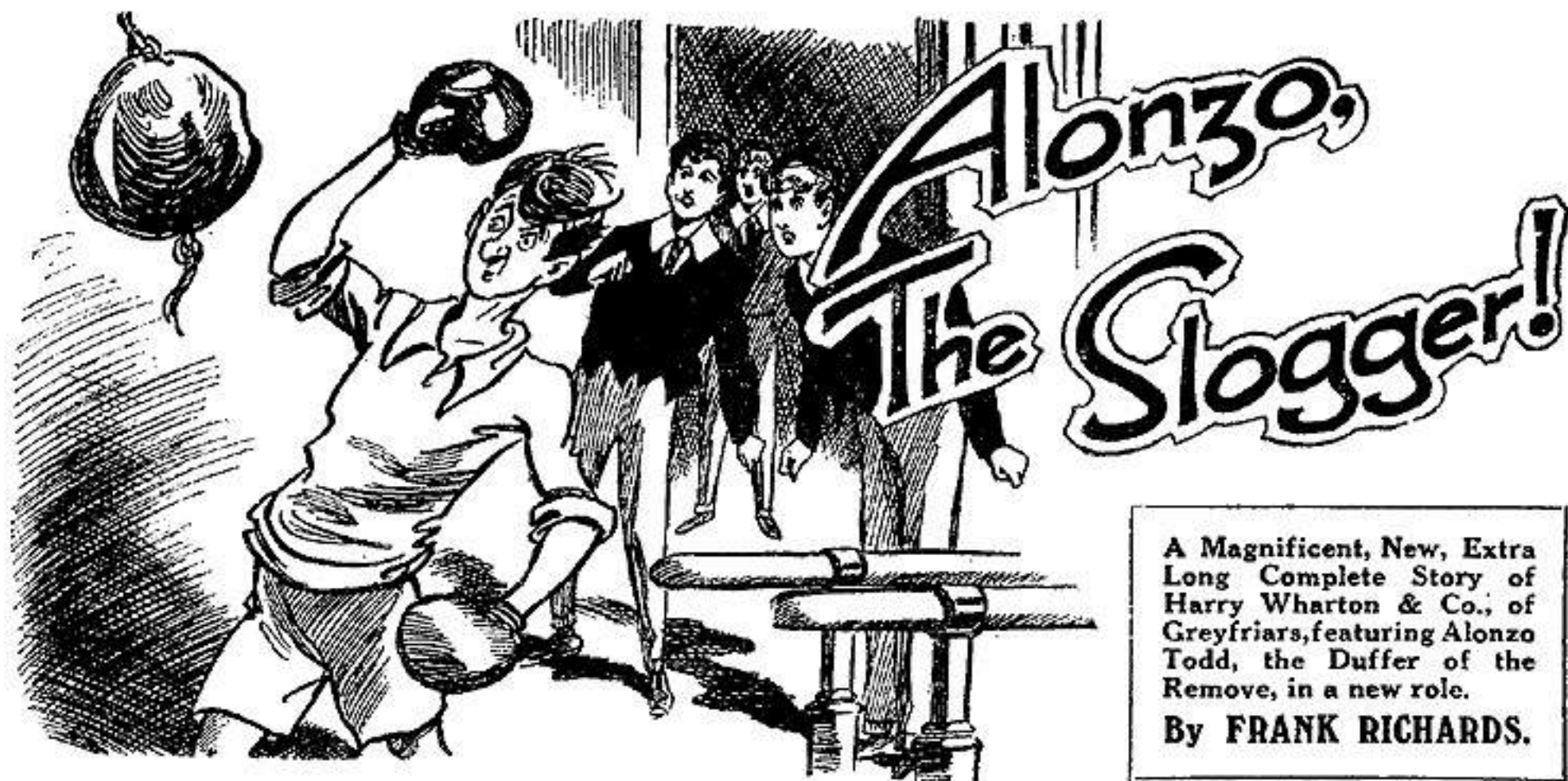
I enter "What is it?" Competition No. 1 and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

Address

CLOSING DATE, TUESDAY, JUNE 23rd, 1925.

STRENGTH! That's what the weedy Duffer of Greyfriars craves for. His Form-fellows think that he might just as well cry for the moon, for muscle and Alonzo will never be allied. But they're wrong! Alonzo suddenly becomes endowed with the strength of a Goliath and a Hercules put together!



A Magnificent, New, Extra Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, featuring Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of the Remove, in a new role.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Alas, Poor Old Alonzo!

"WE must put up the best man we've got!"
"But who is the best man?"

"The esteemed echo answers whofulness, my worthy chums!"

"Shut up, Inky! Let me think!"

Harry Wharton & Co. uttered those remarks.

They were sitting in Study No. 1. It was teatime, and on the study table was a tempting array of good things. There was a rich plum-cake, a present from Johnny Bull's Aunt Tabitha, a freshly opened tin of peaches, and a dish of assorted pastries.

But the Famous Five were apparently oblivious of the delicacies before them. Tea, for once, did not seem to interest them. Their brows were knit in thought. Something was worrying them.

"There's Bulstrode," said Wharton doubtfully.

"The tossupfulness seems to be between the ludicrous Bulstrode and my esteemed chums, Wharton and Cherry," purred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in his weird English.

"You're right, Inky!" nodded Frank Nugent. "Only Bulstrode's not very reliable!"

Harry Wharton regarded his chums doubtfully. Within the next week entries were to be sent in for the Public Schools Junior Boxing Championship. As captain of the Remove, it was Wharton's duty to make a nomination. But to do so was no easy matter.

The Remove contained several men who were extremely useful with their fists. Wharton himself was one; then there was Bob Cherry, always a man to be reckoned with; and Dick Russell. Bulstrode, too, was a junior well able to take care of himself, while several others almost as good claimed attention.

"Blessed if I know!" exclaimed Wharton at length. "The thing is to pick the best chap and yet please everyone."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Then you've got your work cut out, Harry!" he said.

Tap!

There came a gentle tap at the study door.

"Come in, ass!" sang out Wharton cheerfully.

The door of Study No. 1 opened and revealed the bony figure of Alonzo Todd. Alonzo was an inoffensive youth who endeavoured to order his entire existence according to the valuable precepts of his Uncle Benjamin.

His softness of heart—and softness of head—had earned for him the title of the Duffer of Greyfriars. But Alonzo did not seem to mind this in the least.

He stood in the doorway of Study No. 1, and beamed at its occupants.

"Good-evening, my dear school-fellows!" he murmured politely.

"Good-evening, my dear ass!" grinned Frank Nugent facetiously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I trust you are not laughing at me, my dear fellows," said Alonzo, with a faint look of pained surprise.

"Oh, no!"

"Not in the least, Toddy!"

"The leastfulness is terrific," grinned Inky.

Alonzo beamed again.

"Then I am sorry I suspected you were," went on the Duffer gently.

"Pray, accept my sincere apologies, my dear fellows! My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that to be suspicious of one's fellow-men—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" groaned Bob Cherry. "He's off! Gag him, somebody!"

"Never mind old Ben now!" smiled Harry Wharton. "What's the wheeze, anyway, Toddy?"

"Wheeze?" murmured the Duffer, looking puzzled.

"Yes, ass! Let it rip!"

"Rip?" repeated Todd parrot-like, a way he had when puzzled or excited.

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" groaned Johnny Bull.

Todd blinked.

"I'm sorry to hear your Aunt Tabitha is giddy, my dear Bull!" he said. "I trust it is nothing serious?"

The Famous Five choked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You burbling jabberwock!"

"Look here, Toddy!" said Bob Cherry, rising to his feet. "We've got no time to waste with you. Say what you've got to say, and bunk. You're interrupting a discussion about the boxing championship."

Alonzo beamed again.

"Exactly, my dear Cherry," he said. "That is the precise business that caused me to enter your sanctum!"

"Go hon!"

"Ye gods!"

"Yes, my dear Form-fellows!" went on Alonzo, in his long-winded way. "I believe Wharton is experiencing a considerable amount of difficulty in choosing a suitable and worthy boy to represent us in the forthcoming fistic encounter?"

"That's so," nodded the captain of the Remove.

"Then, pray, allow me to offer my services," murmured Alonzo. "I do not approve of brutality, of course; but for the sake of Greyfriars, I would be willing to meet any junior from another school in fistic combat. There! What do you think of that, Wharton?"

The Famous Five gasped.

"W-what do I think of it?" stammered Wharton faintly. "Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass, Alonzo!"

The chums of the Remove doubled themselves up and roared. Alonzo Todd was too funny. There was no doubt about what they thought of it—and of Alonzo. That the Duffer of the Remove, of all people, should offer himself to fight for the championship left them gasping. It was doubtful whether the gentle Alonzo knew a boxing-glove from a water-melon. But he was in deadly earnest.

"Pray, what is the joke, my dear Wharton?" he asked innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co. again.

"Don't be a boob!" choked Bob Cherry. "You couldn't fight pussy!"

"Boob?" repeated Alonzo.

"Yes, you chump!"

"Chump?"

"Oh, dry up!"

"Dry up!" echoed Alonzo again.

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Harry Wharton & Co. rose to their feet. They felt that if they had much more of Alonzo they would not be responsible for their actions.

"Then you cannot see your way to avail yourself of my offer?" asked Alonzo sadly.

"No, I'm sorry I can't, Toddy!" grinned Wharton, gently urging Alonzo out into the passage. "Thanks all the same for your offer, though!"

"And don't be a boob any more!" added Bob Cherry.

"Boob!" murmured Alonzo.

But the Famous Five were not listening. They were inside their study, and the door was closed. Alonzo was on the wrong side of the door.

"Good gracious!" murmured Alonzo, as this fact slowly dawned upon him. "I fear my offer has not been taken seriously—and Cherry called me a boob. My Uncle Benjamin would not approve of my being called a boob. I must mention that to Cherry later. Yes, indeed, I must!"

And with a gentle shake of the head, the Duffer of Greyfriars toddled off down the passage. He had not gone far, however, when there came a sudden yell from the end.

"Ow! Lemme alone, you blessed rotter!"

Alonzo stopped short, and frowned.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "I believe one of my schoolfellows is in pain!"

Alonzo pursued his way round the bend in the passage, determined to investigate.

"I'll teach you not to have so much lip, you rotter! Hold that!"

"That" was a violent twist of the arm. The arm, which was doubled behind his back, belonged to Hazeldene of the Remove. But Bolsover major had got a temporary grip of it.

"Ow! Groo! Yow!" gasped Hazeldene.

Alonzo Todd approached the two juniors and regarded them more in sorrow than in anger.

"Is Bolsover hurting your arm, my dear Hazeldene?" inquired Alonzo, in a shocked voice.

"Oh, no, fathead! Yoop! Ah!" groaned Hazel.

"Buzz off, you skinny freak!" snorted Bolsover, giving Hazeldene's arm another twist.

"Ow! Grooooo!"

"My dear Bolsover—"

"Yowp! Stop it, you rotter!"

"I'm afraid you are being brutal—"

"Ow! Leggo, Bolsover!"

"My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me the necessity of being kind to the weak—"

The bully of the Remove grinned savagely and gave Hazeldene's arm another jerk. Alonzo's concern seemed to add to his enjoyment.

"Yerrup!" howled Hazeldene, his face contorted with pain.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo, in alarm. "I am greatly shocked—nay disgusted at your callous behaviour, my dear Bolsover. I fear I must assault you in an endeavour to make you desist."

Alonzo approached closer to the two juniors, and, gripping Bolsover by the arm, tried to make him release his hold on his unfortunate victim.

Bolsover released his hold quicker than Alonzo had expected. The next moment his hard fist crashed into the Duffer's jaw.

Biff!

"Ow! Yoop!" gasped Alonzo.

Wallop! Thud!

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Two more blows followed in quick succession. Alonzo collapsed, with a gasp, to the hard and unsympathetic linoleum, and clasped a bony hand to his jaw.

"Groo!" he moaned. "Ah! Ow!"

"That'll teach you not to butt your fat head into matters that don't concern you," snorted Bolsover major savagely.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" grinned Hazeldene, apparently unappreciative of the Duffer's efforts to aid him. "I can look after myself without a boob like you interfering."

"Boob!" gasped Alonzo, blinking.

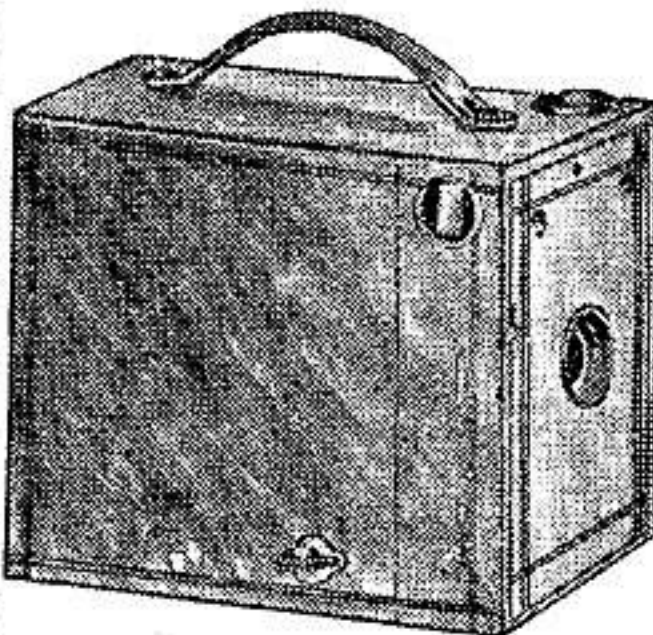
"Oh, rats!"

And the two juniors strolled away in different directions, leaving Alonzo still on the floor, nursing his aching jaw.

"Ow!" he groaned. "How extraordinary that Hazeldene should call me a boob. Cherry called me a boob, too. And all because I endeavoured to be obliging. Dear me!"

Footfalls sounded along the passage.

SNAP IT UP! THIS RIPPING CAMERA FOR YOU!



Enter our Fascinating
Competition on Page 2.

But Alonzo failed to notice them.

His simple face wore a puzzled look. Cherry had called him a boob. Hazeldene had called him a boob. And all for no reason, as far as he could see. It was strange, he thought, that he should be called a boob. No one called Cherry, or Bulstrode, or Tom Brown a boob.

Alonzo surveyed his bony form with visible misgivings. He wondered if the fellows would call him a boob if he were stronger and bigger; if he were more like Cherry and Bolsover, for instance.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo again.

"It is really most extraordinary!" The footfalls sounded closer. They were caused by Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove, who, with his two precious pals, Stott and Snoop, was advancing arm-in-arm down the passage.

Alonzo failed to notice Skinner & Co.; but they did not fail to notice him. Skinner winked at his two cronies, and the three juniors continued straight ahead, pretending they had not seen the Duffer.

Suddenly something hard—it felt like a boot—caught the unsuspecting Alonzo on a tender part of his anatomy. The boot was followed by the falling form

of Skinner. His sudden weight pitched Alonzo face downward to the floor, and he caught his somewhat prominent nose on the linoleum.

Crash!

"Ow! Ah! Yoop!" gasped Todd.

"My hat!" exclaimed Skinner, picking himself up and regarding the Duffer in well-assumed amazement. "It's Toddy!"

"He, he, he!" sniggered Stott and Snoop.

"Really, my dear Skinner—"

"I didn't notice you there, Toddy, old man," went on the cad of the Remove, with mock concern.

"Ow! I am severely injured, my dear Skinner!"

"What were you doing on the floor, anyway?"

"My spine is cracked and my Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind old Ben now!" grinned Skinner. "I thought you were a blessed dog!"

"He, he, he!"

"Ow!"

"Hurt?"

"Yes, Skinner."

"Much?"

"Yes, Skinner."

"Good! Then that'll teach you not to roll about the floor like a blessed bony beetle in future!" exclaimed the cad of the Remove. "I might have hurt myself, and if I had you'd have known it, you silly boob!"

And with loud chuckles Skinner & Co. resumed their way down the passage.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Alonzo's Great Idea!

"DEAR me!" Alonzo Todd gazed after the three cads with a curious expression on his simple face.

"Dear me!" he murmured again. "That is the third boy who has called me a boob to-day. How extraordinary!"

The Duffer of Greyfriars picked himself up from the floor, and made his way slowly to his study. Alonzo was thinking—and thinking hard. Alonzo was a great thinker, but usually his thoughts amounted to nothing. Now, however, Alonzo was thinking more deeply and intensely than usual. And the subject of his meditations was the scant ceremony with which he was always treated.

The Duffer of Greyfriars reached his study. It was empty—a fact for which he was extremely thankful. He sank down into the only armchair the study possessed, his brows still knit in thought. Three times within an hour he had been called a boob. And twice during the same length of time he had received physical injury.

In a dim sort of way Alonzo realised that he was not as other juniors were. He realised that had he been a strong fellow like Cherry he might be taken more seriously.

Harry Wharton, for instance, might have received his offer to represent the Remove in the boxing championship in a very different manner—if only he were stronger!

Alonzo's Uncle Benjamin had told him about the survival of the fittest. The fittest individuals and the fittest nations had always survived; but Alonzo realised that he was not among the fittest.

It would have been an easy matter to compel Bolsover to cease bullying Hazeldene—if only he were stronger.

There were, in short, lots of things Alonzo might do were he not handicapped by physical weakness. It came home to him for the first time that he did not count much in the scheme of things at Greyfriars. It seemed that after all, brains did not count against brawn.

Perhaps Skinner & Co. would have been more careful not to tread on him—if only he were stronger!

A beaming smile illuminated the simple face of the Duffer of Greyfriars as he thought of the bullying he could prevent—if only he were stronger!

Alonzo fell into a reverie again.

The idea of being the champion of the weak seemed to appeal to his kindly nature.

If only he were stronger!

Alonzo had a mental picture of himself as the champion of the oppressed—a powerful, fearless lad, at the mention of whose name all bullies would quiver and tremble with fear.

He saw himself, too, in the middle of the boxing-ring, winning the championship for Greyfriars after a gruelling fight. He tried to imagine how proud his Uncle Benjamin would be of him—how he would describe him to his friends on the Stock Exchange, and all the bulls and bears Alonzo had heard him speak of: "My nephew Alonzo, you know. One of the boys of the bulldog breed! Ha, ha!"

"If only I were stronger!" murmured Alonzo wistfully.

He picked up a magazine from the study table, and idly turned the pages. A thrilling story of the underworld of Naples, entitled, "Swivel-Eyed Pedro's Vendetta," failed to claim his attention for more than a moment, however.

Alonzo left Pedro to work out his vendetta alone, and idly scanned the advertisement pages at the back.

"If only I were stronger," he murmured again, "how useful would my strength be to the weak and the oppressed. And I would refuse to allow my schoolfellows to call me a boob. Yes, indeed!"

Alonzo continued to flick the advertisement pages until he was almost through the magazine. He was about to throw it from him in disgust when an advertisement displayed in heavy bold type caught his eye.

"Dear me!" gasped Alonzo, starting.

He stared at the advertisement again, his simple face breaking into a beaming smile. The advertisement in question read as follows:

"WHY BE BULLIED?"

Why be the Despised and Rejected of men, when you can make them go in Fear of You? Weak Men are no go! Weak Men are a Wash-out!

I CAN MAKE YOU STRONG!

Professor Skinnem's Staminoid Syrup will make a New Man of you. Your friends will respect you, and your enemies will FEAR YOU!

In real art jars, prices 5s. and 7s. 6d. Sent post free under plain cover. Write for jar right now, making cheques, postal and money-orders payable to Professor W. E. Skinnem, 25, Great Mutt Street, London, W. 1.

EVERY JAR A WINNER!"

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo again. "This is most extraordinary!"

Alonzo read the advertisement over several times to himself.

"Your friends will respect you and your enemies will fear you," Alonzo gasped. "Dear me, how nice to be feared by Bolsover. How nice to be



An unsuspected boot caught Alonzo on the tender part of his anatomy. The boot was followed by the falling form of Skinner. His sudden weight pitched Alonzo face downward to the floor and he caught his somewhat prominent nose on the linoleum. "Ow! Ah! Yooop!" gasped Todd. (See Chapter 1.)

feared by Loder. That would be excellent."

Alonzo read the advertisement over for the fifth time until he knew almost every line by heart. Slowly the wistful look vanished from his face, its place being taken by a beaming smile.

Gone now was his puzzled brow, gone, too, was all his trouble. Life seemed to be a bed of roses, and great strength lay in his power to obtain—according to the noble Professor Skinnem.

And all for the absurdly cheap price of seven-and-sixpence!

It seemed almost too good to be true, and yet there it was in black and white. There could be no doubt about it, the advertisement distinctly stated that every jar was a winner.

"The very thing!" gasped Alonzo. "How noble of dear Professor Skinnem to allow the public to participate in the benefits of his wonderful syrup. How noble!"

In his exuberance Alonzo commenced a very awkward and very ungraceful war-dance round the study.

"Weak men are no go," he went on, quoting from the advertisement. "Oh, how true, how true! Dear me, I must send for some of Professor Skinnem's syrup before it is all snatched up."

Alonzo put a bony hand into his trousers-pocket and withdrew a quantity of small change. There was a two-shilling piece, two sixpences, and a shilling's worth of coppers. Alonzo laid them on the study table and slowly counted them.

"Good gracious!" he murmured. "I find I am a shilling short of the requisite amount to purchase one of Professor Skinnem's smallest jars, and then there is the postage and the money for the order. How annoying."

The Duffer of Greyfriars puckered his forehead in thought for a moment, and slowly investigated the contents of the rest of his pockets.

From his waistcoat he produced a stick of chewing-gum, a gift from Fisher T. Fish, the junior from New York. His other pockets yielded a broken pen-knife, a piece of sticky toffee, and a pair of shoe laces.

William George Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, frequently complained of his shoelaces breaking. And invariably Bunter's shoelaces broke outside someone's study door, necessitating instant repair. Most juniors regarded Bunter's stories of broken shoelaces as excuses for eavesdropping.

But Alonzo, in the simplicity of his soul, having received Bunter's word of honour that such was not the case, had purchased a special brand of shoelaces recommended by his Uncle Benjamin, to save Bunter the embarrassment of further accidents.

Apart from those items, however, Alonzo discovered nothing in the way of coin of the realm. Not even a bad halfpenny came to light to gladden his eyes.

"Dear me!" gasped Todd, as the painful truth dawned upon him. "This

is most annoying! However, perhaps I can obtain a small loan from some of my schoolfellows?"

And having arrived at that optimistic decision, Alonzo toddled from his study, having first torn Professor Skinnem's advertisement from the magazine and folded it neatly in his pocket.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Raising the Wind!

"EXCUSE me, my dear fellow—" Alonzo Todd addressed that remark to the first junior he met. That junior happened to be Fisher Tarleton Fish, the Removite from the United States, the self-styled business man of the Remove.

"Scat!" snapped Fish. "I guess I'm busy."

"I shall not detain you a moment, my dear Fish. I merely wish to know whether you could oblige me with a small loan?"

"I guess I could," said Fish.

Alonzo beamed.

"That would be very kind of you, Fish. Two shillings will do for now, if you don't mind."

And Alonzo held out his hand.

Fisher T. Fish stared at it.

"Say, what's that for?" he demanded in surprise.

"For the two shillings you are going to lend me, Fish."

"Your mistake, Toddy," grinned the American junior. "I guess I'm not lending you two bob. Jevver get left?"

"But you just said you could, my dear fellow," explained Todd, looking puzzled.

"Yep!" agreed Fish. "I reckon I said I could, if I would. But I calculate I won't!"

And Fisher T. Fish burst into a roar of nasal laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear me!" exclaimed Todd, in dismay. "That is most heartless of you!"

But Fish had gone, and the only indication of his recent presence was another howl of laughter from the end of the passage.

"I fear that Fish was having a joke at my expense," murmured Alonzo, as he continued in his quest along the passage.

"My dear Skinner—"

"Rats!"

"My dear Stott—"

"More rats!"

"Really, my dear Snoop—"

"Most rats!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner & Co. passed on, chuckling.

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, hove in sight.

Alonzo eyed him doubtfully. It was seldom that the Falstaff of Greyfriars possessed any money, and when he did, he usually lost no time in disposing of it in the tuckshop.

But Alonzo thought it would do no harm to try him. Sometimes the most unexpected shots came off.

"My dear Bunter—" began Alonzo.

"Oh, scat!" grunted Bunter crossly.

There were not many fellows in the Remove Bunter could talk to as he liked, at least, not when he was in their immediate vicinity. But Todd was one of those he could, and he always made the most of his opportunity.

"Buzz off!" exclaimed Bunter again.

"Really, my dear Bunter," said Todd. "I wish to speak to you about a small matter. I have four shillings and—"

At the mention of the money in Todd's possession Bunter stopped short, and the

scowl vanished from his face as though by magic.

"I say, Toddy, old man," he smirked, blinking at the Duffer of Greyfriars through his big spectacles. "I'm awfully sorry I was a bit short just now."

"Pray don't mention it, my dear Bunter. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that an apology from one gentleman to another—"

"Good! But about the four bob," broke in Bunter, his little eyes gleaming through his big spectacles.

"Precisely," beamed Alonzo. "I'm coming to that now. The fact is, my dear Bunter, I am in need of another two shillings to make up the sum I require."

Bunter's face fell. But the next moment a cunning gleam came into his eyes, and his fat face took on its ingratiating smirk again.

"As I told you," went on Alonzo innocently, "I have four shillings, but that is, unfortunately, not sufficient."

"So you want to borrow a couple of bob, Toddy?"

"Exactly, my dear schoolfellow."

"Good. Then I'm your man. Anything to oblige an old pal, you know. I'll lend it to you, Toddy."

"How kind of you, Bunter!"

"Not at all," smirked the Owl of the Remove, blinking at his intended victim through his spectacles. "Not at all, Toddy. You've got four bob, you say? Lemme see now."

Bunter paused and assumed an expression of deep thought.

"I trust I shall not inconvenience you, my dear Bunter?" said Alonzo anxiously.

"Well—or—not exactly," said Bunter. "The fact is, Toddy, I've got nothing smaller than ten bob, and I must have a little for myself, you know. It's just a question of getting change."

"Of course, Bunter."

"Look here, Toddy!" exclaimed Bunter, with an oily smile. "I've got it. Suppose you hand me the four bob you've got to carry on with, and I'll give you my ten. You'll owe me six bob then, but I'm not in a hurry."

"Oh, thank you, Bunter! You are sure you can spare all that?" inquired Alonzo anxiously.

"Quite, Toddy. Hand over the four bob."

Alonzo did as requested.

"Good!" exclaimed the Owl of the Remove, as his fat hand closed over the coins.

"And now the ten shillings, please, Bunter."

Bunter blinked.

"Oh, crumbs!" he gasped, in well assumed astonishment. "I quite forgot, Toddy. But it'll be here by the next post. You grab the lot when it comes, and owe me six bob—see?"

"But what will be here by the next post?" demanded Alonzo, puzzled.

"My postal-order," explained Bunter, blinking. "You see, I was so anxious to oblige you that I quite overlooked the fact that it hadn't arrived. I'm expecting a postal-order from a titled relative, you see, and—Ow!"

A heavy hand fell on Bunter's plump shoulder.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed a stentorian voice behind him. "Up to your old tricks, you fat fraud?"

"Oh, really Cherry—"

Bob Cherry, who, with Johnny Bull, had arrived unobserved by Bunter, transferred his grip from the Owl's fat shoulder to his ear.

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "Lemme go!"

"Then hand Todd back his four bob first, you fat swindler!"

"Good job we heard what you were talking about," put in Johnny Bull. "We've just arrived in time to prevent a blessed robbery."

"Really, Bull. I trust you do not suspect me of any intention to defraud my friend Todd!" gasped Bunter, with well assumed dignity.

"No; I am sure Bunter would not do that, my dear fellows," said Alonzo. "Only, unfortunately, Bunter assures me he overlooked the fact that his expected postal-order had not arrived. It was very remiss of Bunter, I am sure."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bull and Cherry in unison.

"You silly ass!"

"You burbling jabberwock!"

"I fail to see anything hilarious in Bunter's misfortune!" gasped the Duffer, nevertheless looking dismayed. "But I shall certainly need my four shillings returned."

Bob Cherry and John Bull exchanged grins.

Billy Bunter's expected postal-order was almost an institution at Greyfriars. It had been expected as long as the fat junior had been at the school—by the fat junior himself. But by everyone else, save perhaps the trusting Alonzo, its arrival would have been regarded as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

"Hand Todd his four bob," said Cherry again.

"Look here," began Bunter angrily. "If you think—"

But Bob did not think—he acted instead. He gave the fat junior's ear another tweak.

"Ow! Yoop! Leggo!"

"Dip up, then!"

"Oh, really—"

Tweak.

"Yoooooop!"

Tweak.

"Ow! All right! Lemme go!" howled Bunter, his ear feeling as though it had been caught in a rat-trap. "Todd can have his blessed money."

"Oh, good!"

Bob released the Owl's ear and waited to see the promise carried out.

Bunter handed Todd the four shillings with ill grace. When the transaction was over, Cherry suddenly turned Bunter round, and sped him on his way with a push from his big boot.

Biff!

"Yarooooop! Beasts!" roared Bunter. "I'm hurt!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beasts! Yah!"

And Bunter scuttled away as fast as his fat little legs would carry him.

"Think yourself lucky you got your money back," said Bob, turning to the Duffer.

"Bunter would have twisted you, you ass," said Johnny Bull, in his blunt way.

"Really, my dear fellows," said the Duffer, "I fear that, after all, Bunter was uttering terminological inexactitudes about his postal-order. He is a dishonest boy."

"Go hon!"

"Yes, my dear Bull. Now I come to think of it, I believe Bunter has mentioned his postal-order before—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the two juniors. "I believe he has!"

"So you have noticed it too, Cherry?"

"Oh, you funny ass!" sobbed Bob.

"You'll be the death of me yet, Toddy. Ha, ha, ha!"

And almost doubled with mirth, the two Removites continued down the passage, leaving Alonzo staring after them in great perplexity.

"Dear me! I appear to have afforded Cherry and Bull considerable amusement," murmured the Duffer. "However, I have not yet succeeded in my quest. I think perhaps I will try Wharton."

Alonzo proceeded in the direction of Study No. 1. He was beginning to feel rather doubtful of his ability to raise another two shillings. But he hoped for the best.

Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and the nabob of Bhanipur were in the study when Alonzo arrived.

"Hallo, ass! Back again?" exclaimed Wharton.

"The backfulness is terrific."

"My dear schoolfellows," exclaimed Alonzo, for once coming straight to the point, "I have called in to see whether you can oblige me with a loan of two shillings—"

"Then you've called in the wrong shop, Toddy," laughed Frank Nugent. "We're all broke."

"Broke to the widefulness," added Inky.

"Dear me, this is most unfortunate!" exclaimed Alonzo sorrowfully. "I have four shillings in my hand, but it is not sufficient by two shillings."

"What's up with your other hand?" inquired Harry Wharton curiously.

Alonzo stared at his left fist as though becoming aware of its existence for the first time.

"How extraordinary!" he murmured. "I must be holding something, my dear Wharton. Really, I—I—I have not noticed the fact before."

"Go hon!"

The chums of the Remove exchanged amused glances.

"Well, what are you holding, ass?"

"I will investigate, my dear fellows."

And Alonzo opened his hand.

As he did so, something flashed brightly and fell to the floor with a musical clink.

It was a two-shilling piece!

Alonzo stared at it in amazement, and examined the money in his right hand. It amounted to four shillings altogether.

"Why, you've got six bob already!" exclaimed Wharton. "You said you'd only got four—"

"Really, my dear fellow—"

"Four bob in one hand and two in the other makes six, doesn't it, ass?"

"Good gracious!" gasped Alonzo.

"Indeed it does! I was not aware I held any money in my left hand at all, Wharton. How extraordinary! I must have found it in my left-hand trousers-pocket without becoming aware of it. Dear me! I shall not need to borrow two shillings after all, then. Dear me!"

The three juniors gazed at the Duffer of Greyfriars in amazement. Alonzo was the most absent-minded boy in the school. But that he should wander round trying to borrow two shillings when he already possessed that sum and was not aware of it, almost stunned them.

"Oh dear!" gasped Alonzo. "How absent-minded of me! I really was unaware that I was holding that two-shilling piece, my dear fellows. I think that possibly—"

But what the noble Alonzo thought was never known. There came a sudden roar from Harry Wharton & Co.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!"

"The asinine qualities of the absurd Todd are terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, my dear school friends—"

"Oh, go away!" shrieked Frank Nugent. "You're standing on your foot!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo blinked at his pedal extremities with a puzzled brow.

"My foot!" he gasped.

"Yes, chump!"

"Chump!"

"Oh, vamoose!"

"Vamoose!"

"Get out, you blessed parrot!" yelled Wharton.

"P-parrot!"

But the three juniors had had enough. They rose to their feet, and, gently propelling Alonzo out into the passage, slammed the study door.

Alonzo Todd returned to his own apartment with a vague idea that he had had his loan-raising expedition for nothing. The extra two shillings he had endeavoured to borrow had been in his own hand all the time. Then he remembered the purpose for which he required the money.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "I must hurry and obtain a postal-order, or I shall miss the post. I should never forgive myself for my foolishness if my order arrived too late and all Professor Skinnem's wonderful staminoid syrup was snapped up."

Ten minutes later Alonzo's order was on its way to the inventor of the wonderful syrup, at 25, Great Mutt Street, London, W.1.

And when the duffer of Greyfriars went to bed that night he dreamed dreams in which he saw himself the champion of the oppressed, the friend

of the weak, and the terror of bullies. He saw himself strong and virile, feared by his enemies, and respected by his friends, even as stated in Professor Skinnem's advertisement—and all for the paltry sum of five shillings, including a real art jar!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch is Puzzled!

"PARCEL for you, Master Todd." "Oh, thank you, Trotter!"

The school page deposited a brown paper package bearing the London postmark on the table in Alonzo Todd's study, and departed grinning. There was no particular reason why Trotter should grin—but grinning with Trotter was a matter of habit.

Alonzo surveyed the parcel with a pleased smile.

It was the day following his order to Professor Skinnem. Breakfast was over, and Todd was gathering his books together preparatory to leaving for the Form-room. But with the arrival of the school page he placed them on the table again and turned his attention to the parcel.

Todd took up the package and quickly ripped off the paper, revealing a small brown jar.

"The staminoid syrup!" he exclaimed in delight. "How excellent!"

Clang, clang!



"I can play at that game as well as you, sir," said Alonzo. As he spoke the Duffer jerked the cane from Mr. Quelch's hands and doubled it across his knees. Snap! He broke the cane as though it had been no more than a sugar-stick. "Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch in amazement. "Wh-a-a-at! How—!" (See Chapter 4.)

The first bell for morning lessons echoed along the passage.

Alonzo glanced hastily at the directions printed on the label on the front of the jar.

"One teaspoonful to be taken in a wineglass of water after meals," he murmured. "How fortunate I have just broken my fast! I shall be able to take a dose before lessons!"

With a beaming smile on his simple face the Duffer of Greyfriars quickly obtained a wineglass of water and prepared himself a good stiff dose. But as the wonderful mixture gurgled down his skinny throat his beaming smile quickly vanished.

"Ach! Grooo!" he exclaimed, with a shudder. "I cannot say the preparation is exactly pleasant. Ow!"

Alonzo placed the staminoid syrup in the study cupboard and made his way out into the passage.

The second bell sounded for lessons. "Dear me, I fear I shall be late!" murmured the Duffer. "I must hurry!"

And Alonzo hurried. The passage was crowded with juniors, but Alonzo pushed by them without ceremony.

"Ow!" "Stop pushing, Todd!"

But Alonzo did not stop pushing. A strange feeling of exhilaration was beginning to creep over him. Already, it seemed, Professor Skinnem's wonderful concoction was beginning to have effect. The directions had stated one teaspoonful only. But Alonzo's Uncle Benjamin had always impressed upon him that, if a thing was worth doing at all, it was worth doing thoroughly. Sometimes Alonzo took his avuncular relative too literally. He had taken him too literally now. Since he considered the staminoid syrup worth taking, he had taken two teaspoonfuls, to be on the safe side.

Bump! In an endeavour to pass Lord Mauleverer, the slacker of the Remove, who was ambling gracefully along the passage, a junior cannoned into Alonzo from behind. The junior was Mark Linley, the scholarship lad from Lancashire.

"Sorry, Toddy!" gasped Mark apologetically.

"Pray look where you are going, my dear Linley!" exclaimed Alonzo tartly. "Don't blunder about like a bull, my dear fellow."

Mark gasped, and surveyed the Duffer curiously.

As a rule Alonzo was the most mild-mannered junior in the Remove. It was totally unlike Alonzo to reply to an apology in the manner he had done.

"Got out of bed the wrong way this morning, I suppose," thought Mark.

Several other juniors observed Alonzo's brusqueness, but they only grinned. They thought very much the same as Mark.

The rest of the juniors crowded into the Form-room and took their places. Several moments later Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, appeared. The hum of conversation died quickly away as the Form master seated himself.

Mr. Horace Quelch, M.A., was a gentleman whose digestive organs did not always function as Dame Nature intended them. On those occasions he was inclined to be somewhat short with his class. This morning was one of those occasions.

His gimlet-like eyes roamed round the Form and alighted on Alonzo Todd, who was whispering to the junior next to him.

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"Todd," snapped Mr. Quelch, "take fifty lines for talking in Form!"

"Really, sir—"

"Take a hundred lines, Todd!"

Alonzo half rose to his feet, as though to argue. But apparently he thought better of it and dropped back into his place again.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Quelch has got 'em this morning!" whispered Bob Cherry.

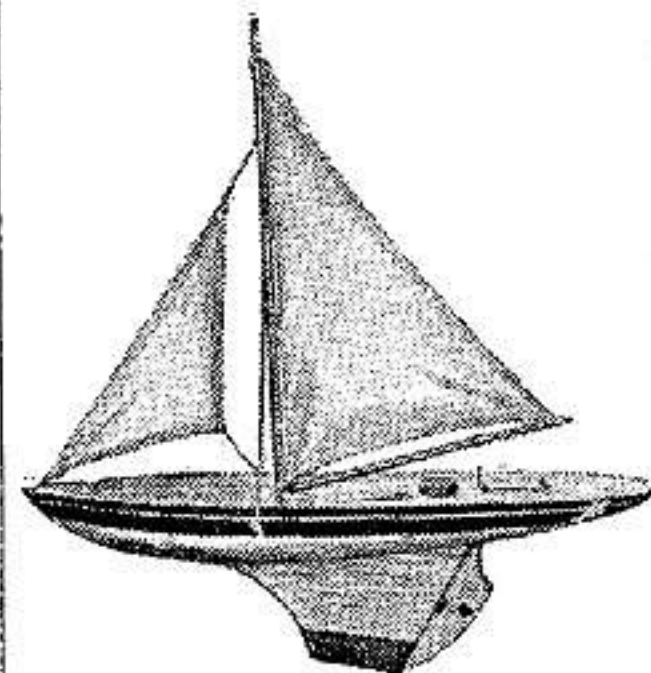
"So has Alonzo," replied Wharton in an undertone. "Did you see the look he gave Quelch, Bob?"

Cherry nodded. Several other Removites had noticed it, too, and were gazing across the Form-room towards the Duffer with puzzled expressions.

Alonzo Todd did not seem to be his usual mild-mannered self.

Mr. Quelch turned to the class again and the lesson commenced. The lesson in question was English literature, a subject on which the Remove master was particularly keen.

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The lesson proceeded uneventfully until question time.

"Bulstrode," said Mr. Quelch suddenly, "in whose work is Mokanna, the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, mentioned?"

Bulstrode rose to his feet. "Moore's sir," he said promptly. "Very good!"

Several other juniors were questioned. But the Removites had observed the danger signals of Mr. Quelch's temper that morning, and had paid more than ordinary attention to the lessons.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes roamed round the class and alighted on Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove.

"Bunter!" snapped the Remove-master, "kindly inform me why the Prophet of Khorassan always wore a veil?"

Bunter lumbered to his feet and blinked rapidly through his big spectacles. For the past ten minutes he had been working out a gastronomical problem, and Mr. Quelch's valuable precepts had consequently fallen on deaf ears.

"Answer me, Bunter."

"Ow! Yes, sir!" "Why did the Prophet hide his face beneath a veil?" demanded Mr. Quelch again.

"B-because, that is to say, sir—"

"Answer me, boy."

Bunter almost jumped. He felt that any answer—even a wrong one—would be better than none at all, and he resolved to take a plunge, so to speak, and hope for the best.

"I am waiting, boy," grated Mr. Quelch.

"Well—you see, sir," stammered Bunter. "Because—because he—"

"Because he what, boy?"

"Ow! Because he hadn't washed it, sir!" gasped the Owl of the Remove desperately.

There came a loud howl of laughter from the rest of the form.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How dare you, boy!" grated Mr. Quelch angrily. "Take a hundred lines. The rest of the form will take a hundred lines each for their unseemly laughter."

The Removites' merriment ceased immediately.

"Kindly inform Bunter the reason the Prophet of Khorassan hid his face beneath a veil, Todd?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, turning to the Duffer of Greyfriars.

Alonzo rose to his feet. There was a curious expression on his face. As a rule Alonzo wore a simple expression reflecting a simple and a kindly soul. But as he stood in the Form-room, the cynosure of all eyes, the juniors observed a new and entirely different expression. He gazed at the Remove-master with a look of mingled boredom and anger.

"I am waiting, Todd," said Mr. Quelch encouragingly.

"I don't know, sir," said Todd, at length.

"You don't know, Todd?"

Mr. Quelch stared—and so did the Removites.

The voice was the voice of Alonzo right enough—yet it seemed to hold some new and strange quality.

"What did you say, boy?" thundered the Form master.

"Dear me!" gasped Alonzo irritably. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to speak clearly. I thought I had done so. I said I don't know, sir—"

"Bless my soul!"

A dead silence fell upon the whole Form.

Mr. Quelch's usually pale face assumed a deep, beetroot hue. The Removites stared at the Duffer as though he had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

"How dare you, Todd!" thundered Mr. Quelch, in an awful voice. "How dare you, I say, sir!"

"Never mind that," said Alonzo, staring straight at the Form master. "I don't know anything about this ass from Khorassan, and what's more I don't want to—"

"Boy!"

"To tell you the honest truth, sir, I'm just about fed-up with lessons—"

"Bless my soul!"

"So the best thing you can do is to leave me alone, sir!"

"G-good gracious!"

The Removites gasped.

"Great Scott!"

"The silly ass!"

"He's mad!"

"The madfulness is terrific!"

The Removites stared at their Form fellow in amazement. They wondered for a moment whether they were experiencing some sort of nightmare. That Alonzo Todd, the simple and courteous Duffer of Greyfriars, should calmly inform Mr. Quelch that he was fed-up with lessons took their breath away. It was amazing! Incredible!

As for Alonzo, he seemed utterly oblivious of the sensation his strange conduct was causing. He remained

standing, a look of irritation which amounted almost to defiance on his usually, simple face.

"Come here, Todd," stormed Mr. Quelch, overcoming his amazement only with the greatest difficulty.

Alonzo shook his head.

"You—you refuse?" almost shrieked the Form master, perspiration breaking out on his brow. "How dare you! Come here, I say!"

"Don't be a fool, Toddy!" whispered Mark Linley.

"Go out before you get slaughtered," advised Nugent, in an undertone.

But Alonzo appeared not to hear.

"If you want me you'd better come and fetch me," he retorted, staring aggressively at the dumbfounded Form master.

"B-bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch's complexion changed from beetroot to white. Gripping a cane savagely in his right hand, he strode up the gangway to where Alonzo was standing. His left hand closed on the Duffer's collar and Alonzo was jerked out to the front of the Form.

"Hold out your hand, Todd!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Alonzo gazed at the Remove master as though unable to make up his mind whether to obey or not. But, at length, he did as requested.

"I don't understand the strange change that has come over you, Todd," grated Mr. Quelch, raising the cane aloft, "but I will endeavour to teach you that I will not tolerate insolence."

The cane whistled through the air and caught Alonzo a stinging cut across the palm of the hand.

Thwack!

Alonzo ground his teeth but made no sound.

"Your other hand, Todd."

Once again Mr. Quelch's ashplant whistled through the air. But Alonzo had had enough. In fact, he had had more than enough. It was seldom—very seldom indeed—that the Duffer received punishment in the Form-room. But on those few occasions when he did, the fact that he had caused inconvenience to the Remove master hurt him far more than the actual punishment.

Now, however, Alonzo seemed to be taking a different view of things.

Even as the cane whistled down, Alonzo's hand flashed upwards and gripped the ashplant close to Mr. Quelch's wrist. The blow missed its mark, and instead of catching the palm of Alonzo's hand, it caught Mr. Quelch a smart cut across the shin.

"Oh! Ahaa!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "How dare you, Todd! Release the cane immediately!"

Alonzo showed no sign of doing as he was bidden, however.

"Very well," said the Form master. "Since you appear to want a thorough thrashing you shall have it, Todd."

And Mr. Quelch wrenched desperately to release the cane from Alonzo's grip. But to do so was not the easy matter the Remove master had anticipated. In the ordinary way, it could not be said that Alonzo was noted for his strength. But now he seemed to hold the cane with the strength of a steel vice.

"Let go, boy!"

"My dear Mr. Quelch, I regret——"

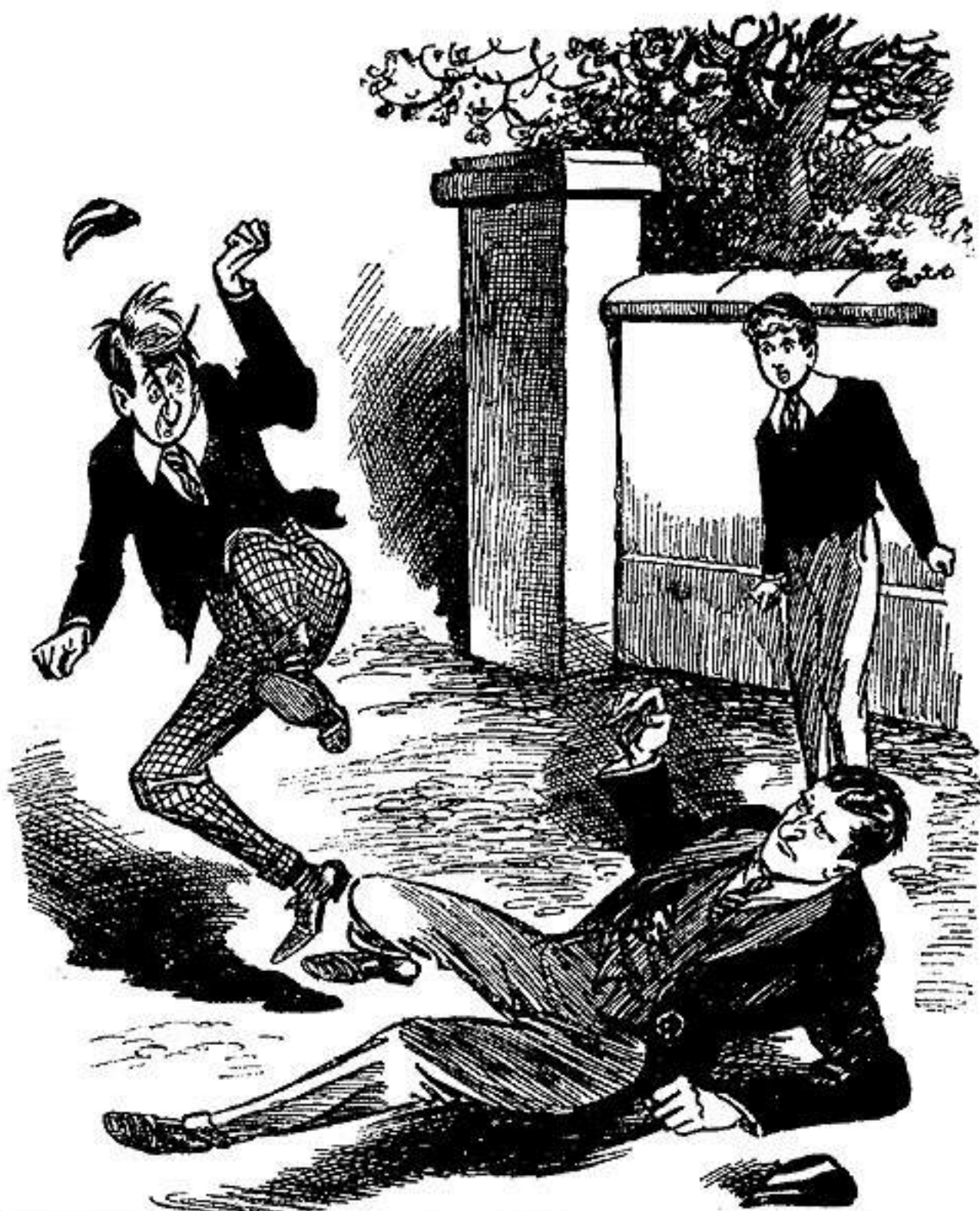
"Do as you are told, Todd!"

"Not to-day, sir."

The Removites gasped. As for Mr. Quelch, he almost foamed at the mouth. Never before in the history of the Form had he known Alonzo to behave in such a manner.

"The ass is mad, b'gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Right off his rocker!" ejaculated Johnny Bull.



A blow which seemed to Loder like a nine-point-five caught him squarely on the jaw. Crash! Loder sat on the ground with more force than was necessary and gazed long and earnestly at constellations never witnessed by astronomers. "Come on!" shrieked Alonzo Todd, dancing about like a frog on a hot stove. "Boob, am I? I'll smash you!" (See Chapter 5.)

The Removites waited breathlessly, wondering what was going to happen next. By now, however, Mr. Quelch seemed to have reached the limit of his patience and his control. With a gasp of anger, he gripped the cane with both hands and endeavoured to wrench it from Alonzo's grasp.

"All right, sir!" exclaimed Alonzo, in the same strange voice. "I can play at that game as well as you."

As he spoke, the Duffer of Greyfriars, without apparent exertion, jerked the cane from Mr. Quelch and doubled it across his knee.

Snap!

The cane was a fairly stout one. But Alonzo broke it as though it had been no more than a sugar-stick, and flung the pieces into the Form-room fireplace.

"Oh!"

A deadly silence fell on the entire Form, broken only by the spasmodic breathing of the outraged and astounded Form master.

A curious smile of satisfaction illuminated the face of the Duffer, a smile that was as strange as Alonzo's conduct.

Slowly Mr. Quelch seemed to regain his scattered faculties, and the Removites waited with beating hearts for the end of the uncanny scene.

The Remove master breathed deeply, and his lips formed into a straight line. Without a word he suddenly snatched up

another cane, and, with a gasp of anger, commenced to wade into the Duffer right and left.

Thwack, thwack, thwack!

A grunt of pain escaped Alonzo as the first stroke took him across the shoulders. A sudden gleam shot into his eyes. Then, before Mr. Quelch could bring the cane into play again, he found his wrists imprisoned in a vicelike grip which hurt.

"Ah! Release me, boy!" he gasped, commencing to struggle.

Alonzo gripped the master's wrists tighter and the cane clattered to the floor.

The Removites stared. Mr. Quelch was a wiry gentleman, possessed of no little strength. But in the Duffer's grip he seemed to be as helpless as a babe.

Alonzo had always been regarded as the weakling of the Form, but the juniors felt that they had been mistaken in him. Since he entered the Form-room that morning he appeared to have changed utterly. It was extraordinary, and the juniors failed to understand it.

"My hat!" gasped Wharton, starting to his feet. "He's hurting Quelch. He's mad!"

"Release me, Todd!" gasped Mr. Quelch again, his face contorted with pain. "How dare you! Ow!"

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"I regret you have made it necessary for me to hurt you, sir," exclaimed Alonzo. "But if you promise to desist in your endeavour to punish me I will release you."

"Great Scott!" ejaculated several voices together.

"Of all the nerve!"

As for the Remove master, he stared at Alonzo with a puzzled brow for a moment. That some strange change had come over the usually mild Alonzo was obvious enough. Mr. Quelch had a feeling that all was not well with the Duffer, so he decided to humour him.

"Very well, Todd," he said slowly. "If you will release me I will promise not to punish you."

For the fraction of a second Alonzo's old beaming smile returned as he released the master's wrists.

"I am so sorry, my dear Mr. Quelch," he murmured, in a more natural voice. "I am exceedingly sorry indeed. I trust I have not hurt you, sir. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me always to treat with courtesy and respect those placed in authority over me."

A sudden roar came from the rest of the Removites.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The idea of Alonzo speaking of courtesy and respect to those in authority when he had only just stopped short of assaulting his Form master, struck them as being too funny. So they roared again.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My giddy aunt!"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Quelch suddenly.

The laughter ceased immediately.

"You may now return to your place, Todd," went on Mr. Quelch, turning to Alonzo.

And Alonzo did. But the Removites observed that already his momentary smile had vanished, and that the same curious expression he had worn when Mr. Quelch had endeavoured to cane him had returned again.

The rest of the lesson passed uneventfully enough.

Mr. Quelch left Alonzo very much alone. But from time to time he was observed to glance at him curiously, as did many of the juniors. When the Form was eventually dismissed Mr. Quelch made his way to Dr. Locke's study with a thoughtful expression on his brow. By now he was more alarmed than angry over Alonzo's strange conduct. He resolved to inform Dr. Locke of what had happened, and to recommend that a sharp eye be kept on Alonzo in future, both in and out of the Form-room.

The story of Alonzo's extraordinary conduct during lessons spread round the rest of Greyfriars like wildfire. Many were the theories put forward to explain it. Horace Coker of the Fifth confided to his pals, Potter and Greene, that Todd had developed water on the brain. But Coker's theory, with most of the others, was rejected. Alonzo's sudden acquisition of strength was even more amazing than his behaviour. Think as they might, the Removites could find nothing to explain it. That Alonzo had suffered some curious change was agreed by all.

But what had caused that change?

That was the question the juniors asked themselves.

In Study No. 1 the Famous Five shook their heads.

"We'll have to watch Alonzo," said Harry Wharton quietly.

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"The watchfulness must be of the esteemed closeful order, my worthy chums," said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Hear, hear!"

It was observed that at dinner-time Alonzo Todd almost rivalled Billy Bunter in the amount of food he consumed. He had two helpings of meat and two of pudding. A request for a third helping was refused.

Apparently, Alonzo's strange change was not in one direction alone.

During afternoon lessons Mr. Quelch left the Duffer very much alone, and the Form was dismissed for the day without any further incident.

"Well, it's been a bit tame this afternoon!" exclaimed Frank Nugent, as the juniors trooped down the passage. "But I don't suppose we've heard the last of Alonzo for to-day."

And that was the opinion of the rest of the Form.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Lesson for Loder!

"HERE he comes!"

"Here's the giddy rebel!"

"Here's the beater of Form masters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

These remarks, and many more like them, greeted Alonzo Todd as he strolled down the School House steps into the Close after tea.

Alonzo beamed, but it was less of a beam than usual. It was more of a grin.

"Don't be a set of chumps, my dear fellows!" he retorted crisply.

The Removites blinked. Alonzo's method of speech seemed to have changed as well as the quality of his voice.

"Oh, naughty, naughty!" sniggered Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Think how shocked, nay, disgusted, your Uncle Benjamin would be if he heard you call your dear schoolfellows chumps, Toddy," went on Skinner, wagging an admonishing forefinger at the Duffer. "Imagine the feelings of the poor ass if he heard—"

Smack!

Alonzo's hand shot suddenly out and caught the cad of the Remove across the face.

"Ow!" gasped Skinner, staggering back.

"I am sorry I found it necessary to assault you, Skinner!" exclaimed Alonzo. "But if you repeat your remarks about my Uncle Benjamin I shall be compelled to assault you again—only harder."

And with that Alonzo turned and strolled towards the school gates.

The rest of the Removites stared after him in amazement.

"My giddy aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Our little Alonzo is turning out to be a blessed lion-tamer!"

"Serves Skinner right, anyway," grunted Johnny Bull. "He asked for it."

"And he got it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The—the skinny rotter!" gasped Skinner angrily, the imprint of Alonzo's hand showing vividly against the pallor of the rest of his face. "I'll—I'll smash him!"

"Go on, then," advised Wharton, grinning.

But Skinner did not go on. He stared after the retreating form of the Duffer with a mingled look of fear and anger. Alonzo was becoming something of an unknown quantity, and Skinner did not like unknown quantities.

"All right. I can wait," he grunted. He strode away, followed by the chuckles of the astonished and amused Removites.

"If that doesn't take the blessed bun!" gasped Nugent, when he had gone. "Alonzo is becoming a blessed mystery, and no mistake!"

"Hear, hear!"

"I wonder what he'll be up to next?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, his brows knit in perplexity. "I didn't know Alonzo had it in him."

As for Alonzo himself, he strolled across the Close as much amazed by what he had done as the rest of the juniors.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "I—I seem to be becoming almost aggressive!"

Alonzo was within twenty yards of the school gates when he stopped short.

"Ow-wow-ow!"

The Duffer of Greyfriars listened with contracted brows.

"Ow-wow-ow!"

Alonzo glanced around him. There was no one in sight who could have made that noise.

"How curious!" he murmured. "There was a distinct sound as of some juvenile in distress."

Alonzo's bony legs stretched out quickly towards the school gates. The cries of pain seemed to him now to come from just outside.

"Wow! Leggo, you rotter! You'll break my arm!"

This time the voices of two people were quite audible. Alonzo's surmise was right. The two, whoever they were, were in the road outside the gates, hidden from view by the wall.

The Duffer wasted no further time. He broke into a run, and dashed out of the gates. Even as he did so, another and a louder groan smote his ears.

"Ow! Yoop! Stop it!"

The cry came from Dicky Nugent of the Second. Loder, the bullying prefect of the Sixth, his face red with anger and exertion, had Dicky in his grasp, with one of his arms screwed behind his back. Every few seconds he gave a jerk, which brought the cry of agony from the sag which had first attracted Alonzo's attention.

"Desist, Loder!"

Loder turned to the Removite with a furious face.

"Clear off, you cheeky young cub!" he roared.

"Pray cease your bullying, you great coward!" retorted Alonzo, not in the least daunted by the threatening look of the Sixth-Former.

Loder released Dicky's arm, but retained a grip of his collar.

"Yoop! Lemme alone, Loder!" howled the Second-Former.

Loder's reply was a smack across the ear which sounded like a pistol-shot.

Dicky Nugent let off another howl of pain.

"Wow! Yoop! Get your own blessed fags, you blackguard!"

"My dear Loder," began Alonzo again, "pray desist!"

The prefect turned an infuriated face to the Removite.

"Go away, you—you big boob!" he snorted, with withering scorn.

Alonzo waited for no more. Even as the word boob left Loder's lips a startling change came over the Duffer. His eyes glinted, and his mouth straightened, as he tensed himself for a spring.

"Boob!" he almost hissed.

Like a shot from a catapult he flung himself at the Sixth-Former, hitting out with a force and velocity which was nothing short of stunning.

Thud!

Loder let go of Dicky Nugent suddenly and clapped his hand to his nose. Alonzo's bony fist had been in contact with it a moment before, and had almost smashed it to pulp.

"You young hound!" gasped the prefect, backing away. "I'll brain you!"

"Pray do!" snorted Alonzo, almost gleefully.

For the fraction of a second Loder glared at the junior as though unable to believe the evidence of his own eyes and ears. That Alonzo, of all people, should attack him—and hurt him—almost dumbfounded him.

"I will, too, confound you!" grated the prefect.

And with a roar of rage he launched himself at the Removite. But when he got there Alonzo had gone.

In a manner the Sixth-Former could not understand the junior had got behind him. He turned his head to see where he had gone, but as he did so a blow which seemed to Loder like a nine-point-seven caught him squarely on the jaw.

Crash!

Loder sat on the ground with more force than was necessary, and gazed long and earnestly at constellations never witnessed by astrologers.

"My hat!" gasped Dicky Nugent in amazement.

"Come on!" shrieked Alonzo, dancing about like a frog on a hot stove. "Boob, am I? Come on! I'll smash you!"

Loder staggered to his feet, his head spinning. It seemed to him that he was experiencing some horrible nightmare. His jaw and nose ached horribly, but Loder was not thinking of the pain. He had been knocked spinning and nearly outed by a junior.

And that junior was Alonzo Todd!

"Come on!" roared Alonzo again, his skinny arms whirling like the sails of a windmill. "I'm a boob, am I?"

Meanwhile, attracted by the noise, a crowd of juniors had arrived on the scene.

They stared at the prancing Alonzo and at the staggering Loder in amazement.

"W-what's the game?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"What's up with Toddy?"

"And with Loder's nose?"

"It's Alonzo," chuckled Dicky Nugent delightedly. "Loder was twisting my arm because I wouldn't go to the village and buy him some blessed fags, when along came Alonzo and soaked him a real raspberry right on the boko!"

"My only Sunday topper!"

"Loder will kill him!"

"Come away, Toddy!"

But if Alonzo heard he heeded not.

He continued his wild prancing round the burly Sixth-Former, seeking an opening.

"Boob!" he shrieked. "I'll show you if I'm a boob!"

Gritting his teeth, Loder made a smashing drive at the frail form of the Duffer. But Alonzo jumped nimbly aside, and replied with a jab to the jaw. If Loder missed Alonzo did not.

Crack!

There came a report like an exploding cracker as Alonzo's bony fist took the prefect under the point. Loder seemed to stiffen as he felt himself lifted an inch off his feet by the force of the blow.

"Ow!"

"Good old Toddy!"

But by now Alonzo seemed to have got going in real earnest. Round and round the amazed prefect he circled, hitting out right and left.

"Leave 'em alone!" shouted Bob Cherry as several juniors sprang forward to separate the combatants. "I've got

an idea that Alonzo can look after himself."

"But Loder'll smash him!"

"Toddy's got no chance!"

Quite a crowd of fellows had collected now to witness the extraordinary spectacle of a fight between a Sixth-Former and a Removite. The combatants were badly matched. Loder was nearly three times as big as his bony opponent, yet, in spite of this, Alonzo seemed to be having it all his own way.

He literally whirled round the Sixth-Former, getting in smashing blows every few seconds.

"Go it, duffer!"

"On the ball, Bony!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Any ordinary junior would have exhausted himself long ago with the terrific amount of running about; but Alonzo went on, seeming to possess the strength of several men.

Biff!

The Duffer caught Loder full in the eye, and within a few moments it assumed a purple colouring, and commenced to close up.

The Removites were almost mad with delight.

"Now the other one!"

"Good old 'Lonzy!"

Thud!

Another ram-like blow caught the prefect on his already swollen proboscis, and after that he cast all discretion to the four winds of heaven and stormed about blind with fury—and a black eye.

Alonzo circled round the prefect rapidly several times, and then, with a blow that felt to Loder like a kick

from a mule, he caught him on the chin again.

Flop!

Loder sat down violently, and held his aching jaw. With a swollen nose and two black eyes, nearly closed, he presented a sorry figure.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Wazzer marrer?"

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

"Come on, my dear Loder!" panted Alonzo, still brandishing his bony fists. "I have not concluded yet. Pray rise, you great bully!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors howled. It was too funny. Loder looked anything but a bully at that moment.

As for Alonzo, he was bruised here and there where chance blows had caught him, but apart from that he still retained that aggressiveness and strength which was such a puzzle to the juniors, who had always known him as the weak and inoffensive duffer.

"Rise and permit me to continue thrashing you, Loder!" yelled Alonzo again.

"Lemme alone!" gasped Loder in a cracked voice.

"Then you will not rise?"

"Ow! No, confound you!"

"Very well, Loder; I must punish you another way!"

As he spoke the Duffer darted suddenly in, and, gripping the prefect round the waist, with his arms imprisoned at his sides, heaved him off the ground.

A gasp of amazement went up from the spectators.



Alonzo Todd slung the struggling prefect over his shoulder as though he were a babe and crossed towards the horse-pond. "Lemme go!" howled Loder. "Certainly, my dear Loder!" Alonzo bent down and, suddenly straightening himself again, shot the unpopular prefect into the middle of the slime-covered pond. (See Chapter 5.)

"My hat!"

"He's as strong as a blessed horse!"

Certainly Alonzo's strength was amazing. Loder was no light-weight, and it would have puzzled even two of the strongest of the juniors in the Remove to have lifted him. But Alonzo, for some strange reason, seemed to be able to do so with hardly any effort.

Loder kicked and struggled as he felt himself lifted. But his efforts were futile. Alonzo slung the struggling senior over his skinny shoulder as though he were a babe, and walked across the road towards the disused horse-pond in the field opposite the school gates.

"Lemme go!" howled Loder.

"Certainly, my dear Loder!"

Alonzo bent down, and, suddenly straightening himself again, shot the unfortunate prefect from his shoulder.

Loder sailed through the air, and landed dead in the middle of the slime-covered pond.

Splash!

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" gasped Wharton in amazement.

"He's chucked him in the horse-pond, begorra!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder's head suddenly appeared above the water. His eyes and nose were full of mud, and his head and shoulders were covered with weeds.

"Och! Groo! Yoop!" he gasped, ejecting a tadpole from his mouth.

Another wild howl of mirth went up from the Removites.

Loder dragged himself from the pond. All the spirit had gone out of him now. Without so much as a glance at the juniors, he staggered away to a bathroom, via the back entrance of the school, wondering what sort of tale he could invent for his sodden state and his injured face.

Alonzo stood an excellent chance of a flogging if his afternoon's work became known to Dr. Locke. But he realised with satisfaction that it was hardly likely Loder would make a report, and admit to being licked and ducked in the horse-pond by a junior.

Loder realised it, too, but without satisfaction.

Alonzo gazed after the retreating figure of the prefect with something resembling his old-time beaming smile.

"I think that will teach Loder not to be a bully and call me a boob," he murmured.

The next moment there came a yell from the Removites.

"Up with him!"

Alonzo was suddenly hoisted to the shoulders of several Removites, and, amidst loud cheers, borne away from the scene of battle, the physical wonder and hero of the hour.

A fellow who could lick a Sixth-Former in a stand-up fight was not to be met with in the Remove every day. Consequently, the juniors made much of him.

Eventually the one-time duffer was carried into the junior Common-room and dumped in state upon a form. For the next half-hour he was surrounded by a crowd of admiring—and wondering—juniors, who sought, but sought in vain, for some explanation of the curious change that had come over him.

Near the fireplace, watching the scene with an absorbed expression, sat Fisher T. Fish, the self-styled business man of the Remove. The American junior spent a great deal of his time in thinking out schemes whereby he could transfer the wealth of his schoolfellows—if any—from their pockets to his own.

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More often than not these schemes failed to work, and instead of bringing kudos in their trail brought pain—and lots of it—to their unfortunate originator.

But this worried Fish not a jot; like the jolly old spider in the fable, he was always willing to try again. Fish watched Alonzo and the Removites, the first outline of a new money-making scheme forming in his mighty brain. All that was necessary was to obtain Alonzo's assistance, and to use his name. Fish did not anticipate any difficulty about that.

"Jumping Jerusalem!" he gasped to himself. "My wheeze is sure the cat's pyjamas! I guess I'll talk it over with Todd to-night!"

When the American junior retired to bed some time later, he wore a very pleased look on his lean face. His excitement was not unobserved by the rest of the juniors. But they were used to Fish getting excited, and took very little notice of him.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Fish's Latest Wheeze!

"BUCK up, Franky!"

Harry Wharton made that remark in Study No. 1 an hour after tea, the day following Alonzo Todd's defeat of Gerald Loder.

"Sha'n't be long now, Harry."

The two chums were finishing their preparation for the next day's lessons. It was not a job they found congenial, and they were glad it was nearly over.

Nugent threw down his pen with a sigh of relief.

"That's the lot!" he exclaimed.

Crash!

The two juniors jumped to their feet in alarm as the study door was suddenly slammed open.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared a familiar voice. "You chaps heard the latest?"

Bob Cherry, the fighting man of the Remove, burst into the room like a tornado, collided with the table, and sent the papers and inkstand, which the two juniors had been using, flying into a corner of the study.

"You burbling iabberwock!"

"You frabjous chump!"

Wharton and Nugent surveyed the wreck of their hour's work with furious faces. The inkstand had been recently filled, and the contents had shot out, smothering the prep papers, so that hardly a vestige of writing remained visible.

"Sorry!" gasped Bob. "Never mind those blessed papers now. Have you heard the news?"

"Blow the news!"

"Look at our prep!"

Bob Cherry looked; but, apparently, he did not find it very interesting. He turned to his two wrathful chums again, his ruddy face flushed with excitement.

"It's Alonzo!" he burst out.

"It's ink!" shouted Wharton.

"It's our prep!" hooted Nugent.

Bob Cherry snorted.

"All right!" he grunted at last. "I'm sorry, but you'll have to do it again. I'll lend you a hand. But I came to tell you about Toddy."

"Well, what about him?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"He's gone into partnership with Fisher T. Fish!" said Bob excitedly. "They've started a blessed school for developing strength! Fish is the business man, and Alonzo is the instructor."

Wharton and Nugent stared.

"Don't rot, Bob!"

"I'm not!" exclaimed Bob. "They've stuck a notice on the board at the end of the passage. Come and have a look. Nearly half the blessed school has collected there already!"

Bob Cherry gripped his two chums by their arms, and marched them out to the notice-board in the passage. As he had said, a crowd had already collected there, gazing at the notice pinned up by Fisher T. Fish, in his capacity of business manager to Alonzo Todd.

Fisher T. Fish was a youth who believed in pep—pep in all things—and plenty of it. On more than one occasion he had been heard to state that: "The guy who gets the gleaming dollars is he who climbs the tree and hollers."

Fish had always suffered from an acute desire to possess dollars, whether gleaming or otherwise.

He had never hesitated to "holler" if he thought it would help him to obtain them. Certainly he had not hesitated now, as was proved by his notice. The notice, which was done out in the approved style of the best advertising schools of the great country whence he hailed, read as follows:

**"WE'VE GOT 'EM SKINNED!
WE'VE GOT 'EM SKINNED!
BOO! YAH! HONK!"**

**THE ALONZO-FISHO STRENGTH
DEVELOPING AND MUSCLE-
BUILDING FEDERATION (INC.).**

The Above Real Live Federation Has
Been Formed To Organise And Build
An A1 Form Of Full-o'-Pep And Hardy
British Boys.

President	Fisher T. Fish.
Vice-President	Fisher T. Fish.
Secretary	Fisher T. Fish.
Treasurer	Fisher T. Fish.
Manager	Fisher T. Fish.
Assistant	Alonzo Todd.

Why Be Weak? I Can Make You
Strong! Once I Was A Downtrodden
Mutt Like You! Once I Was A Big
Simp! Once I Was A Goop!

**BUT NOW I AM AN ALL-FIRED
ROARING TORNADO!**

You Can Be The Same!

Enlist Right Now For A Course Of
Super-Man Strength Development.
Courses Now Going At Real Knock-Out
Prices. 5s. to 7s. 6d. Easy Payments
Arranged. Apply to Secretary, Fisher
T. Fish, Study No. 13, Remove Passage,
Greyfriars.

(Signed) FISHER T. FISH
(Secretary).

**ATTA BOY! ATTA BOY!
WOW!"**

On one side of the strange notice was pasted a small photograph of Alonzo Todd. Alonzo was stripped to the waist, and supporting what appeared to be an enormous dumb-bell with apparent ease. But the dumb-bell, in point of fact, was a stick with a football fastened at each end. By skilful touching-up on the photograph, it made a realistic-looking weight.

Alonzo, apparently, was the gentleman who had once been a downtrodden simp and a goop, but who was now an "all-fired roaring tornado."

The chums of the Remove almost went into hysterics—and so did the rest

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2!

of the juniors. Their laughter echoed up the passage until it could almost be heard in the distant quarters of the badly Sixth, attracting fresh juniors to the scene every second.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"If this ain't the outside edge!"
"My giddy aunt!"
"The awfulness is terrific!"
The Removites gazed at the strange notice again. But as soon as their eyes fell on the photograph of the "all-fired tearing tornado," they went off into fresh howls of mirth.

Alonzo might be strong. He might be able to lick Loder and do many other things that were amazing. But whatever he might be able to do, the fact remained that, as far as physical appearance went, with his simple face and bony figure, he was far from being a stimulating spectacle.

"Oh, ain't it rich!" gurgled Wharton.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Bejabbers, an' if anyone goes in for this scheme av the spalpeen Fish, I'll eat my hat!" exclaimed Micky Desmond, the lad from the Sorrowful Isle.

"It'll be a blessed wash-out like all his other stunts!" grinned Vernon-Smith. "But not before he's skinned a few of the fellows!"

"He says at the top of the notice, that he's got them skinned," choked Dick Penfold. "And that's before he's started."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"As Desmond says, no one will go in for it!" exclaimed Ogilvy. "Fishy has backed a loser this time!"

And that was the opinion of the Removites generally.

The crowd drifted slowly away to the Common-room, discussing Fish's latest wheeze with many chuckles. Whether anything came of the Alonzo-Fisho Strength Developing and Muscle-Building Federation (Inc.) or not, the Removites felt they were in for some fun. And in this they were right, but not quite in the way they expected.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo's Pupils!

"**P**ARCEL for you, Master Wharton!"

Trotter, the school page, made that remark as he opened the door of Study No. 1 after tea the next day.

"Oh, thanks!" exclaimed Wharton.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent had been entertaining the rest of the Famous Five to tea. The chief topic of conversation had been the forthcoming Public Schools Junior Championship.

The excitement occasioned by the extraordinary behaviour of Alonzo Todd the past few days had caused the chums of the Remove almost to forget it.

The problem of who was to represent the Remove—or Greyfriars—had not yet been solved, and the days in which Wharton had left to send in his nomination were fast running out. But with the arrival of the parcel Wharton decided to leave his decision for the morrow.

"My hat! They're the new boxing-gloves I ordered from London!" exclaimed Wharton, as he tore the wrapper from the package. "Come on, you fellows; let's get down to the gym for half an hour and try them out."

"Good egg!"

The Famous Five trooped out into the passage and made their way across the Close to the gym. They arrived to within a few yards of the door when a curious sound smote their ears.

GREYFRIARS CELEBRITIES. No. 9. WILLIAM WIBLEY.



Biff, thud, wallop!
"Great Scott!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Someone's going through the mill, and no error!"

"I wonder who it is?"
Harry Wharton swung open the door of the gym and stepped inside. As he did so there came a loud report like the explosion of a small shell.

Bang!
"My giddy aunt!"

The rest of the Famous Five, standing behind their chum, peered over his shoulder. A truly extraordinary spectacle met their astonished gaze.

Standing in the middle of the floor, attired in a white sweater which hung on his bony form like a balloon on a hat-pin, and with the sleeves turned up above his bony elbows, was the one and only Alonzo Todd.

The lower part of the Duffer's person was covered with a pair of shorts, while on his hands he sported a pair of boxing-gloves several sizes too large for him. That he had the gloves on the wrong hands seemed to worry Alonzo not at all.

"M-my hat!" gasped Frank Nugent, staring.

Alonzo was gazing in front of him at a deflated leather case which had once been a punchball. Judging by its appearance now, it had been recently kicked by a giant elephant. The bladder was peeping through a rent in the side,

while the cord which should have fastened it to the floor was broken, leaving it dangling from a beam across the gym.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo ruefully. "How unfortunate! I have slightly damaged it. And I did not hit very hard. Dear me!"

"My only hat!" ejaculated Johnny Bull. "That was the blessed bunch-bag we heard go pop then."

"It must have been!"

The eyes of the Famous Five travelled in amazement from the wrecked ball to the left of the gym where six juniors were standing in a row. They were Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove, and his two precious pals, Stott and Snoop, Wan Lung, the Chinese junior, Billy Bunter, and his minor, Sammy of the Second.

Near by, seated at a desk, sporting a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles borrowed for the occasion, and with a megaphone in his hand, was Fisher T. Fish.

Harry Wharton & Co. allowed their astonished gaze to travel back to Alonzo.

"W-what's the game, Toddy?" demanded Bob Cherry faintly.

"Beat it, you jays!" roared Fisher T. Fish through his megaphone. "I guess the first session of the Alonzo-Fisho Strength Developing and Muscle Building Federation is now on. I guess we
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ain't a prize show for amateurs—nope, sir!"

"Oh!"

"So that's the wheeze!"

The Famous Five's amazement died away; then they grinned, then they chuckled, then they laughed, then they doubled themselves up and roared.

"The seekers after strength!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows," gasped Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five through his big spectacles, "I don't see anything to cackle about because a fellow's training. I'm all for an Al nation, you know."

"An Al feed you mean?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pool Chinaman get velly stiong allee samee punchee plenty boko," added Wun Lung.

"Yes, buzz off!" snorted Skinner.

The Famous Five roared again. It was too funny. Each one of the class was a celebrity in his own way, but they were not the type of youths that one would have expected to show much interest in any sort of physical exertion.

"I guess you jays can laff," sneered Fisher T. Fish. "But when we've turned these downtrodden mutts into all-fired roaring tornados, like I stated in the prospectus, I calculate you'll laff the other side of your faces—jevver get left?"

There came a roar of protest from Alonzo's pupils.

"Who's a mutt, Fish?"

"I'll punch your nose!"

"Oh, all serene, I guess!" exclaimed Fish soothingly.

"So that's it!" exclaimed Johnny Bull and Wharton together. "They're acquiring strength so they can go round punching heads like Alonzo does!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The reason the six juniors had taken up Fisher T. Fish's wonderful offer was now obvious enough. They were out to emulate the exploits of Alonzo. If Alonzo could do it, why not they?

That was the question the astute Fish had put to them when he had called round the studies canvassing for pupils. Since they had found no answer to such logic, they had parted with the first instalment entitling them to a course of super-man strength development.

"Well, what part of the lesson have you got to, Alonzo?" demanded Wharton curiously.

"Having concluded a little punching practice, I was about to indulge in a little exhibition wrestling, my dear fellows," said Alonzo.

Bob Cherry winked at his chums.

"I'll have a round with you, Toddy," he said.

"With pleasure, my dear Cherry. Pray step forward."

Bob removed his jacket and stepped on to the mat that was laid in readiness. He did not profess to understand the sudden change that had come over Alonzo, but he felt that he would have no difficulty in handling him.

"Right-ho, Toddy!" he grinned. "Let her rip!"

Alonzo wasted no further time in talk. Circling round the burly Removite, he suddenly dashed in. Bob felt himself gripped round the waist and swung off his feet. The next moment Alonzo had raised him above his head, and commenced to twirl him round.

There came a gasp of astonishment from the rest of the Famous Five.

Alonzo had acted so quickly that Bob Cherry hardly had time to realise what

was happening. He struggled to break free, but in vain.

Faster and faster Alonzo whirled him round, as though he had been no more than a sack of beans.

"Ow! Yoop! Lemme go!" shouted Bob, the gym swimming before his eyes.

"He, he, he!" sniggered Skinner & Co. delightedly.

"Go it, Alonzo!"

Suddenly the Duffer ceased his twirling, and lowered the astonished Bob to the ground.

"Ow!" gasped Bob.

"I hope I did not alarm you, my dear Cherry?" said Alonzo solicitously.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Perhaps if your friends would combine with you to oppose me, it would be more even. I am afraid you are a weakling, Cherry."

Bob glared.

"Do—do you mean you want to take the lot of us on together?" demanded Johnny Bull incredulously.

"Certainly, Bull!"

"My hat!"

"Come on, then!"

The chums of the Remove needed no second invitation. They closed round the amazing Alonzo, grinning. They felt that while he might be strong, he was an optimist of the first water if he thought he could tackle the lot of them.

Johnny Bull dashed in first, and endeavoured to collar Alonzo round the waist in the same manner that he had done Bob Cherry a few moments before.

But something seemed to go wrong with the works.

A hand suddenly shot out and gripped him by the collar. The next moment he was yanked off his feet and sent hurtling across the floor.

Crash!

He struck the ground with a loud bump and stared dazedly around.

Thud!

Bump!

Crash!

Bump!

Four other figures descended on the luckless Bull one after another.

"Ow! Yoop!" groaned Bull.

"Ow! Yoop!" echoed four other voices in unison.

A roar of laughter sounded across the gym.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Jevver get left?"

Johnny Bull gazed blankly at the four juniors sprawling on the ground.

"What the thump—" he began.

"Ow! My nose!"

"Ow! My eye!"

"Who kicked me?"

"The kickfulness of the esteemed mule was terrific!"

The Famous Five blinked at each other sheepishly and rose painfully to their feet. The whole thing had happened so quickly that even now they could hardly realise what had happened.

"Did—did Alonzo chuck you fellows across?" gasped Bull at length.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Nugent sarcastically. "We all slipped on a piece of orange-peel—like you did! Ow!"

"Well, I'm jiggered!" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"Come on!" shouted the voice of Alonzo, who was jumping up and down on the wrestling mat, rubbing his bony hands together. "Come on, my dear Bull, Cherry, Wharton, and Nugent. Come on, my dear fellows, I am waiting!"

The Famous Five glared.

"Of all the blessed cheek!"

"I'll slaughter him!"

Harry Wharton & Co. made a concerted rush towards the excited and leaping Duffer of Greyfriars. But Alonzo was ready for them. There followed a wild scramble and a whirling of arms and legs.

"Ow! I've got him!"

"Yooop!"

Round and round whirled the combatants. Several times the Famous Five obtained a grip on their opponent, but they failed to keep it. Alonzo seemed to possess all the qualities of an oily eel combined with the strength and ferocity of a rhinoceros.

Bump!

Wallop!

Harry Wharton & Co. felt themselves picked up and thrown about like sacks of flour, but they were nothing if not game. They came on again and yet again. Try as they might, however, they seemed no match for the amazing Alonzo.

Meanwhile, Alonzo's class gathered at a respectful distance from the combatants and yelled themselves hoarse with excitement.

"Go it, Wharton!"

"Go it, Toddy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Nugent went sailing over Alonzo's shoulders and landed on the chest of Inky, who was struggling to his feet from a similar throw.

"Ow! Yoop!"

"Come on!" howled Alonzo, his excitement increasing every moment. "Come and have some more!"

Gone now were all thoughts of Uncle Benjamin and his valuable precepts. Alonzo was enjoying himself. Hitherto he had been the weakling of the Form. He had been the standing joke whose fellows referred to as a boob. But he was a weakling and a boob no longer—and he intended to let them know it.

"Come on!" he roared again.

Harry Wharton & Co. did not come on. They did not feel it was a sporting proposition. They were bruised and aching all over. Alonzo Todd was more than they could manage—and they knew it. And every moment his prodigious strength and ferocity seemed to increase.

Bump!

Crash!

Wharton and Nugent hit the floor from a swing from Alonzo's hip.

"Groo! Yoop!"

"I'm off!" gasped Nugent, picking himself hurriedly up. "He's balmy!"

Frank made a bolt for the open door of the gym.

"Me, too!"

The rest of the Famous Five followed, accompanied by yells of laughter from the spectators and further invitations from Alonzo to come back and have some more.

Alonzo surveyed the fleeing juniors with satisfaction.

So far he had done well—very well indeed. He was just beginning to enjoy himself, and he did not want his fun spoiled by lack of opponents.

His gaze transferred itself to his grinning pupils, and, emitting a roar like unto the celebrated mad bull of Bashan, he made a wild rush at them.

Bump!

"Yerooooooh!"

"Really, Todd—Yoop!"

Alonzo's class were wise in their generation. They had seen what had happened to the Famous Five. The idea of having the same thing happen to them was not one that appealed to them. So, with a yell of alarm, they turned and fled helter-skelter from the gym, close on the heels of the Famous Five.



Alonzo's hand suddenly shot out and gripped Johnny Bull by the collar. The next moment Bull was yanked off his feet and sent hurtling across the floor. Crash! He struck the ground with a bump and stared dazedly around. Thud! Bump! Crash! Thud! Four other figures descended to the floor of the gym one after another. "Ow! Yooop!" howled Bull. "Ow! Yooop!" echoed four other voices in unison. (See Chapter 7.)

"Ow! Stoppit!" yelled Bunter, in fear, running as fast as his fat little legs would carry him. "Stoppit, Toddy, old man!"

Alonzo did not stop, however. Instead, he sped out after the alarmed Removites, yelling at the top of his voice and wildly waving his skinny arms.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Tartar for Trumper!

"MY hat!"

"What's up?"

A shout went up from different parts of the Close as the two groups of juniors appeared speeding from the gym.

Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth, who were standing near by, grinned.

"It's Bunter again!" chuckled Temple. "He's always bullying Wharton and his pals. You know how fierce Bunter is."

"Oh, rather!" said Fry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

At that moment another figure came into view a few yards behind. It was Alonzo Todd!

The Upper Fourth fellows stared, and almost collapsed.

"It's Todd!"

"Oh, rather!"

That Todd was responsible for the headlong flight of the two groups of juniors was obvious enough. The terrified yells of Billy Bunter and his minor, Sammy, made that much more than clear. Temple, Dabney & Co., in common with the rest of the school, had heard of the curious change that had come over the Duffer. Even so, the spectacle of about a dozen juniors being chased by him almost robbed them of breath.

"My only Sunday topper!" gasped Dabney faintly. "They're bolting from Todd! I wonder what he's been up to this time? Come on, chaps, let's follow up and see what happens."

"What-ho!"

The Fourth-Formers turned and raced across the Close.

They had not gone far, however, when there came a yell of alarm from beneath the old elms just inside the school gates.

"Rescue, Remove!"

As the cry echoed across the Close Alonzo stopped short. His quarry, hearing his footfalls cease, stopped, too.

"What's up now?" gasped Bob Cherry, glancing behind at the Duffer.

"He has stopfully halted!" purred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Perhaps the esteemed Todd is windfully puffed."

But it was soon obvious that something other than a lack of wind had brought the Duffer to a standstill. He stood for a few moments, his prominent proboscis tilted in an attitude of strained attention. At that moment he resembled nothing so much as an old war-horse listening to the beat of drums.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "What was that?"

"Buck up, Remove!" came the cry again.

"Council rotters!"

"Trumper!" gasped Harry Wharton, who, like Alonzo, had heard the alarm clearly for the first time.

Even as the cry died away Alonzo let off a fearful howl. Forgetful of his fleeing class, he suddenly turned and charged off at a furious speed towards the school gates.

"Come on!" shouted Wharton. "After him!"

The Famous Five turned and followed.

Meanwhile, over near the school gates a battle royal was raging. Trumper and his merry men from Courtfield Council School had planned a raid on Greyfriars. But they had been spotted by Mark Linley before they had been five minutes in the college precincts. The Lancashire lad had immediately raised the alarm, and, aided only by Dick Penfold, dashed in to give battle. Mark and Penfold fought for all they were worth, but the Courtfield youths

were as hard as nails, and outnumbered them by about six to one.

Solly Lazarus, Trumper's trusty lieutenant, had just succeeded in getting Penfold on to the ground. He was about to take a seat on his head when there came a fearsome yell from his left.

"Desist!"

Trumper & Co. glanced up in alarm.

But their looks of apprehension quickly changed to grins. For rushing down upon them, still attired in his sweater and shorts, they beheld the bony form of Alonzo Todd.

Some distance behind Todd stood a number of Removites, who, for some reason or other Trumper & Co. did not understand, made no effort either to restrain or aid Alonzo.

The Famous Five and Skinner & Co. had a feeling that Alonzo would be able to look after himself. But they were all close on hand should their services be needed.

"Desist!" roared Alonzo again, putting on every ounce of speed he possessed.

"My 'at!" gasped Trumper with a grin. "Look at 'im!"

"Get ready to thloth him vun, felloth," lisped Solly Lazarus excitedly. "It's only that thilly ath Alonoth Todd."

"Haw, haw, haw!"

Alonzo charged down on the grinning Council School lads like a bull at a china shop, hitting out right and left.

Biff, wallop, thud!

"Ow!"

Smack, crash!

"Yoop!"

Several of the village youths went down, one after another, under the Duffer's terrific onslaught. Trumper, like the Removites before his curious change, had been inclined to regard Alonzo as a harmless ass. But now he quickly changed his opinion. This was a new Alonzo, and he did not quite know what to make of him, and neither did his followers.

"My 'at!" gasped Trumper, mopping his nose, which had just been in violent contact with Alonzo's fist. "E's gorn barny! Ow!"

"Give him beans!"

"Knock 'is 'ead off!"

The Courtfield lads quickly recovered from the attack, and closed in at their enemy. Alonzo, however, was more than ready for them. He possessed a mad desire to hit, and to hit hard and often. He was satisfying that desire. Those villagers who had stopped Alonzo's early blows possessed the same desire towards Alonzo, but their desires were not satisfied. The wrestling in the gym had merely been a start as far as Alonzo was concerned. Now he was going strong.

Biff, thud, smack!

"Yoop!"

"Crooo!"

Whack, thud, wallop!

Alonzo was living up to the title of an "all-fired, roaring tornado," bestowed upon him by Fisher T. Fish. He was certainly too much of a tornado for Trumper & Co. And what Trumper & Co. themselves lacked in the qualities of a tornado, they made up for by roaring—with pain.

Try as they might, they could hardly touch the amazing Alonzo. Even when they did their blows seemed to affect him but little, unless it was sub-consciously to increase his speed and ferocity. He was all around them, dealing out blows which felt to the village lads like kicks from a horse.

Smack, biff, thud!

The villagers went down before the onslaught like so many ninepins. No less than six were on the ground nursing broken noses, black eyes, or swollen jaws, while two of them, like the rabbits in the fable, were already seeking fields afar, via the school gates, as fast as their legs would carry them.

By now a great crowd of Greyfriars fellows had assembled, and were watching the fight with excited amazement. Todd had never been noted as a fighting-man. But he seemed to be doing better—far better—than any other half-dozen juniors put together.

The Removites sent up a cheer of encouragement.

"Go it, Toddy!"

"On the ball!"

"Give 'em one for Uncle Ben!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo needed no urging. He went it, for the simple reason that he could not help himself. His boundless strength was simply shrieking for an outlet.

As for Trumper & Co., they thought the Duffer must have been bitten by a rabid dog. It was the last thing they had expected of him. They were beginning to realise, in a dim sort of way, the reason the Removites had held off from joining in the battle. Moreover, they were so stunned with surprise that they hardly knew what to do. They thought that in Alonzo they had seen a sheep coming to be slaughtered. But the sheep had turned into a raging lion, and had become in some mysterious way the slaughterer instead.

By now Trumper & Co. had had enough—more than enough. They were aching and bruised all over, and every moment their bruises were being added to.

"Scoot, fellowth!" yelled Solly Lazarus suddenly. "The thilly ath hath gone mad!"

As he spoke, the Hebrew lad turned and bolted. He was closely followed by the rest of the Courtfield youths—all

save Trumper. That youth was determined not to give in while he could still stand.

He picked himself up from the ground, and stood for a moment like Ajax defying the lightning. The bony form of Alonzo hurtled down upon him. Trumper hit out wildly. His fists missed their mark, and two stunning blows landed simultaneously on his ears.

A group of exceedingly bright comets—or so it seemed to Trumper—shot up before his vision. The next moment two steel-like arms closed round his waist, and he was shot through the air over Alonzo's shoulder.

Bump!

"Ow! Yoop!"

There came a roar of laughter from the almost convulsed Greyfriars fellows.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hear us smile!"

"Ow!"

Trumper staggered to his feet.

Smash, thud!

Two more mule-like blows took him on the jaw.

But Trumper was finished.

With a terrified howl he turned and bolted helter-skelter for the school gates, close in the wake of the rest of his band.

"Lemme go!" he howled. "Keep-imeff! Ow! Yoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo gazed around him in amazement.

"Dear me, the villain has fled!" he gasped.

Alonzo started in hot pursuit.

Across the Close raced Trumper & Co., Alonzo bringing up their rear. Trumper & Co. put on a speed that would have made a Marathon runner of old look like a messenger-boy with an urgent telegram.

The spectators went almost mad with delight. Their old enemies had been completely routed, and by one unaided junior!

Frank Nugent threw his cap into the air, while Bob Cherry rolled over and over on the ground choking with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Trumper & Co. reached the school gates and fled headlong up the road towards Friardale. Alonzo arrived at the gates a split second after them, and stood in the road shaking a bony fist at their retreating figures.

It had been a complete and overwhelming victory for the Removites. Trumper & Co. had fled ignominiously, yelling for mercy. Such a thing had never been known in the history of the ancient college before. And it had all been due to Alonzo Todd, celebrated throughout the school as the Duffer of Greyfriars! It seemed, however, that he was a duffer no longer. He was a hero instead.

The Removites closed around him, chuckling and laughing.

"Good old Toddy!" exclaimed Wharton, gripping him by the hand.

"The goodness of the esteemed Todd is terrific!"

A dozen juniors endeavoured to thump Alonzo on the back at the same moment.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Really, my dear schoolfellows—"

"Three cheers for the Duffer!" yelled Johnny Bull suddenly.

"Hip-pip—"

"Hooray!"

Cheers went up from juniors and seniors alike.

Alonzo mopped his brow with a handkerchief.

"Dear me! It is surprising how firing I find the least exertion!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, taking Alonzo by the arm and leading the way in the direction of the tuckshop. "The feed's on little us!"

"Thank you, Wharton! I am certainly hungry."

"Good!"

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, pushed his way through the crowd, and blinked at Alonzo and the Famous Five through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, I'll come to the tuckshop—"

"Seat!"

"Really, Wharton, I hope you're not going to separate me from my pal Toddy!"

Alonzo turned to Bunter, the light of battle again in his eyes.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter suddenly, and he fled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Five minutes later Alonzo was being feted in the tuckshop by the Famous Five and a number of admiring Removites. But Todd's old pal Bunter was not there.

Bunter had conceived a new respect for the one-time Duffer.

THE NINTH CHAPTER

In Training!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Where's young Sandow?"

Bob Cherry entered the junior Common-room and glanced around.

It was the day after the rout of Trumper & Co., and Alonzo was still enjoying the unusual experience of being lionised.

Alonzo Todd arose from a seat in the corner where he had been reading.

"Do you want me, ass?"

Bob Cherry started.

For the past few days, ever since the manifestations of his curious change, Alonzo had developed an alternative method of speech. Sometimes he spoke in his old, long-winded way, while at others he assumed a brisker manner, more like the rest of the juniors.

At first it had been somewhat disconcerting. Now, however, the Removites were beginning to get used to it.

"Yes, I'm the ass who wants you, Toddy," grinned Bob. "And four other asses in Study No. 1 want you, too."

Alonzo closed his book and followed Bob Cherry to Study No. 1.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Bob, pushing open the door.

"Good! Sit down, Toddy!"

Alonzo did so, wondering what was coming next.

"Now, look here, Alonzo!" began Wharton, when Bob had closed the door. "We've been watching you for some time. I don't know what the thump's happened to you, but you certainly seem to have become a rough handful."

"I'm afraid I have, my dear Wharton," nodded Alonzo. "I have felt for some time that I am becoming aggressive."

The chums of the Remove grinned.

"Go hon!" murmured Frank Nugent facetiously. "You don't say so."

"Yes, really, Nugent."

"Well, anyway," went on Wharton, "I've been thinking. You remember you offered to represent Greyfriars in the Public Schools Junior Boxing Championship a few days ago?"

Alonzo nodded.
"Is the offer still open?"
Alonzo achieved a near approach to his old-time beaming smile, but it ended in a grin.
"Certainly, my dear Wharton!"
"Good!" exclaimed Wharton. "Then, if you like to go in for a little training the job's yours. I know you're as strong as a blessed horse, but that isn't everything. To take part in a proper boxing match you'll have to be coached up a bit. You won't be allowed to biff your opponent over the boko, and then crush his ribs, or sling him over your shoulders, for instance."
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the rest of the Famous Five.
"Well, what about it?" went on Harry.
"I would be very pleased indeed, my dear Wharton!" gasped Alonzo, with a pleased expression. "Exceedingly pleased, my dear fellow. I would certainly refrain from crushing my opponent's ribs, and would endeavour instead to concentrate on smashing his boko, as you call it."
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Good old Alonzo!"
"Perhaps you will permit me to demonstrate my meaning," said the Duffer, rising to his feet.
"Here, keep away, you ass!" gasped Harry Wharton, in alarm.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I will not be too severe."
"All serene, Toddy!" boomed the stentorian voice of Bob Cherry.
"We know what you mean!" exclaimed Johnny Bull, laying a restraining hand on the Duffer's arm. "Sit down, there's a good chap!"
"The sitdownfulness of the esteemed Toddy would be of the acceptable order!" grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur.
"Very well," said Alonzo. "If you would rather."
"Now, let's cut the cackle and get to the horses," went on Wharton. "You turn up in the gym after tea to-night, and I'll arrange for a few sparring partners for you. Meanwhile, I'll send in your name."
"Thank you, my dear Wharton!"
"Good! Now cut off like a good chap. We've got a lot to do, and the bell will go for afternoon lessons soon."
Alonzo left the study, and Harry Wharton busied himself filling in particulars of the Greyfriars candidate on the entrance form. This task was soon over, and he turned to his chums again.
"What about sparring partners?" he demanded.
"Ahem!" coughed Bob Cherry.
"Exactly!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.
"Quite so!" nodded Frank Nugent.
"Of the coursefulness!" murmured Inky.
Wharton grinned.
"Shall I shove your name down, Bob?" he asked.
"Don't let me thrust myself forward at another fellow's expense," said Bob Cherry. "What about old Johnny Bull?"
Bull snorted.
"I don't want my blessed chivvy stove in!" he grunted. "Alonzo might get excited and do some damage. He's got a punch like a horse, if you should catch a stray wallop."
"Hear, hear!"
"Someone's got to have the job," laughed Wharton.
"H'm! I suppose they have."
Wharton's chums, however, did not seem at all anxious for it. They knew almost every trick in the noble art of self-defence. But as Johnny Bull had pointed out, one stray blow from the "new" Alonzo would be sufficient to do

more damage than could be repaired very easily.
"If it really comes to the point," said Bob Cherry at length, "I suppose we shall have to take it on. But my idea is to get some other ass to skim the first cream of Alonzo's enthusiasm."
"Hear, hear!" added Johnny Bull and Nugent emphatically.
Wharton looked thoughtful for a moment.
Crash!
There came a bang at the study door.
"Come in, ass!" sang out Wharton cheerfully.
The face of Horace Coker, the genial ass of the Fifth, peeped in at the juniors. The Famous Five rose to their feet in alarm.
"All serene!" grinned Coker, who was supported by his two pals, Potter and Greene. "Pax, you kids. We've come on business."
"What a bit of luck for you," chuckled Bob Cherry.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Coker scowled.
"What's this I hear about Alonzo Todd representing you kids in the boxing tournament?" he demanded. "He's buzzing all over the school telling everyone he's been nominated, and that you fellows are going to give him a bit of coaching."
"True, O king!" agreed Harry Wharton.
Coker gasped.
"But—but he knows nothing about boxing," he said. "He can't tell a near side from an offside glove."
"That's all O.K.," replied Wharton easily. "He's as strong as a horse, and if he can't box he can fight. All he wants is a little boxing tuition."
"Yes, I suppose that's so," nodded Coker.
The chums of the Remove exchanged significant glances. The same idea had entered all their minds at the same moment.
Horace Coker was a very great man indeed—according to Coker.
What he did not know about any given subject was not worth knowing, and of boxing in particular, he was a regular vade mecum.
Indeed, were it not for his presence there to help and advise, Greyfriars would not be the school it was—according to Coker.

Meet
NICK—
THE
MERRY
'TEC!



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When the great Horace heard of Wharton's decision to allow Alonzo to represent the school, he felt that Alonzo's only hope of victory lay in thorough and skilful coaching before the fight. And there was only one fellow in the whole of the school capable of giving that coaching—according to Coker.
That fellow was the great Horace himself!
"Yes, that's so!" agreed Coker again.
"Of course, what we want," said Wharton, staring innocently at the Fifth Former, "is a fellow to take Alonzo in hand who knows boxing from A to Z. A really clever chap, you know, who's man enough to stand a hard knock now and again."
"A fellow with the skill and spirit of the old prizefighters," added Bob Cherry.
"A sort of super-man, you know, Coker!" murmured Frank Nugent, skilfully turning a laugh into a cough. "A fellow like—like—"
"Like me, you mean?" exclaimed Coker, falling to the bait.
The Famous Five nodded eagerly.
"Ha—but would you?" asked Johnny Bull, shaking with suppressed laughter.
"We—we thought of you, you know, Coker, but after all, we're only juniors, and you being in the Fifth—"
"And everyone worrying you to show them how to do things," put in Nugent meekly, "we know how your services are in demand—"
"Oh, that's all right," said the ass of the Fifth loftily. "I don't usually waste time with kids, but for the sake of Greyfriars I wouldn't mind helping you out."
"Oh, thanks, Coker!"
"It's awfully good of you."
"Not at all. I'll be in the gym after tea to-night. You bring your man along and I'll show you how boxing should really be boxed."
And feeling that he had done a good turn to humanity in general, the great Horace left the study. When he had gone the chums of the Remove surveyed each other with purple faces.
"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton. "It worked like a charm!"
"Poor old Coker!"
The Famous Five suddenly gave vent to their pent-up feelings, and roared.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
The bell for afternoon lessons cut short their merriment and they made their way to the Form-room chuckling. Within five minutes the news of Coker's generous offer, and its equally generous acceptance, was all over the Remove.
The juniors waited impatiently for lessons to end, and tea over, they made their way in force to the gym, to see their representative receive his first lesson in boxing from the hands of Horace Coker of the Fifth.
Coker was there well on time. He was supported, as usual, by Potter and Greene. But Potter and Greene were not present through any desire of their own. Coker had pressed them into service as sparring partners. They knew the strength of Coker's fist—but they knew the strength of Alonzo's fist also, if only by repute.
They were caught like the Spanish hero of old, between the dragon and the lake of fire. So they decided to wait and see what happened to their leader before they made any active opposition. Potter and Greene did not believe in meeting trouble half way.
Coker and his pupil lost no time in preparing for the first lesson. With the Removites listening in open-mouthed astonishment, Coker opened up by explaining at some length the rudiments of boxing—according to Coker.
When he concluded he turned to Alonzo.
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"Have you got the idea?" he asked. Alonzo nodded.

"Right. You bear in mind what I've told you, and then we'll start. When you've had a try-out with me you can have a go with Potter, while I spot your faults."

"Certainly, Coker!"

The crowd moved back and formed a ring, and the junior and senior commenced to spar.

"Go it, Alonzo!"

"Steady!" sang out Coker. "Try and ward off my blows like I told you, Todd, and then try and see if you can hit me in the face—if you can."

"Certainly, Coker!"

The combatants danced around like a couple of cats on hot bricks for a few moments.

"That'll do for a bit," panted Coker, at length. "You did very well, Todd. That's what we boxers call the defence."

"Yes, Coker!"

"Right. Now I'm going to attack, and you'll see the difference. Don't be nervous, Todd. I won't hurt you."

"Am I still permitted to smite you in the face while you are attacking, Coker?" asked Alonzo innocently.

Coker grinned.

"Yes, if you can, kid! I've taught a good many of you kids boxing, but I must say you show a lot of promise, Todd. Come on!"

Coker commenced what he called his attack. So far, Alonzo had not exhibited any of the ferocity or strength the juniors had learned to associate with him. But he was only warming up!

So was Coker!

His arms began to whirl, and by accident more than anything else, he caught the Duffer a smart tap on his proboscis.

"Ow!" gasped Alonzo.

The next moment he let off a wild howl. There was something about that howl reminiscent of the neigh of a horse in pain. Something whizzed through the air and caught Coker dead on the point.

Biff!

Ten million stars jumped before Coker's vision. The gym seemed to whirl around him, and he slumped heavily to the floor.

Crash!

"Oh!"

"My hat!"

"Coker's down!"

Coker lay where he had fallen blinking dazedly about him. He tried to rise, but his limbs seemed paralysed. Then he tried to speak—but only achieved a groan.

Potter and Greene stared at their fallen leader in amazement.

The Removites grinned.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "Did I hurt you, Coker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, no, you didn't hurt him!"

"He just felt tired!"

Coker rolled over on his side.

"I—I feel sick!" he groaned. "Ah, Oooooop! Whatwozzit?"

"But—but you said I might hit you—if I could!" complained Alonzo. "I understood you to say you would attack me, my dear Coker!"

"Yow!"

"Do you wish me to follow up my advantage—as you said I should?"

"Ow!"

"If you will rise from the boards I will endeavour to administer the knock-out—as you explained I should."

"Wow!"

Coker vouchsafed no reply other than a groan to Alonzo's questions. Instead, he turned an appealing glance to Potter and Greene.

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"Gimme some water!" he moaned. "Oooooop! I do feel bad!"

Potter and Greene raised their leader to a chair. He still seemed stunned and helpless. He tried to get to his feet, but his knees gave way beneath him.

"I—I can't walk!" he moaned.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked alarmed.

"Better fetch the stretcher and get him to his study," suggested Mark Linley. "He won't be able to get across the Close otherwise."

Potter and Greene stared at each other in dismay. But there seemed no help for it. Coker was too heavy for them to carry any distance, and he could not walk.

"Poor old Coker!" gasped Greene.

Several juniors dragged the stretcher from a corner of the gym; and Coker, hardly realising what was happening, was placed upon it. Potter and Greene took an end each, and, with a number of Removites to keep them company, carried their wounded comrade towards the quarters of the Fifth.

"He'll be all right soon," exclaimed Wharton, when the sorrowful cavalcade had gone. "Toddy certainly caught him a nasty one, but Coker never could stand pain."

"Anyway, he told Todd he might—if he could," grinned Hazeldene, who had joined the group. "I heard him."

"So did we."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, here endeth the first lesson," grinned Wharton, turning to Alonzo. "You needn't look so sorrowful. It was a fair enough blow; but Coker couldn't stand it, that's all."

"So he tookfully accepted it lying down!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites returned to their own quarters. Alonzo's boxing lesson had ended sooner than they had anticipated.

As for Coker, under the skilful administrations of his two pals he soon recovered, and, apart from a bruised and aching jaw, was none the worse for his adventure.

When next he appeared near the Remove quarters he was greeted with howls of laughter.

"Yah! Who killed Cock Robin?"

"Sleeping beauty!"

"Poor old Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Deprived of Coker's valuable services, the Removites had to set about coaching Alonzo themselves. Their efforts were not attended without minor casualties, and hardly any of Alonzo's preceptors escaped with whole skins. They made their sacrifices cheerfully, feeling they were working for a good cause, and black eyes were as plentiful in the Remove just then as flowers in May.

By the end of the week, however, Alonzo had made rapid progress. His punches had lost none of their force; instead, if anything, they seemed to have become even more devastating than ever.

"My only aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry to Harry Wharton, the day before the fight. "Alonzo ought to be able to wallop Jack Dempsey himself!"

"You're right, Bob!"

"The walk-over for the esteemed Todd will be terrific, my worthy chums."

Inky's opinion was shared by the majority of the Greyfriars fellows. They thought that, barring accidents, the fight was theirs, and that the silver trophy was as good as in the school Hall already.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Great Fight!

THERE were several schools expecting to meet the Greyfriars man, including Rookwood, Rylcombe Grammar School, and St. Jim's. Highcliffe had been in the running, but had been displaced by Rookwood earlier on.

But it was only a week before the fight that Wharton had learned definitely that Greyfriars would oppose St. Jim's. Tom Merry, the captain of the St. Jim's Shell, being the man put forward.

The Removites had met the St. Jim's fellows on a number of occasions, and they knew Tom Merry to be a hard-hitting and clever boxer. But when they thought of the surprise they had in store for him in the bony shape of Alonzo they grinned.

The fight had been arranged to take place in the Courtfield Boxing Hall, as being a convenient point between the two schools. The headmaster of each school, Dr. Holmes and Dr. Locke, had granted a half-day's holiday for the occasion. And the next day, long before the preliminary battle for the championship was due to commence, the county town was packed with representatives from each school.

The Famous Five, Alonzo Todd, and Lord Mauleverer, arrived in a car specially chartered by his lordship. A cheer went up from the Greyfriars fellows already assembled as Alonzo was recognised.

"How are you feeling, Alonzo?" inquired Johnny Bull as the car stopped outside the boxing-hall.

"I fear I am feeling very aggressive indeed, my dear Bull," said Alonzo. "I shall fight ferociously."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good! Don't forget what we've taught you, and it'll be a blessed walk-over."

"Certainly, Wharton," replied Alonzo. "You may be sure I shall do my best."

Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Bob Cherry, who were acting as Alonzo's seconds, escorted their champion to the dressing-room.

Meanwhile, the great boxing-hall was rapidly filling. The St. Jim's fellows, expecting an easy victory for Tom Merry, had arrived in force, and so had the Greyfriars fellows.

But it was some minutes before the would-be champions had changed into boxing kit.

Alonzo Todd was the first of the couple to appear in the ring, and as he stepped through the ropes a loud cheer went up.

Alonzo stood blinking for a moment under the blaze of the powerful arc lamps, trying to get accustomed to his surroundings. It was the first time he had ever been in the ring. He stared at the sea of upturned faces around him, and for a moment his courage seemed to ooze through his boots, but only for a moment.

"Good old Tom!" suddenly roared someone in the hall. "St. Jim's for ever!"

Tom Merry had appeared!

He grinned at the spectators, and waved his hand to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, who was seated with Figgins & Co. of the New House near the ringside.

The referee, a well-known sportsman, named Collins, appointed by the Public Schools Boxing Committee, held up his hand for silence.

"Gentlemen," he shouted, "on my left is Tom Merry of St. Jim's, and on my right Alonzo Todd of Greyfriars."

"Hooray!"

"Good old Toddy!"

"Good old Merry!"

"The contest you are about to witness," went on the referee, "is for the Public Schools Junior Championship, and will be of twelve rounds duration."

Another roar went up from the spectators, almost drowning the voice of the referee as he called:

"Seconds out of the ring!"

Excitement was intense now. The combatants rose from their stools, and whipped off their dressing-gowns. As the bony form of Alonzo Todd was revealed a yell of laughter rent the air.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Harry Wharton grinned.

"They'll laugh the other side of their faces before long," he confided to Bob Cherry.

"What-ho, Harry!"

Alonzo certainly presented a weird spectacle. He looked as much like a boxer as Billy Bunter resembled a hat-pin. His boxing kit hung in folds on his bony form; while, judging by appearances, he did not seem to possess enough strength to hurt a kitten.

The noise soon ceased as the spectators waited expectantly for the gong.

Boom!

The gong echoed eerily through the great hall.

Alonzo Todd and Tom Merry sprang from their seats and lightly touched gloves.

The next moment the great fight for the championship had commenced.

Tom Merry opened up with a sharp right to the duffer's jaw. Alonzo replied with an attack to the solar plexus. For a few moments the two juniors circled lightly around each other.

Biff!

Suddenly Tom Merry's left shot out and caught Alonzo on the nose.

"Good!"

"Go it, Alonzo!"

"Hand him a horse-kick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo needed no urging.

He was not feeling particularly vindictive when the gong sounded, but the blow Tom Merry had landed on his proboscis seemed to set him going. He let off a wild roar and hit out right and left.

Biff, wallop, thud!

"Oh-er!"

Alonzo's blows landed with stunning force on Tom Merry's ribs, one after another.

There came a gasp of amazement from the St. Jim's fellows.

Tom Merry staggered back and attempted to retaliate. His left shot out, but before it landed, something that felt like a five-point-nine took him on the side of the head.

Thud!

Tom Merry spun completely round and sank to the floor like a log.

"One—two—three—" sang out the referee. "Four—five—"

Boom!

The gong saved Tom Merry from an early defeat.

He struggled to his feet, nursing his jaw. It had been a near thing, and as unexpected as it was near. Even yet he could hardly believe the blow had been landed by the weedy youth before him.

The Removites went mad with joy. They jumped and yelled and flung their caps into the air in their exuberance.

Alonzo was living up to expectations with a vengeance.

As for the St. Jim's fellows, they stared at each other in dismay. This was not at all what they had expected. Tom Merry's seconds, Blake and Herries, worked frantically with sponges and towel.

"Ow!" groaned Tom Merry, in a semi-daze.

"Time!"

The two juniors jumped up and faced each other across the ring, and then, at precisely the same moment, they dashed at each other. This time, however, Tom Merry was taking no chances. Neither was Alonzo. Alonzo was beginning to enjoy himself now. True, he was no very scientific boxer. But the little coaching he had received from Harry Wharton & Co. was standing him in good stead. Also, the punishment he had given Tom Merry in the first round had left the St. Jim's fellow feeling groggy—very groggy indeed.

The two juniors danced around, exchanging light taps for some moments, while the spectators, their appetites whetted by the first round, shouted at the tops of their voices.

"Up, the Saints!"

"Go it, Duffer!"

Tom Merry felt his confidence returning.

"Come, boob!" he grinned good-naturedly.

As the word boob left Tom Merry's lips, a startling change came over Alonzo. The Greyfriars juniors had noticed the same change in him before, during his memorable battle with Loder. His eyes glinted and his lips narrowed.

"Boob!" he snorted. "Come on!"

The next moment he started in real earnest.

Smack, biff, wallop!

"Go it, Toddy!"

Thud!

Tom Merry staggered to the ropes, wondering whether his opponent had gone suddenly mad.

Biff!

Alonzo's fist took the St. Jim's junior full in his left eye, and it rapidly assumed a deep purple colouring.

The St. Jim's fellows groaned.

Crash, biff, thud!

The Duffer of Greyfriars rained blow after blow on his opponent, until Tom Merry hardly knew whether he was standing on his head or his feet. Alonzo was all over him. And each blow he landed felt to the unfortunate St. Jim's fellow like a kick from a horse. He endeavoured to enter into a clinch—and failed. His failure cost him the use of his other eye.

"Poor old Merry!" gasped Bob Cherry sympathetically, from the Greyfriars corner of the ring. "He's going through the mill and no error!"

"My hat, yes!"

"Alonzo is half-killing him!"

There was no doubt about it. Tom Merry was taking a terrible grueling. Any other fellow would have taken the count long ago. But the junior captain of St. Jim's possessed the courage of a lion.

Staggering about the ring with his nose streaming, and both eyes nearly closed, he presented a harrowing spectacle. But he came on gamely again and yet again.



Smack! Biff! Thud! The village youths went down like ninepins before Alonzo Todd's terrific onslaught. He was all round them, dealing out blows which felt to Trumper & Co. like kicks from a horse. A series of howls followed Alonzo's punches. "Yoop!" "Groooough!" "Wow!" (See Chapter 8.)

Crash, smash, thud!
Every blow Alonzo aimed found its mark. By now the Greyfriars fellows had ceased to cheer. They stared at the plucky St. Jim's fellow in amazement.

"Stop the fight!" shouted a voice.

"He'll kill him!"

Alonzo Todd glanced appealingly at the referee.

"No! Let's finish!" panted Tom Merry hoarsely. "I'm not done yet!"

"Knock him out!" roared Bob Cherry. "The poor beggar's had enough!"

"Hear, hear!"

Alonzo nodded, and raised his terrible left.

Thud!

Tom Merry took the blow on the point of jaw and dropped to his knees. Even so he was determined to fight to a finish. He struggled to his feet expecting the merciful knock-out every moment, while the spectators, Greyfriars and St. Jim's, yelled themselves hoarse.

The fight was in Alonzo's hands.

"Go on, finish him!" yelled Bulstrode.

But Alonzo did nothing of the sort.

A curious change seemed suddenly to have come over him. He blinked at the staggering form of Tom Merry before him as though waking from a trance, while his face seemed to resume its old expression of vacant simplicity.

"Go on!" yelled the Greyfriars fellows, wondering what on earth had come over their representative.

"Finish him, ass!"

"Don't stand looking at him!"

Alonzo seemed not to hear.

Tom Merry gazed at his opponent doubtfully. He was not quite certain whether this was some sort of ruse the Duffer was working. But why should he want to work any ruse? The fight was as good as his already.

The Removites rose to their feet frenzied with excitement. Never in the history of the ring had they seen or heard of such a thing before. It seemed that for some reason known only to himself the Duffer was deliberately throwing away the fight.

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Johnny Bull. "This is awful!"

"He's gone off his giddy rocker!"

Meanwhile, the despair of the St. Jim's fellows had turned to hope.

"Hit him, Tom!"

"Go it!"

Tom Merry, considerably mystified, slowly raised his fist. But Alonzo still stared at him much after the manner of a fat rabbit gazing at a starved boar-constrictor.

"Hit him!" roared Bob Cherry again.

"Hit him!" gasped Alonzo vacantly.

"Yes, put him out, ass!"

"P-put him out!"

"Don't be a fool!"

"F-fool!"

The Removites groaned.

"Oh, you blessed parrot!"

"P-parrot!"

Harry Wharton approached the edge of the ring.

"If you don't hit him we shall lose the fight, you blithering chump!" he groaned. "The fight's yours. Go in and finish him."

The Duffer turned and gazed at the red face of the captain of the Remove in mild surprise.

"Really, my dear schoolfellow," he began, in his old long-winded way. "I trust you do not desire me to assault Merry—"

There came a wild howl of laughter from the big hall, mixed with the groans and hisses of the Greyfriars fellows.

"My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me—"

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But what Alonzo's Uncle Benjamin had impressed upon him was nothing compared with that impressed by Tom Merry. The St. Jim's fellow's fist rose and caught Alonzo squarely on the point of the jaw.

Biff!

It was not a particularly hard blow—Merry was not in a state to give hard blows. But it was hard enough. Alonzo staggered and blinked at Tom Merry more in sorrow than in anger.

Crash!

Alonzo hit the floor before concluding and his eyes closed.

"Oh! Really, Merry—"

"He's down!"

A series of howls broke from the Removites. For Alonzo to have his man as good as beaten and calmly to accept a smash on the jaw was more than they could stand.

"The rotter!"

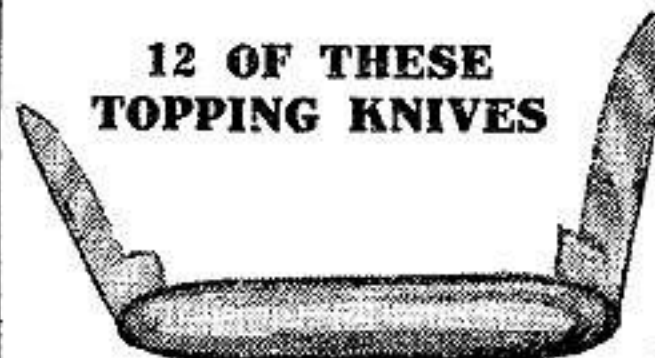
"He's chucked the fight away!"

"Oh, my hat!"

As for the St. Jim's fellows, they simply went mad with delight. In his exuberance, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, jammed his celebrated monocle into his mouth instead of into his eye. And Fatty Wynn, in an

ALWAYS USEFUL!

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equally excited moment hurled a doughnut into the air, which dropped, to his sorrow, too far away to be recovered.

"Hooray!"

"Good old Merry!"

"Up the Saints!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo lay where he had fallen, his eyes closed, a dazed look on his simple face. The referee, as amazed as the rest of the spectators, raised his arm and commenced to count.

"One—two—three—"

"Get up, Toddy!"

"Four—five—six—"

"Oh, great Scott!"

The packed audience was in a state bordering almost on chaos.

"Seven—eight—nine—"

In a last desperate effort to rouse their fallen champion, the Famous Five raised their voices in unison, and belated for all they were worth.

"Get—up—Todd!"

"Out!"

As the referee beat down his arm for the final count, a deafening volley of cheering burst from all parts of the hall.

Tom Merry had won!

Alonzo Todd, after having had things all his own way right from the commencement, had been defeated in the second round when victory was well within his grasp!

It was astounding!

"Merry wins!" shouted the referee, raising the victor's arm.

Meanwhile, Alonzo lay still where he had fallen. Harry Wharton & Co., their hearts heavy with disappointment, scrambled into the ring, and dragged Alonzo to a chair.

"Wake up, Toddy!" gasped Johnny Bull, dashing water into the Duffer's face. "Pull yourself together!"

Alonzo's head slumped on his chest.

"My hat!" gasped Nugent in alarm.

"Something's up with him. He must be ill!"

Tom Merry staggered over to the Famous Five.

"Jolly hard luck for you chaps!" he exclaimed, grinning through his battered face. "I can't understand what came over your man. He had me whacked to a frazzle!"

Wharton smiled faintly, and gripped the St. Jim's fellow's hand.

"You deserved to win, anyhow!" he said sincerely. "You put up one of the pluckiest fights I've ever seen. I'm jiggered if I know what's happened to Alonzo, though!"

Despite the ministrations of the Removites, however, Alonzo showed no signs of returning consciousness. He moaned faintly several times, but that was the only sign of life he gave. That something serious was wrong with him was obvious enough.

Kildare and Wingate, the respective captains of St. Jim's and Greyfriars, had been sitting together. They rose to their feet, and strode across to the ring-side, while the referee and officials quickly cleared the hall.

"Better get him up to the dressing-room and send for a doctor," advised Wingate, "while I get a car to get him back to the school."

"Right-ho, Wingate!"

The now thoroughly alarmed juniors carried Alonzo to the dressing-room as Wingate advised. Soon afterwards Alonzo opened his eyes.

Kildare forced some water between his lips. The Duffer took a few drops and gasped.

"Dear me!" he said. "I—I feel rather queer!"

A relieved expression came over the watchers' faces as they heard Alonzo speak.

Wingate entered the room at that moment.

"I can't get a doctor just now," he exclaimed, "so I've phoned the school to have a bed got ready. There's a car outside. Let's get him away."

Twenty minutes later Alonzo was in bed in the school sanatorium at Greyfriars, being examined by the local medico, Dr. Short. The celebrations which had been planned for the evening in Courtfield were abandoned. The Greyfriars fellows had all returned to the school, over which a hush seemed to have fallen. Now that it was established that something was definitely wrong with Alonzo, the resentment the juniors had held against him for, as they thought, throwing away the fight, was all gone.

Alonzo was ill!

The simple and good-natured Duffer was extremely popular at Greyfriars, and there was not a junior—or senior—in the school, save perhaps Loder, who did not give Alonzo his fullest sympathy. But what had caused his sudden change from a comparative weakling to the strongest fellow in the school in the first place was still as great a mystery as ever. And the juniors felt that in some way it was connected with his sudden breakdown in the boxing ring at Courtfield.

(Continued on page 28.)

LUCKY OR— Pyecroft and Jack Drake reckon themselves to be in luck when they come across a "lucky penny" which they know to be the property of the missing detective, Ferrers Locke. But the tangle this innocent-looking coin leads them into takes a lot of unravelling!



A powerful story of mystery and intrigue, featuring the world-famous detective Ferrers Locke, his assistant Jack Drake, Inspector Pyecroft of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard, and Monty Manners, a Society idol, who has taken up detective work.

The Clue of the Coin.

"TIME'S up!"

Inspector Pyecroft snapped his watch shut, and looked across at Jack Drake significantly.

Ferrers Locke's assistant nodded dismally.

In silence, practically, the two had sat in the sitting-room at Locke's chambers in Baker Street, waiting for the great detective. But they had waited in vain. Frequent messages via the telephone to Lord Thundersleigh's place brought no news of Ferrers Locke, neither did those put through to the police-stations along the route the detective naturally must have followed.

He seemed to have disappeared from the face of the earth.

"Something's wrong somewhere," muttered Drake, licking his dry lips. "If he had met with an accident the police-stations would have got the news by now. I am afraid you're right, Pyecroft, old man; there's some foul work being done."

"Come, my lad," said the C.I.D. man. "We'll travel along the route the guv'nor must have taken, and keep our eyes skinned, though what we are going to see I'm blessed if I can tell. No one seems to have seen this fellow Manners' car since it left Thundersleigh's place, and—"

He was interrupted by the loud ringing of the telephone-bell. With an eager stride he had reached the instrument and was talking to the caller. His conversation was monosyllabic, but there was a hopeful expression on his heavy features when he turned to Drake.

"Well, that's something," he muttered. "The police at Marsden—that's next door to Babbledbury—say that Locke's car—or, rather, Manners' car—was seen to pass through that village about an hour and twenty minutes ago."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Drake. "Hadn't you better phone the next station along the route, and see if the car was seen passing through there?"

"Sure thing!"

PEOPLE IN THE STORY:

DR. FOURSTANTON, a notorious motor-bandit, who has escaped from prison.

MONTAGUE MANNERS, a Society idol and an amateur cricketer of exceptional merit, who has taken up detective work as a living. Owing to his repeated successes in his new profession, "Monty" is deemed by the newspaper scribes to be fast ousting

FERRERS LOCKE, hitherto the most famous criminal investigator in the country, from his pinnacle of popularity.

INSPECTOR PYECROFT, of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard, a close friend of Ferrers Locke, and of

JACK DRAKE, the detective's clever boy assistant.

MOSTYN, the butler-valet of Montague Manners, an elderly gentleman retaining all the agility of his youth.

Soon after Dr. Fourstanton escapes from prison he commits a robbery at Lord Barling's house in Eaton Square. Monty Manners is called in to investigate, likewise Ferrers Locke. The two differ in their reconstruction of the crime, Ferrers Locke clinging to his theory that two burglars, working independently of each other, rifled the house, whilst Monty sticks to his theory that Dr. Fourstanton, and he only, was responsible for the theft.

The two detectives become friends, and Monty takes Locke down to Hampshire to play for Lord Thundersleigh's cricket team against the village eleven.

But hardly has the match been under way for two hours when Locke receives a telephone message purporting to come from Dr. Fourstanton. The sleuth hastens to London, but on the way he falls into the hands of a scoundrel calling himself "Stanton," who has the audacity to place Locke in Babbledbury Asylum. So ingenious are the methods employed by the detective's captor that the superintendent of the asylum has no suspicions that Locke is not mad.

Meantime, Lord Thundersleigh's house is burgled, and a ring that has been in his lordship's family for generations is stolen. Lord Thundersleigh, superstitious enough to have some belief in the legend attached to the ring that, should it leave his possession, the family fortunes would deteriorate, offers Monty Manners the sum of fifty thousand pounds if he will recover it for him.

And while these stirring events are taking place in the region of Lord Thundersleigh's house Pyecroft and Drake, in London, are awaiting the arrival of Ferrers Locke.

(Now read on.)

Again the telephone came into requisition, but this time no news was forthcoming. The station-sergeant at Babbledbury was positive that his men on point duty had not seen the grey car. Pyecroft thanked him for his trouble and rang off.

"It isn't much to go upon," said the C.I.D. man at length. "But we must hop it to Babbledbury, and explore the road to Marsden without loss of time."

"Talking of which reminds me," said Drake, "that we might have adopted that measure before."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that we could have found out that information an hour and twenty minutes ago," said Drake, with a touch of bitterness in his tone.

"Don't be a young ass!" growled Pyecroft. "Don't you think I thought of that? The devil of it was that no one had seen Manners' car, not even at Marsden. You heard the police phone me just now. They've only just collected the news."

"Oh!" Drake was in rather an unreasonable mood, a not infrequent habit of his when he was anxious about his "guv'nor." "Let's get off."

In less than five minutes they were seated in the White Hawk—Locke's powerful racing-car. Drake was at the wheel, and with grim, anxious face he let in the clutch at a signal from Pyecroft, and the car bounded forward.

"Let her rip!" said the C.I.D. man.

Drake did. Speed limits were disregarded entirely. Most of the time in London proper the speedometer was registering thirty, and once in the suburbs, and the open country the Hawk flashed along at something close on fifty miles an hour.

Zealous policemen tried in vain to stop the law-breakers in this powerful white racer, and consoled their outraged dignity by merely taking its registered number.

Babbledbury was reached and passed within the hour, and little did Drake or

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his companion dream that the great red brick building that seemed to flash past on their near side sheltered the very man for whom they were seeking.

"Ease up a bit, my lad," cautioned Pycroft. "This is where we begin to look for sign, although what we're going to see is beyond my ken at the moment."

"Oh, don't be a pessimist!" said Drake, the quick run through the air having revived his flagging spirits.

The roar of the weir waters was soon thundering in their ears as they crawled along now at a snail's pace, looking to right and left of them for any sign or clue. And then one of those strange things—strange, at least, in its effect upon the case—that are often put down to coincidence occurred.

The off-side wheel burst a tyre.

"Hang the thing!" grunted Pycroft petulantly; and Drake, who echoed his sentiments, plied the brakes.

The White Hawk came to a standstill, and the couple jumped out. A brief inspection of the tyre, and Drake was diving his hand in his pocket to get the key of the locker which contained the spare. In his eagerness to lose no time he dragged some loose silver out with the key, and grunted his annoyance as a shining half-crown dropped to the roadway and rolled into the bank.

He fielded it, and was about to regain an upright position, when his eyes caught sight of a copper piece lying not more than three yards away. He eyed that piece of copper in amazement, for there was something strangely familiar about it.

Next moment he picked it up and was examining it.

Pycroft, who was engaged in unstrapping the spare wheel, suddenly gave a start as an excited yell broke from his companion.

"What's the giddy game, my lad?" he demanded testily.

"I've found a penny—a French penny!" exclaimed Drake, his eyes shining.

The C.I.D. man eyed his companion more in sorrow than in anger.

"What the thump does a penny matter at a time like this?" he jerked out, hardly able to keep a note of strong disapproval from his voice. "Hang the penny!"

"But it's Mr. Locke's penny!" ejaculated Drake, peering at the coin in question as if to assure himself a second time. "Why, I'd know the guv'nor's lucky penny anywhere!"

"Wh-a-a-at?" Pycroft's astonishment was ludicrous to behold. "Locke's lucky p-p-penny?"

"The very one!"

The C.I.D. man wanted a lot of convincing that what Drake had found belonged to Ferrers Locke, for he had never heard of the "guv'nor's lucky penny." But Drake was so positive on the point, and backed it by giving Pycroft the date of the coin from memory, that Pycroft began to realise what significance that copper coin meant.

"And you found it—" he began.

"Just here!" exclaimed Drake. "I'm not moving from this spot, old bean. I'd be willing to wager a month's allowance that the poor old guv'nor was being carried when he dropped this penny!"

Pycroft eyed him blankly.

"Carried?"

"Sure thing," said Drake quickly. "This penny the guv'nor kept always in his waistcoat-pocket. Now, how the thump can a penny fall out of a waistcoat-pocket, in the ordinary course of events?"

"Unless—" began Pycroft. "I see what you mean, my lad. You reckon

that your guv'nor was slung over someone's shoulder, which meant that the entrance to his waistcoat-pocket would be facing downwards and—"

"You've got it!" said Drake triumphantly. "It's not much of a clue, but it gives us a starting-point."

"Unless, of course, the guv'nor threw the penny away to attract attention," said Pycroft thoughtfully. "And if that were the case this might not be a starting-point at all."

"Don't see it," said Drake, who was particularly clear-headed now. "If Locke could get access to his waistcoat-pocket—meaning that if his hands were free—there were several better clues he could have left behind than a mouldy penny almost the same colour as the earth on the bank. No, no, Pycroft, old scout, I'm firmly convinced that the guv'nor was being carried when this penny dropped out of his pocket. Anyway, let's hunt round."

It was an obvious course, and it bore fruit. This time it was Pycroft's turn to let out a whoop of triumph. Not more than six paces from where Drake had picked up the penny was a deep impression in the soft earth of the bank that, at a stretch of imagination, could be recognised as the part outline of where a human form had lain.

Drake rushed over to Pycroft, and the pair of them stood gazing at the imprint.

"I believe you're right," said Drake excitedly. "See here, old bean, I'll lie down alongside the imprint, and see what sort of mark I leave behind."

He sprawled limply on the soft earth as he spoke, and as quickly rose to his feet again. To his disappointment, the imprint was none too similar with the one Pycroft had found.

"Wait a moment," said the C.I.D. man. "Now, supposing Ferrers Locke had been unconscious—supposing his captor—if there was one—dumped him down for a breather."

"I get you," said Drake intuitively. "I'll try again. I'll be unconscious. You can dump me down."

Followed the experiment which might have appeared ridiculous to a disinterested party, but the simplicity of which gave the desired result. The new outline, although a trifle smaller than the original one—understandable when Locke's height and breadth was taken into consideration—proved almost identical in every other respect.

"Geo, we're getting warm!" exclaimed Pycroft. "Of course, that impression might have been made by anyone, but for the purposes of our theory, which we must necessarily reconstruct backwards, it's very hopeful." He considered for a moment. "The next job is to look for some sign of the car."

But that was a task that occupied the best part of three-quarters of an hour. It was young Jack Drake who spotted something out of the ordinary first. He had been gazing at some faint tyre-tracks in the roadway, and following them up in turn. The last track he had subjected to this scrutiny was interesting. The tyre marks suddenly took a sharp turn at right angles from the road and were continued up the slope of a high embankment.

"Come here, Pycroft!" called out Drake. "What do you make of this?"

The C.I.D. man ran to the spot and surveyed the deep furrows in the bank. Then he grunted.

"Looks as if someone's been trying to break his neck," he said. "That track is a skid or—"

He broke off, and clambered with laboured breath to the top of the bank.

At the summit of the embankment he paused and examined the ground at his feet. In it were two faint footprints, indicating that a man—for they were the prints of men's shoes—had been doing what Pycroft himself was about to do—look down a hundred feet or so to where the waters of the river lashed themselves into a foam as they struggled with the suction of the weir not many yards farther on.

A glance of half a minute's duration was enough to show Pycroft no tangled mass of wreckage that had once been a motor-car peeping up from the racing waters of the river. Drake, not a second behind him, noticed that grim sign too.

They turned, and read in each other's features the same horrible thought.

"I—I suppose the—the guv'nor wasn't in that car when it—" began Drake.

But Pycroft shook his head negatively and smiled.

"For a moment I thought the same as you, my lad," he answered. "But just a glimpse of those tyre tracks before they mount this embankment tell a story of their own. Is there nothing peculiar about them to your way of thinking, Drake?"

Drake's reply was brief and to the point.

"No!"

"We thought at first that the car skidded and rushed up this bank," said the C.I.D. man thoughtfully. "And yet the tyre tracks show that the car was deliberately set in a position facing the bank. Now, no skid would leave a track at right angles to its proper course."

"Something in that," said Drake. "But the car—"

"Looks as though the villain who captured Locke—for he has been captured, take it from me," said the inspector—"left Locke lying on the bank a few yards along the road while he staged this little drama with the car and the river below—"

"To give the impression that the guv'nor had met with a nasty end in that river?" chimed in Drake, seeing light. "I reckon you've hit the bullseye, Pycroft!"

"To prove what I say," went on the C.I.D. man, "we'll examine the tracks opposite the spot where we found the imprint on the bank—"

"Meaning that if the tracks from that point onwards are less clearly defined it will be safe to assume that only one person was in the car. A certain weight would be taken off the tyres."

"You've got it!"

The pair retraced their steps, and the experiment was tried out. It proved even as the inspector had said. Starting from the point opposite the imprint in the bank, the tyre tracks were less clearly defined in the soft, loose soil of the road.

"That settles that," said Drake, with satisfaction. "Now we've got to hit the trail again."

"Before we do that," said Pycroft, "I'm going to make a mould of those footprints at the top of the embankment. I'll be with you in half a jiffy."

Two rough casts were taken of the footprints, and they were placed in the locker of the car. Then Drake and Pycroft each selected a portion of the neighbouring ground, using the print in the bank as a base, and explored every inch of it.

"Whooooop!"

Drake's excited ejaculation brought Pycroft rushing to his side. The boy detective was on his hands and knees, examining a single footprint in the ground.



"So sorry to trouble you, gentlemen," came a mocking voice from out the gloom. "But, really, I much prefer to see you with your hands up"—Drake's and Pycroft's hands went aloft slowly—"like that! Thank you so much!" (See this page.)

Trapped!

"THAT'S the one we're looking for," grunted the inspector, measuring the print with a spring tape-measure he always carried. "Exact to the eighth of an inch in length, anyway. And the extra depth of it is accountable if we assume that the owner of this footmark was carrying Ferrers Locke."

As he spoke he planted his own feet on either side of the footprint and faced the same direction. Looking for a landmark, he found that he was facing the crumbling ruins of a tower a quarter of a mile away.

"Seems a likely looking place for our next halt," he confided to Drake. "Let's get a move on."

They hurried forward, and in ten minutes or so reached the tumbledown door of the tower.

"Might as well look inside," said the inspector, taking hold of a broken panel. "And—"

"Ah!" A mocking voice, obviously disguised, smote their ears as the door swung open. Before Drake and his companion recovered from the first shock of that unexpected meeting a shining muzzle of a revolver whipped before their eyes.

"So sorry to trouble you, gentlemen," came the mocking voice, "but, really, I much prefer to see you with your hands up!" Four hands slowly went aloft. "Thank you so much!"

Drake and Pycroft tried to pierce the darkness of the interior of the tower that cloaked their captor. But a face from which draped a silk handkerchief saw was the shadowy outline of kerchief, two glittering eyes above the

edge of the handkerchief, and the outline of a slouch hat. They could hear the man's breathing, indicative that he had been running but recently and had not yet recovered his wind.

"Lucky I spotted you from the tower first!" said the mocking voice again. "I'm in an awful hurry, gentlemen, so really I must beg you to excuse me if I appear discourteous. Boy"—he turned to Drake, his disengaged hand holding out a pair of handcuffs—"do me the favour of placing these round your friend's wrists."

"I'll be hanged first!" exclaimed Drake hotly.

"Your little mistake!" broke in the mocking voice. "You'll be shot first. I am a desperate man, and, as I have already said, in a hurry. Also, bear in mind that I'm not in the habit of repeating myself, even although this is an exception to the rule. You will put these on your friend's wrists."

Drake's eyes glared defiance, but a look from Pycroft made him obey the masked man's decree. The bracelets snapped home.

"Now, Pycroft," said the masked man, with a smile, "I'll trouble you to do the same for Drake." He made a rapid pass with his hands and drew from the inspector's pocket a pair of handcuffs. "Excellent! Police handcuffs allow little chance of escape for the wearer."

"You scoundrel!" ground out the inspector between his teeth. "I know you, Fourstanton—"

"Ha, ha! So you know me, eh?"

"What have you done with the gov'nor?" demanded Drake.

"The gov'nor? Oh, ah—you mean

Mr. Locke? How on earth should I know? But, really, gentlemen, I am wasting time. I beg of you to walk into this tower, and please remember that this revolver is in the habit of going off at the slightest pressure on the trigger."

The words were lightly said, but there was a sinister meaning in them that compelled obedience. Pycroft and Drake walked inside, half expecting to see Ferrers Locke, perhaps bound, perhaps wounded. But they were disappointed. From behind them a torch flashed out that lit up the interior of the tower basement, although it still left the figure of their captor in the gloom. The prisoners merely saw a heap of sacking and straw littered all over the floor, and the commencement of a spiral staircase.

"Up the stairs, gentlemen!" hissed the voice of the masked man behind them. "I always reserve the best rooms for my guests."

Pycroft showed some hesitation at first, but as he felt the deadly muzzle of the revolver pressed into his back he mounted. Drake, as was natural, followed suit. They climbed up two flights until their captor ordered them to stop. The torch flashed round the place, revealing a four-foot-square room whose walls were of crumbling brick and into which filtered a stray gleam of light as the setting sun played against a narrow battlemented window.

"This will do for a time, gentlemen," said their captor. "You see how comfortable it is. I must leave you here. I'm frightfully sorry, but, really, you shouldn't stumble across my path at such inconvenient moments."

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He moved backwards as he spoke till his feet touched the topmost step of the staircase. Then the light snapped out, leaving all three in stygian darkness. Followed a mocking laugh, the sound of a heavy door being slammed to, and then receding footsteps.

Their captor had gone!

Pyecroft and Drake rushed to the door, almost colliding in the darkness. Their handcuffed wrists allowed but scanty freedom of the hands, but they managed to feel their way all over the door. Pyecroft's fingers encountered an iron ring and he tugged at it furiously. He tugged in vain. It was evident that some sort of lock or bar held the door in place, which could only be operated from the other side.

"This is a go, and no mistake!" growled the inspector furiously. "Nice mess we've made of things. That was Fourstanton right enough."

Drake nodded in the darkness.

"Sure thing! And we've let the scoundrel slip through our fingers. Wonder what he was doing here?"

"Heaven alone knows!" replied the inspector. "He's been running from somewhere. Did you notice how out of breath he was?"

"I did."

They relapsed into silence after that, both instinctively making their way over to the window. The view it commanded was limited to a degree and merely showed a small stretch of open country with no living soul in sight.

"What are we going to do?" asked Drake at length.

"The only thing for it is to yell," returned Pyecroft dismally. "Fat lot of hope we can expect from that. Still, it's something."

They yelled. They yelled for the next hour or more until both their throats were husky and sore, but it brought them no succour. The only answer that disturbed the echo of their own voices was the occasional hoot of an owl.

And, finally, Pyecroft and his companion gave it up.

Monty to the Rescue!

"DON'T forget, Monty, fifty thousand of the best—"

Lord Thundersleigh whispered the words into Montague Manners' ears as he shook the detective warmly by the hand.

"I'm not likely to forget," smiled Monty. "Fifty thousand would do me a treat. I'm going all out for it, my lord."

It was the morning following the extraordinary events at Thundersleigh Grange and Paytree Lodge. His lordship had begged Monty to put all thoughts of cricket in the background, thus the House eleven were to lose the second "sporting detective" from their ranks.

Lord Thundersleigh looked pale and haggard, sure indication that he had passed a sleepless night, sure indication, too, that he attached more than ordinary attention to the strange legend that accompanied the Thundersleigh family ring.

Mostyn, Manners' silent-footed butler, stood at a distance from his master, awaiting his orders.

"Right-ho, Mostyn!" said Manners genially. "Start the car up, old sport!"

"Monty, you're the limit!" admonished Lord Thundersleigh. "One moment you are lamenting the familiarity of your butler-valet, the next you encourage it. Monty, there's no understanding you."

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The sporting detective laughed light-heartedly.

"Oh, Mostyn's all right—at times!" he retorted, and an affectionate glance followed the servant's movements as he started the forty horse-power Rolls that was to carry his master for the day. "Deuced useful chap, my lord; deuced clever, too."

"He certainly knows how to handle a car," said his lordship admiringly. "For a man of sixty years he's a bit of a marvel. Well, good luck, Monty! Do your best—your very best!"

"The best and nothing but the best," said Monty over his shoulder, as he stepped into the car. "I'll recover that ring, no matter what it costs me!"

He threw in the clutch as he spoke, and the powerful car, responsive to his slightest touch, moved off silently down the drive and swung out of the gates. Monty waved a cheery hand to his lordship as he stood there, still that grave and somewhat haggard expression on his fine features, and then he settled down to drive.

The cricket-pitch, already laid out for the second day of the village versus House match, drew a sigh of regret from Monty as he passed it, for the detective was a cricket fanatic. The lure of fifty thousand pounds tempted him away from the cricket as no other attraction could.

"We shall get that ring, Mostyn!" said Manners, when the car had left the Grange behind. "Dr. Fourstanton will have to console himself with the reflection that his loss is our gain—eh? Why, what the deuce are you laughing at?"

"Nothing," answered Mostyn, and his features became owl-like in their gravity once more. "I suppose even a butler-valet is allowed to laugh at his thoughts?"

"You're too deuced familiar, an' all that for a servant!" returned Monty. "You will have to mend your ways, Mostyn. You ought to know better at your time of life."

He relapsed into silence and urged the car to greater speed. The village of Marsden was fast coming up before him. Away to his right the old Tudor tower reared its ungainly head against a sky of unbroken blue, and towards this tower Monty suddenly found his attention drawn.

Crack!

The report of a gun of some sort stirred the air. As Manners heard it he drew the powerful car to a standstill.

"What was that, Mostyn?"

"A revolver shot!" came the instantaneous reply. "And—"

Crack!

A second report rang out.

Manners tried to trace the direction whence it came, and with little difficulty he discovered that it emanated from the region of the disused tower.

Crack!

A third report crackled across the ether, and simultaneous with it Manners saw a bluey grey puff of smoke move out from the tiny window of the tower. With a curt order to Mostyn to follow him he leaped from the car.

"This is a bit of luck," he muttered to his servant as he began to plough his way across the intervening stretch of country. "Those shots are to attract attention. Mostyn, we're on a crime of some sort. How else would you account for the presence of a human being in that tower, ditto the shots?"

Mostyn laughed.

"You've got a wonderful imagination, sir," he said, trying to keep pace with his energetic master. "I shouldn't wonder that you're right."

There was a cynical strain in the

remark that caused Monty to wrinkle his brows petulantly.

"Not so much of it, Mostyn! Really, I don't know how I put up with you."

A hot retort came to the lips of the butler-valet, but it was never uttered, for at that moment another bullet was released from the tower.

"I wonder if we'd better duck our heads?" smiled Monty. "Heaven knows who and what that silly guy up there is firing at!"

The "silly guy" was none other than Inspector Pyecroft, of the C.I.D. After an hour of frantic yelling that had drawn no one to his succour the previous evening, the inspector had decided to seek what sleep he could, and renew his efforts to attract attention in the morning. Drake had fallen in with the idea, for he was tired. Sleep was hardly as comfortable as it might have been, for one or two rats seemed to recognise the crumbling ruin of a tower as their own especial freehold, and made no bones about walking over Drake and Pyecroft's recumbent figures. The dawn had broke, flooding the dingy room with light and renewed hope. Then it was Pyecroft remembered his revolver.

Drake had with little difficulty taken the weapon from Pyecroft's pocket, and as soon as the hour approached in which it was reasonable to expect that some folks would be abroad, the C.I.D. man had, at intervals, fired his "distress signals" through the narrow aperture doing duty as a window.

He had seen the great Rolls car from the distance, and had banked upon attracting the attention of its occupants. Pyecroft's hopes had not been ill-founded.

Manners and his servant reached the door of the old tower, and the former called up to Pyecroft.

"Hold on! We're coming."

He swung the door open as he spoke and went straight for the spiral staircase as if he were familiar with the place. His servant followed at his heels. Then, after two flights had been traversed, the pair came to the oak door.

"This is the place, isn't it?" questioned Manners.

"Of course!" said Mostyn briefly. "See, there's an iron bar holding the door in place!"

As he spoke he took hold of a short strip of metal, one end of which was rivetted into the door, and the other end of which was fast locked in a slot on the upright. With little difficulty the bar was raised and the door pushed open.

"Well, I'm——" began Manners, staring at the two prisoners in astonishment. "Drake and——"

"Pyecroft!" said that worthy, advancing, his manacled hands held out before him, in one of which dangled the revolver. "Many thanks, er—er—Mr. Manners!"

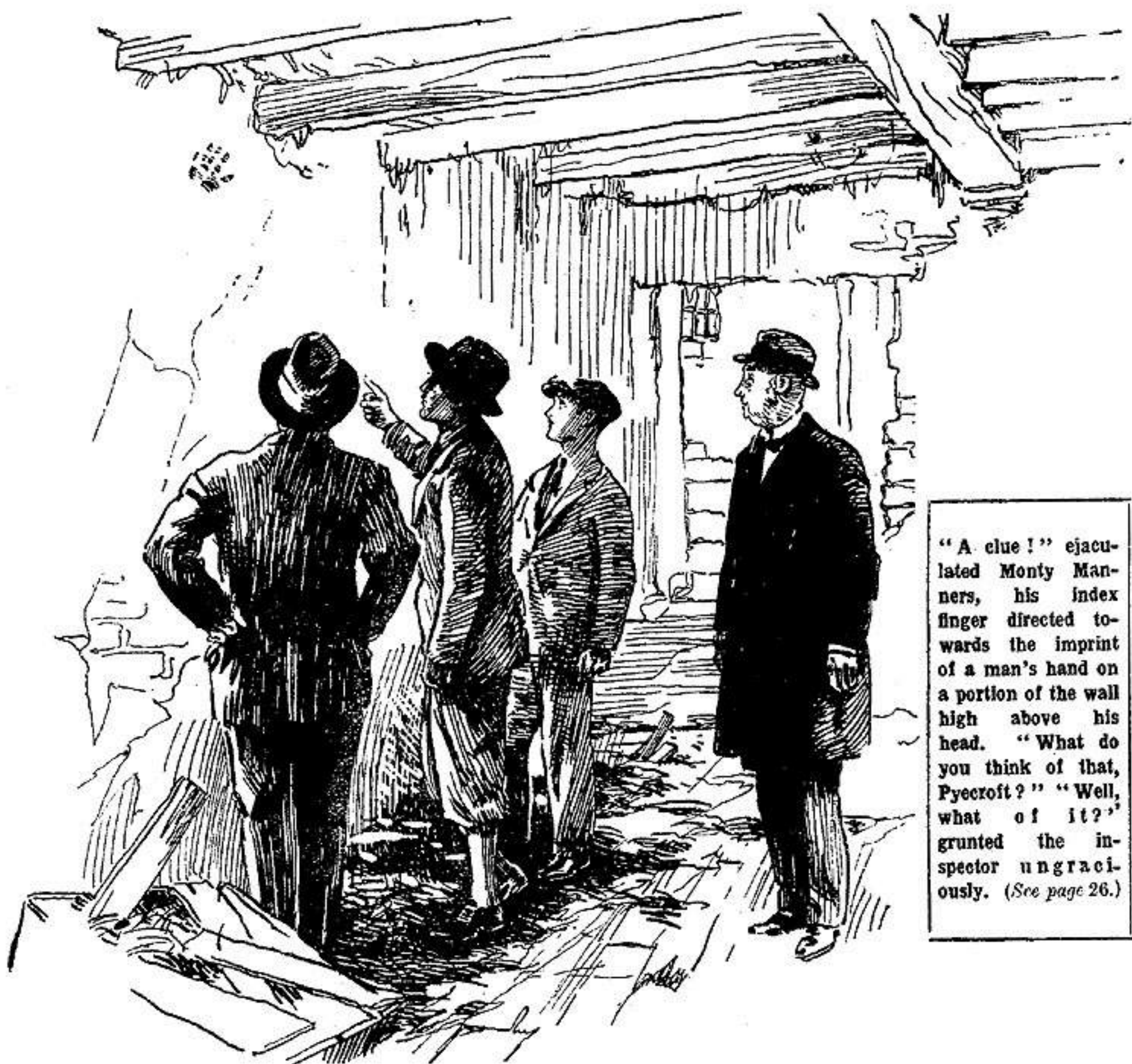
It took Manners a long time to recover from his astonishment, but there was a twinkle in his eye as he unlocked the handcuffs with a special key he always carried.

"What have you two young rascals been up to?" he asked, with a grin. "Rotten sort of hotel you stay at, anyway," he added unmercifully.

Pyecroft felt conscious of the ludicrous figure he cut, and blushed the colour of a beetroot. Drake, who was but a boy, and not so sensitive of the ridiculous, merely chuckled.

"We're the guests of Dr. Fourstanton," he explained. "Or, at least, we were."

"Dr. Fourstanton?" echoed Manners



"A clue!" ejaculated Monty Manners, his index finger directed towards the imprint of a man's hand on a portion of the wall high above his head. "What do you think of that, Pycroft?" "Well, what of it?" grunted the inspector ungraciously. (See page 26.)

in amazement. "Has he been here, too?"

Pycroft explained.

"He was in a tearing hurry when we bumped into him," he said in conclusion. "Has—"

"I should just think he was," answered Manners. "Considering we had been chasing the scoundrel all the way from the Grange—"

Pycroft interrupted with an expression of incredulity that was almost comic.

"Then he's been at the Grange?" he asked.

"Sure. We've had a day of it," chuckled Monty. Thereupon the sporting detective gave Pycroft and Drake a vivid account of the day's events at Sir Ernest Paytree's house and Lord Thunderleigh's. There was an annoyed expression on the inspector's heavy features when his rescuer had concluded.

"Fools!" he ground out. "I sent down specially a squad of men to keep watch at his lordship's place. And this is what happens! Fools—"

"I shouldn't go off the deep end too much, if I were you," admonished Monty waggishly. "Remember that you walked into—"

"Oh, that was bad luck," grunted the

C.I.D. man peevishly. "By thunder, I wish I could have this man Fourstanton to myself for ten minutes!" He made a vicious lunge into space. "I'd stop his little game!"

"But where is Ferrers Locke?" Monty Manners' face became serious as he recalled the reason of Drake and Pycroft's presence in the neighbourhood. "Where's my car?"

"Heaven alone knows where Mr. Locke is," said Pycroft dismally. "But your blessed car is lying in the river smashed to pieces!"

"Are you sure?" gasped Manners. "Then—then Locke is—is—"

He broke off, disliking to finish the thought that flashed through his brain.

"Oh, he wasn't in the car," said Pycroft airily, keen to show this Society man that a common or garden detective had some brains. "I'm positive of that."

Manners shot him a sharp look.

"You are positive of that?"

"I am positive!"

There was a twinge of hostility in Pycroft's snappy reply. He never could quite understand this swell detective, never could quite take to him.

Manners sensed the friction in the air, and changed the subject. Pycroft

evidently had some other theory to go upon. He would no doubt air his views later.

"Well, hadn't we better be getting a move on?" said Drake, chafing at the delay.

"Sure, sonny," replied Manners, not unkindly. "But personally, I'm going to look over this place. If Fourstanton has been making this ruin his headquarters, I might be able to pick up a clue or two."

There was an air of confidence in the fellow that jarred upon Pycroft's irritated nerves.

"Oh, you'll never find anything in this tumbledown shack," he grunted scornfully. "Fourstanton only used this place temporarily, I'll be bound. And he's too clever to drop clues all over the floor."

"H'm!" Manners' rejoinder was non-committal. With a word to his butler he began to move from the room. He searched the top floor of the tower with an eye that missed nothing, what time Pycroft, Drake, and Mostyn wended their way to the ground floor.

Each floor Manners treated to the same searching survey, and at last he descended the spiral staircase, coming to a

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halt in the semi-basement. He moved gingerly about the place, avoiding the dirty jumble of litter that strewn the floor, but his gaze missed nothing. Finally he stood upright and scanned the cobwebbed walls and worm-eaten rafters.

The Clue of the Hand!

"HALLO!"

The ejaculation made Pycroft & Co. swing round on their heels. With the suggestion of a sneer on his face the inspector watched Manners' every movement. The sporting detective was eyeing the muddy outline of a man's hand that stood out in fairly bold relief against the dirty whitewash of a section of the wall, high above his head.

"A clue!" he ejaculated, his index finger directed towards the imprint. "What do you think of that, Pycroft?" The C.I.D. man scratched his head. Even as he saw what had aroused Manners' enthusiasm, he mentally censured himself for having missed the significance of it. His answer was ungracious, to say the least.

"What of it?" "My dear man!" cried Manners excitedly. "Can't you see that that imprint is fairly fresh?"

Pycroft peered closer. "You're right," he admitted grudgingly.

"And is that all?" There was the suggestion of a sneer in Manners' voice. "What would the height of a man be who could stretch his hand to that distance normally?" he added.

The significance of the clue that Pycroft had, to do him credit, seen at once, now aroused Drake and Mostyn to a state of excitement.

"The man who made that mark," said Drake, "was standing on something, I'll wager."

"Exactly!" said Manners triumphantly. "And why should a man stand on something to reach something above his head in a place like this? It isn't a usual practice, is it? And when we remember that Dr. Fourstanton has been here after we have chased him from the Grange, it is not theorising too wildly to assume that he might have left something here—"

"Ah! You mean the ring he stole from his lordship's house?" put in Mostyn.

"Your imagination does you credit," smiled Manners. "Mine is fired by thoughts of fifty thousand pounds, perhaps that's why it rises so swiftly to an occasion like this."

Even as he spoke Manners jumped nimbly on a packing-case, steadied himself against the wall in much the same fashion as the late visitor to the old tower had done, and began to grope with his free hand along the edge of the rafter that spanned the room a foot above the level of the finger-print.

Pycroft looked on with a scornful smile. He had an idea now that Manners would have his trouble for nothing. What could he expect to find?

But Pycroft was doomed to get the shock of his life.

"Ah!" The ejaculation, uttered in a tense voice, came from Manners as his groping fingers encountered a small object about the size of a matchbox. With great care he took hold of it and brought it in line with his vision.

It was a matchbox!

Eagerly the trio on terra firma waited for the sporting detective to join them. Manners' hand was trembling with excitement as he pushed open the drawer of the box, an exhibition of feeling that drew a contemptuous smile from old Mostyn.

"The ring!"

Three voices uttered the same words in unison. It was the ring! Without wrapping of any sort it sparkled up at them from its cheap bed, a hundred lights flashing from it like so many reflections of mirrors.

"Well, I'm blowed!" Pycroft's admiration was not grudged now. He could appreciate another man's success when it came to the point. "You're a blessed marvel, Manners!"

It certainly seemed so. Here was a discovery that any one of the company might have made, but it had fallen to Manners' usual luck to drop straight on to it. His eyes were shining brightly as he carefully closed the matchbox and pocketed it.

"Mostyn," he exclaimed with all the enthusiasm of a boy, "that fifty thousand is mine! What do you think of it?"

"I think you're a very lucky young man," answered old Mostyn. "I wish I had a box of matches like that," he added, and there was a laugh.

"If you hadn't spotted that imprint on the wall we should all have been within five yards of a fortune without knowing it," said Drake. "Gee, those eyes of yours, Mr. Manners, are regular gold mines!"

Manners laughed. He could afford to.

"Not only the fact of the finger-marks being there," he said. "You must remember that those finger-marks might have been made years ago. It was the freshness of them that caught my fancy, and the extraordinary position of them."

Pycroft, who had been thinking a bit on his own, now came forward.

"I suppose you'll be going back to the Grange?" he asked.

"Bet your sweet life, inspector," returned Manners. "I'm not giving fifty thousand quid a chance of slipping through my fingers, detective though I am."

"Well, then, if it's all the same to you, I'll hang out here," said the C.I.D. man slowly. "If Fourstanton left that ring here, he's pretty certain to come back for it."

"Good idea of yours," admitted Manners.

They searched the room farther, but no other clues came to light, and then the party wandered out into the sunshine.

"I shall be able to get in some cricket, after all," said Manners lightly.

"But what about your car?" said Drake. "Surely you're going to see into that matter."

There was an appeal in the words that conveyed some deeper interest than just the disposal of a wrecked car—Drake was thinking of his beloved guv'nor; was asking Manners to help in the search for him.

The detective looked up sharply at Drake's words, and then his glance was transferred to Pycroft. It was up to Pycroft to say something, for Manners reckoned the inspector was holding back from him, as indeed he was.

But Pycroft did not take the hint. He felt that it was going to be his turn to earn a little glory. After all, he had

tracked Locke down to this very place. Surely, with a bit of luck, he would come across him.

"Oh, Mostyn can arrange about the car," said Manners, breaking an awkward silence. "But don't you worry, my lad," he added, with a compassionate look at Drake. "Pycroft will find your master, never fear."

The C.I.D. man puffed his chest. Manners was merely echoing his own thoughts.

"Sure thing!" he replied.

Drake bit his lip and strolled with Manners to the Rolls-Royce. Mostyn was given directions where to find the wrecked car, and without loss of time he hastened towards the river.

Manners started the engine; and then, as Pycroft's glance was elsewhere, he beckoned Drake towards him.

"If Pycroft hasn't found your guv'nor within twenty-four hours from now," he whispered. "I'll take up the job. Savvy?"

Drake murmured his thanks. The car moved forward, and away went Monty Manners with the Thundersleigh family ring.

"Lucky dog!" grunted Pycroft, turning on his heel. "Now, look here, my lad, I'm going to alter my plans a little. Instead of keeping watch here I'm going into the town to wake up the local police. While I am away I want you to mount guard—you can have this revolver in case Dr. Fourstanton should take it into his head to return."

"Right-ho!" "As we've traced Mr. Locke to this tower it is reasonable to assume that he might still be in the vicinity."

"Quite reasonable," agreed Drake; as Fourstanton appears to be hanging round here."

"That's how I'm thinking," said Pycroft thoughtfully. "I'll get the police to search this neighbourhood—Marsden, isn't it—from top to bottom. I'll have every inch of it explored."

The inspector patted Drake on the back, gave him the revolver, and then swung off at a brisk stride to where he had left the car the previous evening. Drake watched him go with mixed feelings. Truth to tell he hadn't too much faith in Pycroft's methods. The inspector was full of zest and energy, but Drake knew from past experience that it needed a deal sight more than that to ferret out a trail of Fourstanton's making.

Little did Drake know that actually in sight, although not recognisable, was his chief. Little did he know that at Babblesbury—two and a half miles distant—a haggard face was pressed against the iron bars of a small window set high up in a building that sheltered the insane.

For fully five minutes Drake stood peering in that direction, perhaps in answer to some magnetic influence that pierced the ether; and then, with a long drawn out sigh, he hunched his shoulders and settled down to watch the tower.

At about the time Drake was giving too free a rein to pessimistic thoughts Monty Manners was handing Lord Thundersleigh his precious ring and receiving that astonished individual's heartfelt thanks and fervent gratitude.

Five minutes later a cheque for fifty thousand pounds was tucked between the folds of Monty's wallet. His lordship had kept his word.

(There will be another long thrilling instalment of this wonderful detective story in next week's grand issue.)

TO AND FROM YOUR EDITOR.

"WHAT IS IT?"

MAGNETITES will be asking themselves this question when they look at the seven pictures to be solved on page 2; but there's one comfort, the answers will speedily be forthcoming. For sheer simplicity, our fascinating competition could not be equalled. Five minutes' work and the whole set of pictures can be solved; even your name and address to be written at the foot of the picture set could be done in that space of time. Now, don't say that Your Editor gives you difficult competitions, or that the prizes are mouldy. Think of those wonderful cameras waiting to be won, the model sailing-yachts, and the topping penknives. It's the opportunity of a lifetime. I'm not going to urge you to enter this easy contest; there'll be no need to. One glance at the pictures on page 2—and the competition speaks for itself.

OBJECTS SEEN IN THE COUNTRY.

Next week's set of pictures, which is a separate competition from that presented this week, deals entirely with objects one sees in the country. Just as easy, take it from me, as the "Seaside" pictures on page 2. Now, that's something to look forward to. Mind you tell your pals about this new contest. There's a fresh chance offered every week.

"RAGGED DICK!"

That's the title of the next long complete story dealing with Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. It's an intriguing title, isn't it? One that conjures up mental pictures of a youth very much down at heel and on his beam-ends. As a matter of fact, "Dick" is all that and a little more. He's a splendid fellow, whose ill-luck has not spoiled his "white man" character. Billy Bunter, the fat and fatuous Removite, meets this newcomer to the Greyfriars stories in peculiar circumstances, as also do Harry Wharton & Co. In the background hovers the unwholesome personality known to the country folk—and the police—as Pedlar Parker! He's a regular terror, a vagrant, a bully, and every sort of a blackguard. With these two new personalities entering into life at Greyfriars, Magnetites can be assured of something extra good. Mr. Richards knows no equal at characterisation. He can paint his "word" pictures true to life; he can clothe a man in the dirtiest of garments, surround him with all the sordid temptations of poverty and hunger, and yet draw the reader's sympathy all the time. If you don't enjoy this coming story—more so than you have enjoyed the excellent tales of late—I'll eat my best Sunday topper. There! (I haven't a best Sunday topper, really—but you know what I mean.)

"THE SPORTING DETECTIVE!"

Next week's instalment of this tip-top serial will hold you enthralled from beginning to end. The underlying mystery theme is "working up" to a fine climax.

I've already wagered to eat my hat this week, but that doesn't stop me from threatening to eat my collar, or something, if you don't enjoy this coming instalment. Monty Manners once more seems to be endowed with exceptional powers of perception, for he scores all the way along the line—much to the discomfiture of Inspector Pyecroft, of Scotland Yard, who would seem, by comparison with Monty, to be as "slow as a tortoise." Ferrers Locke, too, is well to the fore. He can be quite a fighting force, even if he is tucked away in an asylum. But that's going too far. Mr. Hedley Scott shall tell you the story in his own way. 'Nuff said!

"DAME MIMBLE!"

Every Magnetite knows that good lady by name, at least. The worthy dame at the school tuckshop has played many a prominent part in the Greyfriars stories. Bunter knows her better than his own mother! Next week you will know her better, too; for Harry Wharton & Co. have persuaded her to write the "Editorial" of the next supplement. The rest of the features are contributed by the "Herald" staff, but the subjects chosen have their being in the school tuckshop, behind the counter of which, of course, Dame Mimble is always to be seen. Mind you read this coming supplement, chums; you'll like it!

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ALONZO, THE SLOGGER!

(Continued from page 20.)

Harry Wharton & Co. had just left the sanatorium, and were descending the school steps, discussing Alonzo, when they observed a strange gentleman of American appearance striding rapidly across the Close.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What the thump's up now?" demanded Bob Cherry of the rest of his chums.

The American, who was obviously labouring under some great excitement, halted before the Famous Five.

"Where is this Master Todd—Alonzo?" he demanded briskly.

"Alonzo!" gasped Wharton and Nugent together.

The stranger nodded, and pulled from his pocket a piece of pasteboard on which was inscribed:

"Jonas P. Jones,
Skinnem's Staminoid Products, Ltd.,
25, Great Mutt St., London."

"I guess that's me," he said, handing the card to Wharton. "I reckon I must see Master Todd quick—hustle on!"

"But he's ill," explained Wharton, greatly puzzled. "In fact, he's with the doctor now."

The stranger started.

"That's just what I've come about!" he exclaimed. "Lead right on. I guess perhaps I can tell the doctor a little more about what's wrong with your friend than he can find out himself."

There was an urgency about the stranger's manner that could not be denied.

"This way, sir!" exclaimed Wharton, turning and leading the way back to the sanatorium.

Arrived in the sanatorium, Wharton introduced Mr. Jonas P. Jones to Dr. Short, and the juniors between them explained Alonzo's strange conduct of the past few days, concluding with his breakdown in the boxing ring at Courtfield.

"And now, sir," said Dr. Short, "if you can throw any light on this strange affair, as you said you could, I shall be very pleased."

Mr. Jonas P. Jones smiled and produced from his vest pocket a copy of the advertisement of Professor Skinnem's Staminoid Syrup that Alonzo had first seen in the magazine.

Dr. Short and the juniors stared at it in amazement.

"But—but that wouldn't account for the way Alonzo has behaved!" gasped Harry Wharton. "He was as strong as a blessed—ahem, as a horse."

"Waal, now, that's where we come on it," went on Mr. Jones. "As perhaps you know, my firm, in addition to our wonderful Staminoid Syrup, puts out another mixture for weak dray horses. Our dray horse mixture, which is sold under the patented name of 'Kickitard,' was sent to your friend, Master Todd here, by mistake."

"Oh!"

"My aunt!"

"The fact is," proceeded the amazing Mr. Jones, "the labels got mixed some in the bottling department, an' your friend, instead of taking the Staminoid Syrup, as advertised, in real art jars, from five shillings to seven-and-six, has been taking 'Kickitard' instead. That,

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ALONZO, THE SLOGGER!

(Continued from page 27.)

since, accounts for his unusual strength—

Alonzo raised himself to a sitting position and stared.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "And I have been taking double doses of it, in order to be on the safe side, and get the maximum amount of benefit. How extraordinary!"

"Well, I guess the stuff's harmless enough," said Mr. Jones. "As soon as we discovered the mistake I came right along to put it right, I guess. You'll be a bit weak for the next day or two," he went on, addressing Alonzo and

spilling some white pellets from a tin case on to the table at the side of the bed. "And if your doctor will let you take those, I reckon they'll help things along some. Yep!"

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo, with a beaming smile. "No wonder I felt strong."

The Removites looked first at each other, and then at the Duffer.

"No wonder he had a punch like a blessed horse!" gasped Bob Cherry, glancing at the advertisement which had fallen to the bed again.

"And he took a double dose every time!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The secret of Alonzo's sudden acquisition of strength was out at last. And the juniors roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even Dr. Short permitted himself a faint smile, after which he addressed a few pointed remarks to the enterprising Mr. Jonas P. Jones about Professor Skinnem and his wonderful and varied concoctions.

Within ten minutes of Dr. Short's departure, the story of Alonzo's double doses of "Kickitard" was all over the school. Greyfriars laughed as it had never laughed before. Mr. Jones' prophecy proved correct, and within a few days Alonzo had completely recovered. But it was a long time indeed before Greyfriars ceased to talk of his exploits when he was literally Alonzo the Slogger!

THE END.

(You must not miss reading next week's splendid long story of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "Ragged Dick!")

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