

"LEVISON MAKES GOOD!" A Magnificent Long School Story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars.

The Magnet

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COKER TO THE RESCUE!

(A dramatic incident from the grand school yarn inside.)



This Week:

BOLTON WANDERERS

the famous Lancashire team which has been twice successful at Wembley.

THE see-saw nature of football is plainly illustrated when we put the spy-glass on Bolton Wanderers. Right through it has been with them a case of up one day and down the next. There is scarcely one of the original twelve members of the Football League which has been down to the second class as frequently as the "Trotters." But they always come up smiling, and I would have the supporters of the club remember that these days when the team is passing through a trying time

They were the first club to win the Cup at the new Stadium at Wembley, and it was rather funny that they should have kept their first success in the knock-out competition until the new ground was opened. They have also won the Cup since then, and thus stand to-day as the one side which has twice been successful in a final tie at Wembley. Alas, for the moment they have fallen from grace, as it were, and have spent a considerable portion of the present season at the very bottom of the League.

This won't do, of course, and the Wanderers must turn round and trot the other way. But it is not surprising, really, that the Wanderers should come bump against

A Bad Spell

sooner or later. It is said that when a player gets to Burnden Park he never leaves it. This is not literally true, of course, but it is true that the Wanderers management keep their players longer than most clubs. They have paid away more in benefit money since the War than any other club.

The trouble with keeping the same lot of players together for a long time, however, is that they more or less grow old all at once, and then the job of team-building afresh is a specially difficult one. For eighteen seasons Joe Smith and Ted Vizard formed the left wing, and it was the best left wing pair in the game most of that time. But Joe Smith has gone, Vizard is not so young as he used to be, and in other departments the youngsters are being tried. Manager Fowleraker can be depended upon to see that they come out right in the end, though.

I once heard a director of Bolton Wanderers say that as soon as any of their players was presented with a son, that son was immediately put on the books of the club. There would seem to be some truth in that idea. Anyway, there are sons of Bob Jack, a former

player, now on the books, also a son of Jacky Wright, also a former player, and a son of Nuttall, who used to be the groundsman. Yes, these trotters encourage local talent.

From time to time, though, they go out for the "goods," paying big money for the right men. We shall see this as we run the rule over the players who are now doing

Their Level Best

to raise the side to a higher place in the League table.

Goalkeeper Dick Pym cost a lot of money. He's from Devon, and he's a fisherman. It seems strange that in his early days he should have earned money by luring fish into the net, whereas now he gets paid for stopping sharp-shooting forwards from sending the ball into the net. Fisherman Dick has played for England.

Bob Haworth, the right full-back, was found in the Bolton district—at Ather-ton—and is a nutty full back, believe me. He was a professional player, and in the Wanderers League team within a month of leaving a Sunday-school League side. That's going it some, but

(Continued on page 28.)

BOLTON WANDERERS FOOTBALL TEAM.



Left to right (back row): Nuttall, Seddon, Pym, Thornborough, Finney. (Front Row): Butler, D. Jack, Blackmere, Gibson, Picken, Haworth.

A REFORMED LEVISON! Ernest Levison left Greyfriars in disgrace, but he returns to his old school a reformed character. Though Skinner & Co.—black sheep themselves—are inclined to regard his reform as so much bun-kum, the one-time black sheep proves that he has, indeed, turned over a new leaf!

Levison Makes Good!



A Magnificent Long Complete School Story of the Chums of Greyfriars, re-introducing Ernest Levison. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Tempter!

"SMITHY!"

"Well?"

"It's not good enough!"

The Bounder laughed.

He was leaning back in the armchair in Study No. 4 in the Greyfriars Remove, with one leg crossed over the other, and his hands clasped behind his head. Tom Redwing, his study-mate, had been moving restlessly about for some time, the Bounder watching him with an amused grin.

Redwing's face was frowning and disturbed.

He stopped at last, and stood facing the Bounder, and spoke abruptly. It was seldom that Redwing of the Remove was angry, but he looked very angry now, and his eyes flashed at the lazy, nonchalant Bounder.

"What's not good enough, old bean?" yawned Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"It won't do, Smithy!"

"What won't do?"

"You know well enough what I'm speaking of!" snapped Redwing impatiently.

The Bounder shook his head.

"Give it a name," he suggested. "I can see that one of my manifold sins and shortcomings is gettin' on your nervous system. But which? You can't expect me to guess which one from among so many!"

"You know well enough! It's Levison!"

"What about Levison?"

"I've had it from Skinner!" snapped Redwing scornfully.

"What have you had from Skinner?" yawned the Bounder. "One hears so many things from Skinner! I regret to say, my young friend, that Skinner of the Remove does not always stick to the frozen truth!"

"You've asked him to this study this evening!"

"Mayn't I ask a chap to the study?" asked the Bounder meekly.

"And Snoop and Stott, too!"

"Mayn't I ask them, too?"

"And Levison!"

"Well, Levison's a pleasant, entertainin' sort of fellow! No end of good company! The fellows think he improved a lot while he was at St. Jim's. Now he's back at Greyfriars, why shouldn't I have the benefit of his improvin' society?"

Redwing compressed his lips.

"It's a rotten trick, Smithy!"

"Askin' Levison to a spread?"

"It's not a spread you're asking him to! No harm in that."

"Well, I'm glad to hear that there's somethin' I can do with no harm in it!" drawled Vernon-Smith. "What are you gettin' your rag out for, old bean? Levison was willin' to come. He said so."

"It's too mean!" said Redwing.

"The chap's only been back at Greyfriars a day or two! Let him alone!"

"But I like his company, and he must like mine a little, or he wouldn't have accepted my kind invitation."

"I wasn't here in Levison's time," said Redwing, "but I've heard talk about him, especially since the fellows found that he was coming back here from St. Jim's. He seems to have been a rather hard case when he was a Greyfriars man!"

"Hardest nut in the Remove!" agreed the Bounder. "So hard to crack that he was politely requested to clear! He left quite a juicy reputation behind him! Skinner says he was sacked, but I understand that he was simply told that his room was preferred to his company, and urged not to miss an early train. More of an ass than a bad hat, in my opinion. The genuine bad hat never gets the chopper! Look at me!"

"I'm afraid you've deserved it more than once, Smithy!"

"More often than you could count on the fingers of both hands! But here I am still, as large as life!"

"Whatever Levison was like as a Greyfriars man, he changed after he left," said Redwing. "He's well spoken of at St. Jim's; the best fellows there

are his friends—fellows like Tom Merry and D'Arcy. The fact that he's allowed to come back here shows that the Head thinks well of him. Wharton and his crowd have taken him up, which shows what they think. I don't know much of him myself, but he looks a jolly decent chap to me, and his young brother is a real good kid!"

"Well?"

"Well, let him alone, then!" said Redwing hotly. "If he's made good after being as deep in the mud as you are in the mire, Smithy, leave him to it! What the dickens do you want to give him a shove back for?"

The Bounder grinned.

"Skinner thinks that his reform is all humbug," he remarked.

"Skinner would!" snapped Redwing.

"Well, do you know, I'm not a great believer in these drastic reforms myself!" smiled the Bounder. "Haven't I reformed more than once, and hasn't somethin' always happened to knock it on the head again? Skinner's view is that, after gettin' pushed out of Greyfriars, Levison decided to be a bit more cautious at his next school. Hence the jolly old reform that has won him golden opinions from all sorts of people."

"I don't believe it!"

"Then what are you worryin' about? If the fellow's really pi, what harm will it do him to drop into my study for an hour or two?"

"A fellow's often all right so long as he's left alone," answered Redwing.

"He's keeping straight now. But there must be something in him that made him the hard case he was once. Leave him alone, and don't tempt him back into the old ways that caused him trouble enough once!"

The Bounder's lip curled.

"That's all rot!" he answered. "Fellow's don't yield to temptation unless they want to! A fellow who goes over the limit, and then talks about havin' been tempted is simply whinin'! If Levison's jolly old reform

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is genuine, it will be able to stand a little wear and tear!"

"Let him alone, all the same!"

"Rats!"

"There's a proverb which says that evil communications corrupt good manners," said Redwing. "The chap may be genuine enough, and yet he might find an attraction in what you're going to offer him, and fall to it!"

"Rot!"

"Anyhow, let him alone, Smithy!" said Tom Redwing earnestly. "What does it matter to you, anyhow? You hardly know the chap. You're not a malicious cad like Skinner or a sneering noodle like Stott! Suppose the chap joins in your rotten smoking and banking, and turns out to be a black-guard, after all! I should think it would leave a bitter taste in your mouth!"

"I don't like humbugs!"

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Oh, can it!" interrupted the Bounder impatiently. "You're a good little ass, Redwing, but you don't know what you're talking about! I'm not askin' you to join in the shady old party. You can hike along to some study where they go in for moral uplift! Wharton's study will suit you, or Bob Cherry's! Leave me to rip!"

Redwing's eyes flashed.

"I've a jolly good mind to stay here and chip in!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. "I can fancy you in the role of protector of innocent youth! I hardly think Levison would stand it, though."

"Will you chuck it, Smithy?"

"No!"

Tap!

The door opened, and Skinner of the Remove looked in. Snoop and Stott were behind him.

The three black sheep of the Remove stared at the two occupants of Study No. 4. Their first impression was that they had arrived in time to see a fight. Redwing's fists were clenched and his eyes flashing. Never had he been seen so passionately angry.

"Oh, my hat!" said Skinner. "Is it a scrap? Don't mind us! We'll see fair play!"

"I'll hold your jacket, Smithy," grinned Snoop, "or yours, Redwing!"

Redwing gave the newcomers a stare of contempt. Herbert Vernon-Smith gave them a grin and a welcoming nod.

"Trickle in, old beans," he said. "It's all right. It's not a scrap; only a sermon. Redwing always gets emphatic when he reaches seventhly."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner & Co. "trickled" in. They sat in a grinning row on the table to enjoy the spectacle.

"Keep it up, Redwing," said Skinner. "You fellows shut up and listen. This may do us good."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Snoop and Stott.

"We need it," went on Skinner. "You can't deny that we need it. A word in season may work wonders. It's not much good wasting it on Smithy, Redwing. All Greyfriars knows that Smithy is past praying for. But we're not such hardened cases as Smithy. You may do us a lot of good. Keep it up."

Tom Redwing did not keep it up. He crossed to the door.

"Don't go," urged Skinner. "Let's have eighthly, and a word in conclusion, at least."

Slam!

Tom Redwing left Study No. 4, and the door closed behind him with a bang

that rang from one end to the other of the Remove passage. And a roar of laughter from Skinner & Co. followed the bang of the door.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Up to Coker!

"HERE, young What's-your-name!"

Coker of the Fifth knew quite well that the junior whom he was addressing was named Levison. But it would have been beneath the dignity of the great Coker to remember the names of fellows in the Lower School, and Horace Coker's dignity was a very important consideration.

Ernest Levison, lately of St. Jim's, now of the Greyfriars Remove, walked on regardless. He was walking towards the House when Coker of the Fifth called to him, and, like Felix, he kept on walking. Apparently he was not

At least, I heard a noise like a saw-mill, and I thought I remembered your voice, Coker."

Coker breathed hard and deep.

"I suppose that's meant for check?" he said.

"Exactly," assented Levison.

"You'll find that cheek won't pay here, Levison. It may be all very well at St. Jim's. I don't think much of St. Jim's."

"I believe you," agreed Levison. "You don't think much at all, do you, Coker? Apparatus not in good working order, and all that."

"I called to you," said Coker, "to speak to you. It seems that you've come back to Greyfriars."

"It looks like it, Coker. Seeing me here in the Remove, I suppose even you could work out that much. It shows what a Greyfriars education will do for a fellow," said Levison gravely. "It demonstrates, at least, that your intellect works to a certain extent. Nobody would guess it, to look at you. But it does."

There was a chortle from some Remove fellows. Harry Wharton & Co. had been putting about a footer before tea; but they had stopped, and drawn near, to give ear to the dialogue. So far as words went, Ernest Levison was more than able to hold his own with Horace Coker; but the great man of the Fifth looked like proceeding from words to actions. In which case, the Famous Five of the Remove were ready to take a hand—an emphatic hand!

"You've come back!" gasped Coker. "A long time ago you were shifted out of this school. The Head's let you come back. I dare say he had his reasons; but if he had consulted me, I should have said not."

"Didn't the Head consult you?" asked Levison, in amazement.

"No, you young ass!"

"Mean to say that Dr. Locke runs this school without consulting you? What is he thinking of?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five.

"More cheek!" gasped Coker. "I see that you've developed nerve since you were here last, Levison. You'll find that it won't do here. I've a short way with fags, though you may have forgotten it."

"The fact is, I'd forgotten your existence entirely," confessed Levison. "Never remembered you at all till I heard a noise like nutcrackers, and found that it was your voice, Coker."

"You were a young rascal when you were here before," said Coker, in a deep voice. "I don't think you've changed."

"I know you haven't," remarked Levison. "Judging by appearances, at least, you're still the biggest ass at Greyfriars."

"I think the Head made a mistake in letting you come back. I believe you're still a shady young rascal. I'm going to keep an eye on you," said Coker. "You can look out for squalls if you kick over the traces, see?"

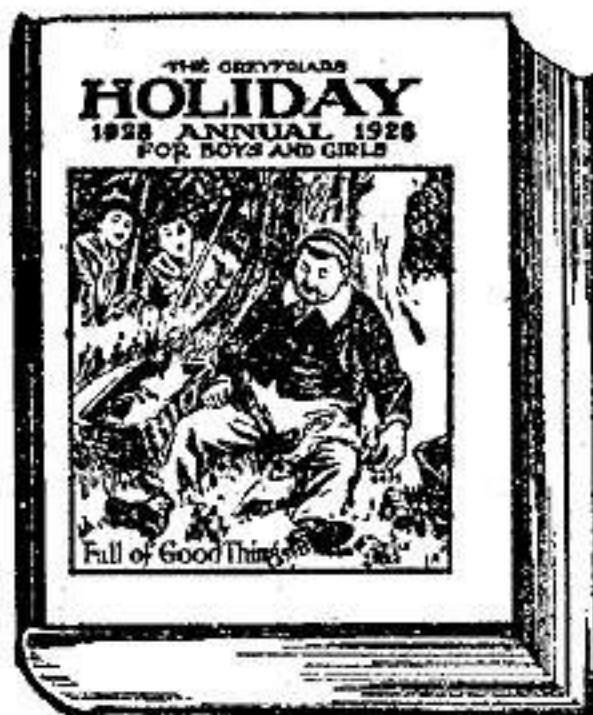
"Has the Head made you a prefect?"

"Not yet. Owing to the Head being rather dense, he doesn't appoint prefects from the Fifth Form. But you can look on me as a prefect!" said Coker loftily.

"I'd rather look on you as a silly ass. It would be nearer the actual facts."

"I'm keeping an eye on you," said Coker. "Mind, any breaking bounds and smoking and betting, and so on—I shall spot it. I'm going to make it my business to see that you don't disgrace the school again. Behave yourself, and you'll be all right. But, remember, I'm keeping an eye on you!"

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prepared to answer to the name of "young What's-your-name."

"Here, young Thingummy!" called out Coker.

Still Ernest Levison walked on, calm and leisurely, and quite deaf. "Young Thingummy appealed to him no more than "young What's-your-name."

"Levison!" hooted Coker.

Ernest Levison smiled faintly, stopped, and glanced round. With calmness he eyed the worthy and indignant face of Coker of the Fifth.

"Hallo, kid!" he said genially.

Coker jumped.

"What—what did you say?" he ejaculated.

"Hallo, kid!"

Horace Coker looked at him. This Remove fag called him "kid." The Remove did not fag, and therefore were not fags; but that was nothing to Coker. He was impervious to facts. All the Lower School were, or should have been, fags, in Coker's lofty opinion. He had formed that opinion on the day he passed into the Upper School, and had held it firmly ever since.

"Anything I can do for you?" went on Levison. "You called me, I think.

"Which eye?" asked Levison.

"Eh?"

"I should like to know which eye, so that I shall know which one to dot," explained the junior.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five. They were deriving considerable entertainment from this dialogue.

"You cheeky young sweep!" roared Coker, quite losing his temper now. "I'll give you a hiding to begin with as a warning."

Coker strode at the St. Jim's junior. Whiz!

Bob Cherry had the old footer at his feet. It was a rather ancient footer used for punt-about, and it had gathered a quantity of mud. Bob kicked at the psychological moment, and the muddy footer rose and whizzed, and landed fairly upon the prominent nose of Horace Coker before he could reach Levison.

Squash!

"Oooooch!" roared Coker.

He staggered back, with mud spattering his wrathful face, and the footer

quad, gazing up dizzily at the dim November sky. But he lay there staring for only a moment. The next, he was being rolled over and over by six pairs of hands towards the nearest puddle. He went into the puddle with a splash.

"Groogh! Oh, you young sweeps! I'll thrash the lot of you! Oooooch!" spluttered Coker, as his rugged face was dipped into muddy water. "Mooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Time for tea," remarked Frank Nugent. "Good-bye, Coker."

"Groooooch!"

The cheery Removites ran lightly into

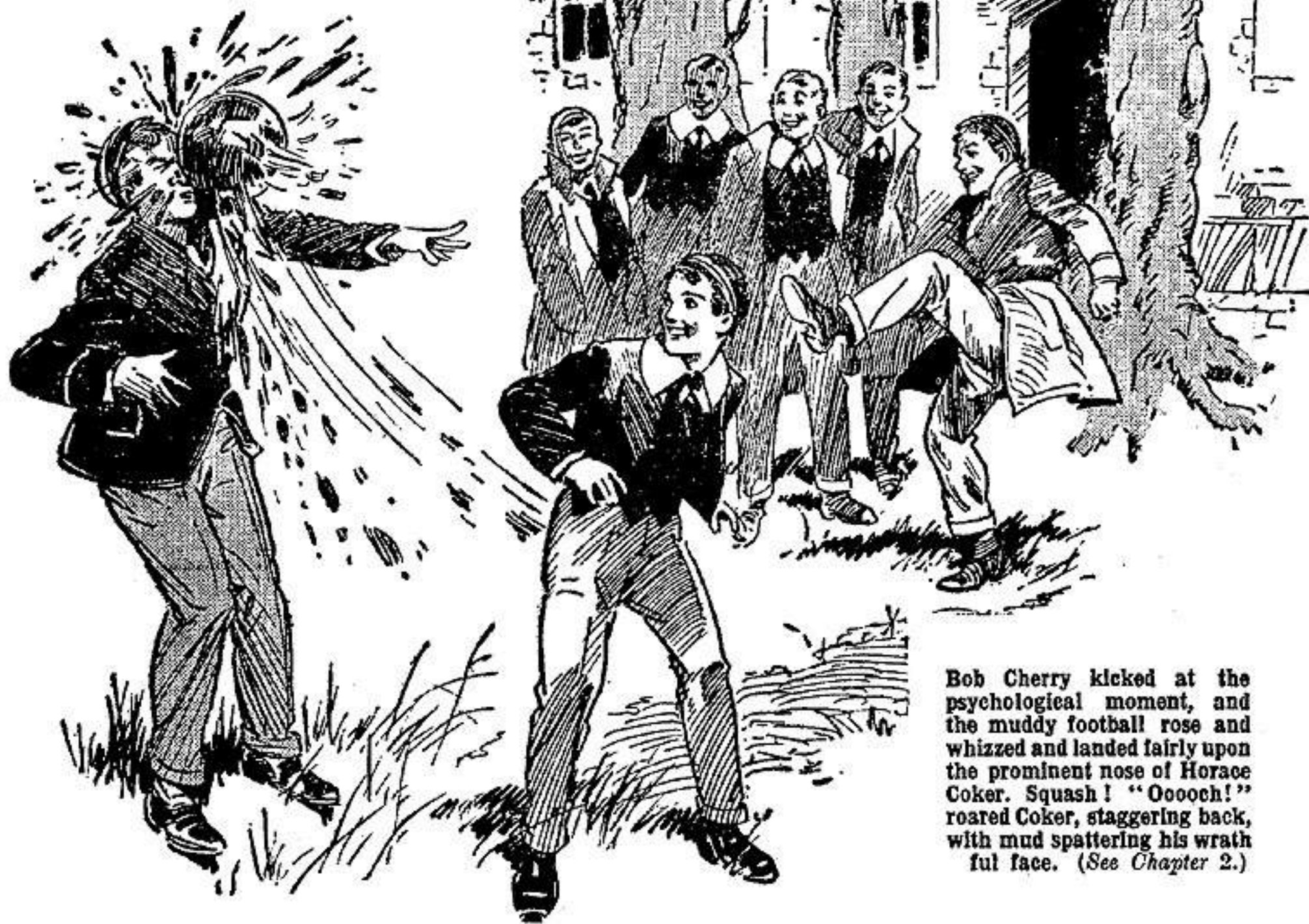
muddy aspect was comic, for he uttered a loud cackinnation. Coker gave him a muddy glare.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

The next moment he gave a roar, as Coker smote. Coker, at that moment, was simply yearning for a victim; any old victim. It was like Billy Bunter to roll on the scene, on the principle that fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as he collapsed under Coker's hefty snite.

Coker of the Fifth strode away towards the House. He wanted vengeance on the cheeky Removites; but still more he wanted a wash. There



Bob Cherry kicked at the psychological moment, and the muddy footer rose and whizzed and landed fairly upon the prominent nose of Horace Coker. Squash! "Oooooch!" roared Coker, staggering back, with mud spattering his wrathful face. (See Chapter 2.)

can down him to the ground, leaving a trail of mud on Coker from his neck to his feet.

"Goal!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The goal-fulness is terrific!" chortled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Look out, my esteemed chums, the worthy Coker seems excited."

There was no doubt that Coker of the Fifth was excited. He made a wild charge at the Removites. When Coker was wrathful, he never counted odds. It was an unfortunate circumstance for Coker that the odds, counted or uncounted, were there all the same.

Coker rushed into the grip of many hands, and before he knew what was happening, he was on his back in the

the House, leaving Horace Coker to sort himself out.

Coker scrambled to his feet, and gouged mud and water from his face and his eyes, and blinked round him.

Had the Removites been still on the spot, there would undoubtedly have been more trouble—for Horace Coker at least. But they had vanished.

Levison and the Famous Five were in the House by that time, and going up the Remove staircase in a laughing crowd.

"Groooooch!" gasped Coker.

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter, of the Remove, rolled into the offing and stopped to blink at Coker through his big spectacles. Billy Bunter evidently thought that Coker's

was no doubt whatever that he wanted a wash.

He tramped wrathfully into the House, and almost into the arms of his Form master, Mr. Prout, who was talking to Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove. Mr. Prout, a ponderous gentleman who could never keep within his own province, was bestowing a little kindly advice on Mr. Quelch, who was listening with ill-concealed impatience. Mr. Quelch was about the last member of the Greyfriars staff to submit to advice from a colleague on the conduct of his Form. He was thinking out some caustic rejoinder, while Mr. Prout ran on:

"Far be it from me to interfere, my dear Quelch. And I am aware, of
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course, that a junior Form is not of great importance in any school. Nevertheless, the appearance of the junior boys reflect, to a certain extent, upon the school. The boy Bunter, for instance, he generally presents a very slovenly appearance. And a new boy in your Form, named, I think, Bright, or some such name, is far from cleanly. Doubtless you have not observed it. That is why I am bringing it to your notice, my dear fellow. Now, in the Fifth, I should allow nothing of the sort—"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, in a freezing voice, far below zero.

"Yes, indeed, my dear Quelch. No boy in the Fifth Form ever presents, in public, a slovenly or uncleanly aspect—"

Mr. Prout had reached that point, when Coker of the Fifth barged in. He stopped at that point.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch, with quiet malice. "Is that a Fifth Form boy? I think this is a boy in your Form, my dear Prout, though in his present muddy and slovenly state I cannot undertake to identify him."

Mr. Prout almost gurgled.

"Coker! Is it Coker?"

"Groogh! Yes, sir."

"How dare you, Coker?" gasped Mr. Prout. "How dare you, I say, appear in the House in that—that slovenly, that dirty, that disgraceful state. Have you no sense of shame, Coker?"

"I—I—" stuttered Coker. "I—I've been—"

"Enough! Go at once and wash yourself!" thundered Mr. Prout. "Go and wash yourself immediately, and brush your clothes. Bless my soul! Your condition would disgrace the dirtiest boy in the Second Form!"

"I—I—I—"

"Go!" snorted Mr. Prout.

Coker went, in a boiling state.

"You were saving, my dear Prout—" murmured Mr. Quelch maliciously.

But Mr. Prout did not continue his remarks on the slovenly members of the Lower Fourth.

Coker of the Fifth tramped away furiously to a bath-room. When he arrived in his study in the Fifth Form passage a little later, in a newly swept and garnished state, he was red and flustered and breathing hard. Potter and Greene of the Fifth were also at tea there; and they smiled as he came in. They had seen Coker's adventures from the study window. They did not think of mentioning that circumstance to Horace, however. Coker would have expected them to rush down to his assistance, had he known that they had seen the affray. Coker often expected things that were very unlikely to come to pass. The opinion of his study-mates was that if Coker liked to get mixed up in a shindy with a mob of fags, he could have the shindy all to himself.

"Anything up, old man?" smiled Potter.

Snort from Coker.

"Yes. That young cad Levison checked me, and a whole gang of fags set on me when I was going to lick him. While you fellows were guzzling here!" added Coker witheringly, as he helped himself to ham and eggs on a large scale.

"Who's Levison?" asked Greene.

"New kid in the Remove. Fellow who was sacked once, and allowed to come back," snorted Coker. "Can't imagine what the Head's thinking of. I warned him that I should keep an eye on him."

"What on earth for?" asked Potter.

"I'm not going to have Greyfriars disgraced by a shady young blackguard. I look on this as a duty," said Coker loftily. "If the Head is ass enough to let him come back here, and the masters and prefects let him rip, what am I to do?"

Potter and Greene both thought, at the same moment, of suggesting that Coker should mind his own business.

But both of them, at the same moment, decided not to make the suggestion. Coker was not likely to take it kindly. Besides, it would have been futile. Coker never could mind his own business.

"I shall keep an eye on him," said Coker firmly. "It's up to me, in my opinion. The young rascal practically defied me—which looks to me like a guilty conscience. I shall take the matter in hand."

"May mean trouble with the fags?" murmured Potter.

"Very likely," assented Coker. "They hang together like a swarm of bees. I shall handle them all right, though—and you fellows will back me up all along the line."

Potter closed one eye at Greene—the eye that was farthest from Coker of the Fifth. Greene smiled. Coker took the enthusiastic support of his comrades for granted. Potter and Greene had their own opinion about that; but they did not state that opinion. It would not have been conducive to peace and a quiet life in the study.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rivals!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came up cheerily into the Remove passage, Levison with them. Short, as had been the time since Levison's return to his old school, he was already feeling quite at home in his old Form; feeling, indeed, almost as if he had never left Greyfriars at all.

His position in the Remove, however, was very different. He was on the best of terms now with the best fellows in the Form, and on friendly terms with almost all the Remove. In the old days he had had more enemies than friends; now he assuredly had many more friends than enemies. Certainly he did not intend to make any if he could help it.

The juniors stopped at Study No. 1, and Wharton threw open the door. He was about to enter the study, but he stopped, with an expression of distaste on his face.

Edgar Bright, the new fellow in the Remove, was there.

Certainly, he had every right to be there, as it was his study as well as Wharton's and Nugent's and Levison's. But his presence was disagreeable, all the same.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the trouble?" asked Bob Cherry, catching sight of the expression on Wharton's face.

"The Toad."

"Oh! Tea in my study, then," said Bob.

"Right-ho! You'll come along, Levison?"

"I'm teeing with Smithy to-day," answered Levison. "Thanks, all the same."

"All serene."

The Famous Five tramped on up the passage. Levison glanced into Study No. 1 at Bright, rather curiously. For more reasons than one Ernest Levison was interested in the unpopular new junior.

Somewhat to his surprise, Bright gave him a friendly nod.

"Come in!" he said.

"I'm going along to Smithy's study," answered Levison.

"Come in for a minute, all the same. I want to speak to you—and we're study-mates, anyhow."

Levison entered the study.

"You don't care to tea with me?" asked Bright, with a rather sneering grin.

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"Smithy's asked me."
"And if he hadn't?"
"I should have gone to No. 13, with the other fellows."
"I don't bite," said Bright, sarcastically.

Levison laughed.
"No reason why we shouldn't be friends, so far as I can see," went on Bright. "I've done nothing to you, that I know of."

"You seem to have got the other fellows' backs up," said Levison, "and they're friends of mine. Besides—"

He paused.
"Besides?" asked Bright, watching him.

"I was surprised to find you here when I came over from St. Jim's," said Levison. "Of course, there are plenty of Brights; but the name struck me. I've been told since, though, that your father is Mr. Esau Bright, of Lantham."

"Anything against him?"
"Oh, no; Only— But most likely he's not told you anything about the dispute, and, in that case, there's no need for me to tell you."

"That's a mistake; I know all about it," answered Bright. "That's what I was going to speak about. Your father was a nephew of a Mr. Thorpe, who was once master of the Remove at this school. Thorpe left twenty thousand pounds to my pater by will. My pater was abroad, the will tucked away somewhere in safety, and your father inherited as next of kin. When my dad came home and found that old Thorpe was dead he naturally put forward the will. I suppose you don't blame him for that?"

"No," said Levison.
"As the will had been proved, I suppose you don't deny that it was a genuine document?" asked Bright sarcastically.

"My father has told me it was genuine."

"I know it's hard cheese on your pater," said Bright. "He's had the money for years and years, and most likely spent a lot of it; and now the courts have ordered him to make restitution. He's got to pay over the whole of the twenty thousand pounds to my father. I dare say it will mean something like ruin to him."

His eyes narrowed as he watched Levison's face.

But Levison's face gave no sign. He made no answer, and whatever his thoughts may have been, Bright was unable to read them.

"I admit it's hard cheese," said Bright, after a pause. "But you can't blame my father for claiming his legal rights, under the will of a man who was his lifelong friend."

"I don't blame him. But—"

"But what?"

"Not much good discussing it," said Levison.

"Oh, let's have it out," sneered Bright. "Your pater told my father some cock-and-bull story about Mr. Thorpe having made a later will, cancelling the early one. In the later one he made your father his sole heir. That story is no good in a law court. The last will would have to be produced."

"It was not a cock-and-bull story," said Levison quietly. "Possibly your father believes so. But the second will was made."

"Where is it, then?"

"Nobody knows."

"It was not found among old Thorpe's papers when he died at Worthing."

"I know that."

"Well, then, doesn't that settle it?"

"Not quite," said Levison. "Old Thorpe's health broke down before he

left Greyfriars. He was practically an invalid for some time before he left the school, and a new Form master took his place while he was still here. When he left it is very likely that he forgot to take away important papers with him. It's known that he had spent years on a book on archaeology, but the manuscripts were not found among his papers at the nursing-home in Worthing. What became of them?"

"A lot of piffle about stones, and such rubbish," said Bright.

"Very likely; but they were not piffle to Mr. Thorpe. Certainly he would never destroy manuscripts he had spent years upon for no reason."

"You think he left that archaeological stuff behind him at Greyfriars?"

"It seems most likely to me."

"And the will along with it?"

"I believe so."

"But where, then?"

"I can't say. In some place where the papers have never been discovered, that's certain."

Levison paused, and fixed his eyes keenly on Bright.

"I'm speaking out quite plainly, Bright," he said, "because I believe you know as much as I can tell you, and more. I've heard all about your going down from the dorm in the middle of the night to search Mr. Quelch's study—the study that was Mr. Thorpe's when he was here. I've heard all about your questioning Bunter about secret passages, and secret panels, and so on, and getting licked for rooting in Quelch's study because Bunter pulled your leg with a yarn about a secret panel there. You're not playing these tricks for nothing. I think—"

He paused.

"Well, tell us what you think," sneered Bright.

"I think that your father believes in the later will, and that you are trying to find it," said Levison bluntly.

"Why should I try to find a will which would benefit your father, and rob my own pater of a large legacy?"

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"You're not the fellow to do that," he said. "If you find the will I do not believe that it will be made public."

"It's a serious offence against the law to destroy a will," said Bright. "Are you accusing me of trying to commit a crime?"

"I am accusing you of nothing," said Levison contemptuously. "I don't even blame you very much, for, whatever you are doing, it must have been your father who instructed you to do it, and the blame lies on him. But if you want me to believe that you are not playing a dirty, sneaking, underhand game here, tell me why you are so keen on trying to find out a secret recess in Mr. Thorpe's old study."

"I'm rather interested in archaeology myself."

"Which you have just described as 'a lot of piffle about stones and such rubbish'!" said Levison ironically.

Bright looked a little confused.

"There's no need to tell lies about it," said Levison, with a curl of the lip. "I'm no fool, and I know enough arithmetic to be able to put two and two together. You've done me no harm, so far; but you're trying to do my father harm, and that comes to the same thing, or worse. You are after Mr. Thorpe's second will, and if you find it you will take it to your father, and that will be the end of it. I was a bit startled at first, when I saw your game, but on reflection I'm very glad of it."

"Glad of it?" repeated Bright, staring.

"Yes; because it proves to me that your father believes in the second will, under which my father inherits his uncle's fortune. It proves also that your father must have heard some talk from old Thorpe, at one time, which led him to believe that Mr. Thorpe had discovered one of the secrets of this old place and used some secret recess for his private papers. You never guessed at a secret passage or a secret panel; your father knew about it, and told you, and that's why you're hunting for it."

Bright bit his lip.

"You're jolly keen," he said at last.

"I never was a fool," answered Levison. "From you, though without your wish, I have found out that Mr. Bright, of Lantham, has some reason to believe that old Mr. Thorpe kept his papers in some secret recess at Greyfriars, though he does not know where it is. That gives me something to go upon."

"Then it is as I suspected when I heard you were coming—you're here to search for the will?"

"You know I am," said Levison coolly. "I should not tell you so if you did not know. We are both here with the same object—to find the second will: I intending to see justice done, and you intending to prevent justice from being done. Do you deny that?"

Bright was silent.

"We're not likely to be friends while you're trying to rob my father," added Levison.

"I admit nothing of the sort."

"That makes no difference. I've no doubt you'd be willing to affect friendship," went on Levison scornfully; "not because you feel anything of the kind, but so as to keep me under your eye, and find out, if I discover anything. You've discovered nothing so far; but I may have better luck."

"You mayn't be able to hang on here till you bag your better luck," said Bright maliciously. "You were sacked once, or turned out at least, and though the Head has allowed you to come back, you may find that you have to go again. My pater has a lot of influence with one of the governors of the school, and you may find that the matter has been taken up at a meeting of the Governing Board."

Levison laughed contemptuously.

"You are threatening me with the sack from Greyfriars," he said. "I think you are nearer to it than I shall ever be."

Bright started.

"I? How?"

"Suppose the Head knew what you were doing here? He knows, from my father, that I hope to find old Mr. Thorpe's last will while I am here. He would be glad to hear that I had found it. But what do you suppose he would think of your hunting for it? Do you think he would believe that you and your pater are taking all this trouble for my father's sake? He would know at once that the intention is to destroy the will—to commit a crime!"

Bright breathed hard.

"Whatever you suspect, there's no proof!" he faltered.

"If the Head knew about your rooting in Mr. Quelch's study at night, if Mr. Quelch knew that you were hunting for a secret panel when you ragged his study the other day, I fancy they would take that as proof."

Bright stared at Levison, with something like terror in his face.

"So that's your game?" he panted.

"You want to get me shifted out of Greyfriars to leave you a free hand?"

"I shall say nothing. I'm not the fellow to tell tales even about a toad

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like you," said Levison. "I was only warning you that you're nearer to the sack than I could ever be. The Head would bunk you out of the school at a minute's notice if he knew your game. I shall say nothing. But if your pater has, as you say, any influence with the governors, and should he use it against me, I should certainly hit back—hard! Whether I stayed or not, you would go. You'd better think that over, Toad."

And with that Ernest Levison left the study. The Toad sat and stared after him with a blank expression on his face.

It had been said of Levison, in his old days at Greyfriars, that he was a hard nut to crack. He had changed very considerably since those times, but in one respect, at least, he was not changed; he was still an uncommonly hard nut to crack. It was borne in upon the Toad's mind that he, and his father, the moneylender of Lantham, would find the cracking of that nut an exceedingly difficult task.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Trouble in Smithy's Study!

"TRICKLE in, old bean!" Levison smiled as he entered the Bounder's study.

Vernon-Smith greeted him cheerily, and Skinner & Co. were very bland and civil. Levison noted that Tom Redwing was not there—rather an odd circumstance when the Bounder was standing a spread, as he was Smithy's study-mate and chum. Redwing's absence, and Skinner & Co.'s presence, possibly enlightened Levison as to the nature of the entertainment that was planned in the Bounder's study. If so, he gave no sign of it. His expression was pleasantly friendly, but it was seldom that Levison's face gave a clue to his thoughts.

"I hope I'm not late," he remarked. "Coker of the Fifth butted in as I was coming along, and then the Toad detained me for a jaw. Not my fault."

"Not at all," said Herbert Vernon-Smith. "But we're all here now."

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter's fat face and glimmering spectacles looked in at the door. The Bounder reached for a cushion.

"Bunk!" he said laconically.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Where will you have it, then?"

The Owl of the Remove eyed the cushion warily.

"I say, you fellows, that beast Coker pitched into me in the quad, all through you checking him, Levison," said Bunter. "Actually thumped me! Thumped me, you know!"

"I hope he thumped you hard?" remarked Skinner.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"And you've come to tell us about it?" asked Snoop.

"Yes, old chap."

"Can't you go and tell some other study?"

"Oh, really, Snoop—"

"Shut the door after you, Bunter," said the Bounder.

He took aim with the cushion, and the fat junior prepared to dodge. Bunter had had a lot of practice at dodging missiles at tea-time.

"You'd hardly believe, Levison, old man, what I've done for that chap," said Bunter. "After all I've done for him, you'd think he'd be glad to ask me to his measly spread. You'd hardly believe that I gave up my whole summer vacation to go to the South Seas with

him, and that I saved his life over and over again!"

"Right on the wicket!" agreed Levison. "Certainly I should hardly believe that, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whiz!

The cushion flew, and Smithy was a good shot. But Bunter was a born dodger. He eluded the flying cushion, and it flew past him into the Remove passage and landed there.

"I'm going," said Bunter, with dignity.

"You'd better," growled Vernon-Smith. "I'll let you have the poker next, if you don't take your face away."

"I'm going," repeated Bunter. "I certainly shouldn't think of staying in this study, considering what goes on here. I must say I'm rather shocked at you, Levison. Disgusted, in fact!"

"What's the matter now?" asked Levison amicably.

"You know jolly well. What would the Head say if he knew you were smoking and playing cards with Smithy after he let you come back to Greyfriars?" demanded Bunter scornfully.

"If he knew that, Bunter, he would say I was a young rascal, and that the sooner I got out of the school the better," answered Levison quietly. "But he's not likely to know anything of the kind, as nothing of the kind will ever happen!"

Skinner & Co. exchanged covert glances.

"Gammon!" said Bunter. "Think I don't know? Look here, Smithy, I don't mind joining in a game. I'm a bit of a sport—in fact, rather a dog!"

"You mean rather a hog?" asked Skinner.

"No, I don't!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm rather goey, old chap," said Bunter. "Any stakes you like—the higher the stakes the better I like it. Banker for quids, if you like. Dash it all, for fivers!" said Bunter, with a burst of sportive recklessness.

"Puzzle—find the fivers!" remarked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder did not answer Bunter. He reached for the poker and annexed it from the fender. William George Bunter promptly backed into the Remove passage. Even upon the Owl of the Remove it was at last borne in that there was no demand for his fascinating society in Study No. 4.

"Yah! Smoky rotters!" he hooted. "Betting blackguards! Yah!" And Bunter, stopping only a moment to hurl in the cushion, departed along the Remove passage.

There was a roar from Sidney James Snoop. He had caught the returning cushion with his chin.

"Why, I—I—I'll smash him!" gasped Snoop.

He rushed from the study in pursuit of the Owl of the Remove. He came back a few minutes later.

"Smashed him?" asked Skinner.

"He dodged into Bob Cherry's study," answered Snoop. Evidently Sidney James had not cared to pursue the Owl of the Remove into that study.

"Shut the door," said the Bounder. "Sit down, Levison, old chap. May as well turn the key in the lock, Skinner."

"Quite as well, in the circumstances," agreed Skinner.

"We're having the spread in half an hour's time, Levison," remarked the Bounder carelessly. "That suit you?"

"Quite," assented Levison.

"And we'll have a chat over old times first: we shall all like it," said Skinner.

"The jolly old times!" said Stott.

"The rorty old times!" sniggered Snoop.

Vernon-Smith drew a box of cigarettes from the table-drawer and handed it round. Skinner & Co. lighted up at once, but Ernest Levison shook his head.

"Thanks, no!" he said.

"You don't care for the brand?" asked the Bounder, wilfully misunderstanding.

"All brands are the same to me, as I don't smoke."

"Oh, draw it mild!" urged Skinner. "We're all friends here, Levison. The door's locked."

"Nobody here is likely to give you away to a prefect!" said Snoop reassuringly.

"You used not to be nervy like this," remarked Stott.

Levison laughed. He was a fellow of strong character, and in his shady days he had had the courage, at least, of his faults. Card-playing behind a locked door, smoking with an eye and an ear open for a prefect's footfall, never had appealed to him. He had taken risks, and he had paid the penalty. The attempt of this dingy crowd to banter him into doing what he was resolved not to do only appealed to his sense of humour. He laughed aloud.

The Bounder was watching him, with a glint in his eyes.

"You won't smoke?" he asked.

"Thanks, no!"

"You don't mind if we do?"

"It's not for me to dictate what a fellow does in his own study."

"Perhaps Levison's right," remarked Skinner, with an air of thoughtful consideration. "He can't be too careful the first few days. We should all be given a chance, but it would be the boot for Levison if the beaks found him out."

"And it would serve me right, too," said Levison. "If I leave Greyfriars again it won't be for playing the goat."

"Every man to his taste," drawled the Bounder. He had taken a pack of cards from the table-drawer, and was idly shuffling them. "Cut for deal."

"I'm afraid you must leave me out of that, too," said Levison politely. "I don't play cards, except a round game at Christmas for nuts."

"Nuts!" said the Bounder, staring.

"Nuts!" said Skinner. "Fan me, somebody."

"He, he, he!" came from Snoop.

Levison looked over the company in Study No. 4. He knew why he had been asked there now, beyond a doubt. His expression was still quite pleasant; he did not want a row if he could help it, even with the black sheep of the Remove. But he was fed-up, and he rose to his feet.

"You fellows seem to have made a little error," he said agreeably. "It's kind of you to ask me, and I'm grateful and all that; but I really don't care for this sort of thing. If you'll excuse me I'll travel."

"Sit down!" granted the Bounder.

"I think I'd better go, Smithy."

"Sit down and take your hand of cards and play, and stop giving us that sort of humbug!" said the Bounder harshly.

"Yes, cut out the humbug, old bean!" urged Skinner. "It won't wash here. Keep it for Wharton and his pi crowd. You see, we know you."

"I suppose a fellow can please himself," said Levison.

"I don't like hypocrites," said the Bounder.

Levison flushed.

"That's rather a hard word, Vernon-Smith," he said very quietly.

"Isn't it the right one?"

"No boy in the Fifth Form ever presents, in public, a slovenly or uncleanly aspect——" Mr. Prout broke off suddenly as Coker of the Fifth barged in. He gazed at the Fifth-Former. "Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch. "I think this is a boy in your Form, my dear Prout, though in his present muddy and slovenly state I cannot undertake to identify him." Mr. Prout almost gurgled.
(See Chapter 2.)



"I hope not."

"Then keep your pi-jaw for fellows who will swallow it, and don't hand it out here!" said the Bounder savagely. "I can tell you that I get fed up on it jolly soon."

"I won't trouble you with pi-jaw, or any other jaw, Herbert Vernon-Smith. Put the key in the lock, Skinner; I want to go."

"Rats!" said Skinner coolly. Skinner felt strong in numbers; if it came to a row the odds were heavy against the junior from St. Jim's.

"Oh, let the chap go if he wants to!" said Stott. "If he's serious about the pi game it's his own bizney, not ours."

"I'm asking you for the key, Skinner."

"You can ask!" said Skinner. "I leave it to Smithy; but if a fellow came to my study and preached at me I wouldn't let him go without a hiding. It's a bit too thick to be preached at by a cad who's been sacked from the school in his time."

Vernon-Smith hesitated. He had been actuated, in the first place, more by idle mischief than anything else, and by an idle curiosity to ascertain whether Levison's reform was really genuine or not. To do him justice, the Bounder was not the fellow to lead anyone unwillingly into his own shady ways. But he was angry now. He felt that, in the circumstances, he looked rather an ass—and the arrogant

Bounder did not like being made to look an ass.

"Don't give him the key," he said.

"Right—I won't!"

"I'm leaving this study!" said Levison.

"Not before I choose," said Vernon-Smith coolly.

"What's the good of rowing, Smithy?" asked Levison quietly. "I came here as a friend, on your invitation. Let me go without trouble; there's no sense in a shindy."

"You're askin' for the shindy, not I," Levison fixed his eyes on Skinner.

"Will you give me the key?"

"Smithy's boss here," replied Skinner. "You heard what he said."

"Then I shall take it."

"Hands off!" roared Skinner, as the junior from St. Jim's grasped him. "Here, back up, you fellows!"

Skinner crumpled up in Levison's muscular grip. In a few seconds the key was in Levison's hand, and he turned to the door, pitching Skinner, in a gasping state, away from him. Stott and Snoop were jumping to Skinner's assistance, and they grasped Levison as he got the door unlocked. The Bounder had sat motionless—sorry, probably, that he had allowed the matter to go so far. But as Levison turned on Snoop and Stott and knocked them right and left the Bounder sprang up. Right or wrong, he could not leave his com-

panions unaided now that the trouble had started.

Snoop went sprawling along the floor, and Stott staggered against the table. In the old days at Greyfriars Ernest Levison had not been known as much of a fighting-man. Obviously he had improved very much at St. Jim's in that respect, as in other respects.

But the Bounder was made of a stuff very different from the three slackers. Levison threw the study door wide open as Smithy came at him, and he turned with Vernon-Smith's fierce grasp on his shoulder.

"Let go!"

"Rats to you!"

The next moment they were fighting. Skinner and Snoop and Stott, gasping for breath, stared on at the scene as Levison of St. Jim's and the Bounder of Greyfriars surged into the Remove passage, fighting furiously.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Row in the Remove!

BILLY BUNTER had entered Bob Cherry's study rather breathlessly. Nobody was surprised to see him arrive. A spread was on in Study No. 13. Bunter's nose for a spread was well known in the Remove. Nobody in Study No. 13 was surprised
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to see him and nobody was pleased. That, however, was a small matter to William George Bunter. He was fully persuaded that his arrival anywhere ought to give pleasure. But he was aware, from long experience, that it didn't. Fortunately, it did not matter whether other fellows were pleased. It was whether Bunter was pleased that mattered.

There was quite a numerous party in Study No. 13. All the Famous Five were there, and Mark Linley and little Wun Lung, the Chinese. And all of them as Bunter rolled in made the same remark together:

"Get out, Bunter."

It was an idle remark, from Bunter's point of view. He had not got in in order to get out again.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Go along to Smithy's study," suggested Bob Cherry. "Smithy's got a spread on."

"I've turned Smithy's spread down," said Bunter loftily. "Rather too low-down for me. Blagging with that St. Jim's fellow is not in my line."

"What?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"They're going it in Smithy's study," said Bunter. "Smokes and cards, and I—I think I saw a bottle of whisky—"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"What do you mean, you fat duffer?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove angrily. "How dare you say that Levison is doing anything of the kind!"

"You know his style," said Bunter. "You haven't forgotten what he was like when he was at Greyfriars before? I told him I was disgusted with him. I felt bound to say that. After the Head's let him come back, I consider it too thick—too thick altogether! I'm not sure that I ought not to mention it to a prefect. Still, a man can't be a sneak!"

"I don't believe a word of it," said Mark Linley quietly.

"Oh, really, Linley—"

"The truthfulness of the esteemed Bunter is not terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, shaking his dusky head.

"Smithy's got Skinner's crowd there," grinned Bunter. "What does that look like? I say, you fellows, I'll have some of that cake."

"Isn't Redwing there?" asked Johnny Bull, as Bunter helped himself to cake—an extensive helping.

"No fear! He's too pi for that game," said Bunter. "He's not a chap like Levison."

"Off, shut up!" growled Bob Cherry.

"It's rather shocking," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "It's really up to you to chip in, Wharton, as captain of the Remove."

"I don't believe a word of it," growled Wharton, "and I shouldn't meddle with Levison, anyhow. You want kicking, Bunter, for talking about the chap at all!"

"Good egg!" said Bob Cherry. "Let's kick Bunter! A kicking always does him good, anyhow!"

"The kickfulness is the proper caper," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that thumping row?" exclaimed Bob.

There was a tramping of feet in the Remove passage, and a buzz of many voices.

"A fight! A fight!" came in a yell along the passage.

Bob Cherry threw the door of Study No. 13 open.

Fellows were coming out of all the

studies, and the Remove passage was crowded. In the distance, Bob could see two juniors hard at it hammer and tongs. He gave a shout:

"Levison and the Bounder!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Tea in Study No. 13 was forgotten; the tea-party rushed out to join the crowd already swarming in the passage. Only William George Bunter did not forget. He was not specially interested in a scrap between the Bounder and the fellow from St. Jim's. But he was deeply interested in the spread. While excitement reigned in the Remove passage, Billy Bunter sat at the festive board in Study No. 13, and his plump jaws worked hard and thoroughly.

"Levison!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove, as he arrived on the scene.

The St. Jim's fellow did not heed him. He had his hands full with the Bounder. Vernon-Smith had received several hard knocks already, and he had found, to his surprise and rage, that Levison was holding his own well—if not more than holding his own. The cause of the quarrel was forgotten now by the angry Bounder as he attacked the St. Jim's fellow with savage intensity.

"Smithy!" shouted Bob.

"What on earth's the row about?" exclaimed Nugent. "Look here, let's stop them, you men!"

Tom Redwing came hurrying up from the Remove staircase. His face was both angry and distressed as he saw his chum fighting with Levison. He did not hesitate for a moment; he rushed between the two of them, threw his arms round Vernon-Smith, and forced him back by main strength. Levison dropped his hands at once.

"Let me go, you fool!" roared the Bounder passionately.

Redwing shoved him back harder. The sailorman's son had twice the Bounder's strength, though Smithy was no weakling.

"Stop it, Smithy!" snapped Redwing.

"Mind your own business! By gad, I'll knock you flying if you don't get out of the way!" yelled the Bounder furiously.

"You won't, old bean!" grinned Bob Cherry, grasping the Bounder's arms and pinioning them. "Chuck it!"

"Enough is as good as an esteemed feast, my worthy Smithy," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh soothingly.

The Bounder, black with rage, struggled savagely. But he was safely held, and he seemed to realise, as some of the juniors laughed, that he was cutting a rather ridiculous figure. He ceased his resistance suddenly, and strove hard to control his temper.

"You can let go," he said, in a quivering voice. "I'll keep my hands off the cad—here. Later will do!"

Redwing released him, and Bob Cherry stepped back.

"But what's the row about?" asked Wharton.

"Find out!"

The Bounder's eyes gleamed at Levison.

"You'll meet me in the gym with the gloves on, Levison?"

"Whenever you like."

"That's settled, then."

And the Bounder went back into his study and slammed the door.

Levison, breathing rather hard, dabbed his nose with his handkerchief. Brief as the conflict had been, it had been hard and fast, and damage had been received on both sides.

"Any objection to telling a man what the row was about, Levison?" inquired Peter Todd.

Levison smiled.

"No. A difference of opinion."

"Smithy's manners aren't improving," remarked Squiff. "Chuckling a man out of a study after asking him to tea isn't done, I believe, in the best circles."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Row over a game—what?" asked Hazeldene curiously.

"Not exactly. Just a row, owing to a difference of opinion," answered Levison. "I'll travel off and bathe my nose, I think."

"It needs it!" grinned Peter Todd.

The crowd dispersed. Harry Wharton & Co. went back along the Remove passage to Bob's study. Wharton was looking very thoughtful. He had a fairly clear idea of what the row had been about—and, in any case, it proved that Bunter's insinuations were unfounded. So far from falling into the ways of the black sheep of the Remove, the fellow from St. Jim's was now on fighting terms with them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob, as he tramped into Study No. 13 and stared at William George Bunter, shiny and sticky and busy at the table. "If you fellows hadn't finished tea, Bunter's saved you the trouble."

Bunter blinked at the juniors.

He had not had much time, but he had made the most of it. There remained on the tea-table a single, solitary jam-tart, to which Bunter had been about to help himself when the tea-party returned.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Had enough, Bunter?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Well, not quite," said Bunter. "I'll have that tart, if you fellows don't mind. Then I'm afraid I shall have to go—as I'm going to have tea with old Mauly."

"You must have a lot of room left for tea with Mauly, after your jolly old performances here!" remarked Bob. "Sure you'd like that tart?"

"Yes, old chap."

"Here it is, then!"

Bob Cherry picked up the tart and slammed it on Bunter's head. Bunter gave a roar. He had wanted the tart, but he had not wanted it there. Even Bunter did not like jam-tarts taken externally.

"Ow! You silly owl!" he yelled, jumping up. "Groogh! You've made my hair all sticky, you—you—you—"

"Sorry there's no more," said Bob cheerily. "But there's some tea in the pot. You can have that. Hold him while I pour it down his neck, you chaps!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter made a jump for the door and disappeared.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Levison Minor in the Third!

GEORGE TUBB, of the Greyfriars Third, gave a grunt.

Tubb was cross.

Prep in the Third Form room was due in half an hour. By that time Tubb of the Third had to show up a page of Latin translation to his Form master. On the great principle of never doing to-day what can be put off till to-morrow, Tubb had left his task very late—almost too late. He knew that he could not do his translation in half an hour. The best that he could do was to have a shot at it and trust to luck with Mr. Wiggins.

The master of the Third was, fortunately, a good-natured gentleman, perhaps rather too easy-going for such a

Form as the Greyfriars Third. Likewise, he was a very absent-minded gentleman, and there was a possibility that he might forget Tubb's task altogether. Still, George Tubb felt that it behoved him to have a shot at it, at least. The trouble was that he didn't want to.

Tubb was a great man with his fists in the Third, but in scholarship he did not shine. He was sometimes tied up in a knot even by Eutropius. Caesar was a lion in his path. The Gallic War was to him what the "Epta epi Thebas" was to men in the Sixth. There was only one incident in Roman history on which Tubb's mind liked to dwell. That was the assassination of Julius Caesar by Brutus & Co. Tubb felt that he had deserved it for having written the "Gallic War."

Leap-frog was going on in the passage outside the Third Form-room. Any fellow in the Third would have agreed with Tubb that leap-frog was ever so much better than Latin translation. Only Mr. Wiggins could not see it. Unfortunately, it was Mr. Wiggins who had authority in the matter.

"Blow it!" said Tubb.
"What's the row now?" inquired Paget of the Third.

"I've got to do that rotten Caesar."
"Oh, let it rip!" said Paget. "As likely as not old Wiggy will forget to ask for it. He forgets nearly everything."

"Only he's reminded me twice," said Tubb morosely. "That looks as if he's made a special note of it. He says I'm bad at Latin."

Paget grinned.
"Well, you're not exactly Ciceronian," he remarked.

"Who wants to be good at Latin?" demanded Tubb wrathfully. "What's the good of the rubbish? Does Latin help you to kick straighter at goal?"

"It doesn't."
"Am I going to talk to the hands in Latin when I'm grown up and in my pater's business?" growled Tubb. "No good telling Wiggins all that, though."

"No good at all," grinned Paget.

"I'll tell you what," said Tubb. "you're jolly good at translation, old chap. You do it for me."

"Wiggins would know my fist."

"That's all right. I'll copy it down."

Paget made a grimace.

He was chummy with Tubb. But it was not a chum's duty, so far as Paget could see, to undertake Latin translations. Paget was an aristocratic youth with distinguished connections. He chummed with Tubb, chiefly because that hefty youth was cock of the walk in the Third. He tolerated the distressing circumstance that Tubb's people were in the brewery business—in beer, as Paget termed it. Perhaps Paget considered that sacrifice enough on the altar of friendship, without doing George's exercises for him. But Paget's manners were uncommonly polished for the Third, and he did not refuse by the simple reply of "Rats!" as most of the Third would have done.

"Fraid it wouldn't do, old bean," he said regretfully. "I'd do it like a shot, of course; but if old Wiggy started asking you questions on the trans, you'd get tied up and bottled. Better have a shot at it yourself."

"Well, come in and help."

"Comin'!" called out Paget, in answer to an imaginary call, and he disappeared along the file of leap-froggers.

Tubby granted and went into the Form-room.

He sat down to his desk and his dog-eared Caesar, grunted again, and applied himself to his task.

"Ad haec Ariovistus respondit," growled Tubb.

Even that simple sentence presented difficulties to the hapless Tubb.

He pondered—not on Latin. He pondered whether Mr. Wiggins might not, after all, forget to ask him for the translation.

But there was little hope. Tubb's Latin had an exasperating effect upon Mr. Wiggins, which really was not surprising. Mr. Wiggins made allowances for Tubb's natural denseness, but he considered that Tubb was lazy and dilatory also, and no doubt he was right. As for Tubb's scornful view of all value of a classical education, that had never dawned on Mr. Wiggins at all. Tubb felt hopelessly that old Wiggy was certain to ask for that translation before prep, and if it was not done somehow

"Not the least little bit in the world," said Levison minor. "But it's coming along, all the same."

"Swot!" jeered Tubb.

"Rats!" retorted Levison minor. Tubb gave him a glare. He had already noted with disdain that Frank Levison was good in class, and did not make Mr. Wiggins look as if he found the life of a Form master not worth living.

"You like to please your dear good kind masters—what?" jeered Tubb.

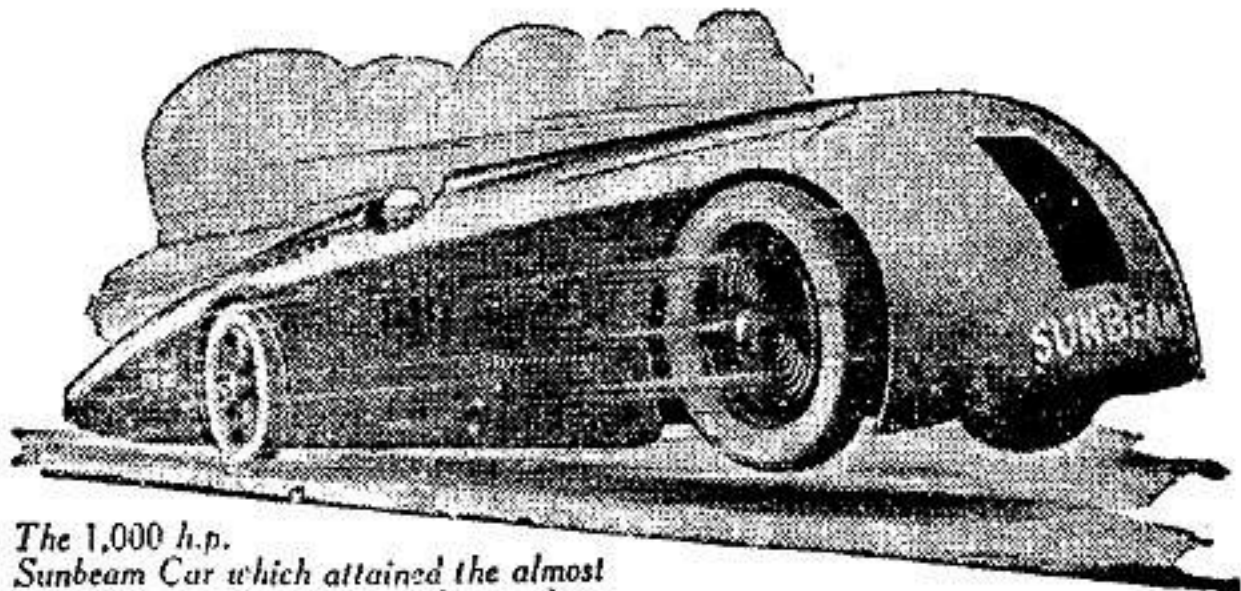
Levison minor laughed cheerily.

"Well, yes," he said. "Mr. Wiggins is rather a pleasant change after my Form master at St. Jim's. He seems jolly good-tempered."

"Not with me," growled Tubb.

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there would be a caning. The tough Tubb cared little for canings. But the translation would have to be done all the same, and perhaps with another page of Caesar added. That prospect was appalling. One page of Caesar was unspeakable. Two were unthinkable.

Tubb groaned and set to work once more.

A good-looking, rather slim youth came quietly into the Form-room and began to take out books for prep. Tubb—probably glad of any pretext for ceasing his painful mental labours—stared at him aggressively.

"Oh, you!" he grunted.
Frank Levison glanced round.

"Little me!" he said cheerily.

"Jolly anxious for prep, aren't you?" sneered Tubb.

"Well, you worry him rather. My hat! You'd feel the change if you were under old Selby at St. Jim's!"

"Blow Selby and St. Jim's!" grunted Tubb. "Blow you! Cheeky young cad! That hooligan Cherry, in the Remove, spoke to us about you. Put in a word for you. Cheek! I was going to lick you to start with, but I forgot!"

Levison minor made no reply save by a smile. He went on sorting out his books.

"We don't like fellows in the Third to pal with men in the upper Forms," went on Tubb. "We're down on it."

"I haven't any pals in the upper Forms, unless my brother is one," said Frank. "If Bob Cherry put in a word for me, as you say, I dare say he meant to be good-natured."

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"Practically telling us how we were to treat you!" said Tubb.

"Oh, I'm sure he didn't mean that," answered Frank cheerily.

"I was going to lick you to begin with," said Tubb morosely. "If I had time I'd do it now."

"You might need something more than the time," grinned the St. Jim's fag.

"Think I couldn't?" roared Tubb.

"Well, I hope you couldn't, anyway," said Frank Levison amicably. "What's the good of rowing, Tubb? I didn't come here to row."

"After prep," said Tubb, "I'll mop up the Form-room with you."

Frank Levison did not look alarmed. He smiled.

"I'll remember," he assented. "All serene."

Tubb half rose from his form. He was inclined to begin on the fag from St. Jim's at once. Certainly, Levison minor had given no offence. But Julius Caesar had. That page of translation made George Tubb yearn to punch somebody.

But he sat down again. Half of his half-hour was already gone, and he had not proceeded far.

"Up against it?" inquired Levison minor genially, glancing at the Latin page which was worrying poor Tubb so much.

"Yes," snarled Tubb. "I'm not a swot. That young cad Paget might have lent me a hand. Blow it!"

"Like me to lend you a hand?"

Tubb stared.

"You! I suppose you could do it?"

Levison minor suppressed a smile. The page that tangled George Tubb so woefully presented no difficulties to him.

"Well, I'd try," he said modestly.

As Tubb had expressed his intention of mopping up the Form-room with Levison minor after prep, it might have been supposed that he would feel rather diffident about accepting aid from the youth who was to be mopped up. But delicate considerations of that kind were quite unknown in the Greyfriars Third. Tubb's rugged and rather grubby face became amicable at once.

"Squat down and have a shot at it," he said.

Frank Levison sat on the form beside Tubb and lent his aid. His knowledge of the classical tongue was not extensive in itself, but it was extremely so by comparison with George Tubb's blissful ignorance. He hardly seemed to need the "dic" at all. Never had a page of translation glided so swiftly off Tubb's pen.

Cheerier and cheerier grew the grubby countenance of George Tubb. In ten minutes he had done well, with Frank Levison's aid, what he would have done badly in half an hour unaided. It still wanted some minutes to the hour of prep when Tubb wrote his last word and threw down his pen. It did not occur to him to tender thanks for the service, but no doubt he was feeling thankful.

Levison minor went back to his own books, and Tubb carried his translation to the Form master's desk.

"Finished the job?" asked Paget, coming into the Form-room with some of the Third for prep.

"Just done," answered Tubb.

"Good man! Here comes Wiggy."

Mr. Wiggins, the master of the Third, rustled in, and the fags took their places. The Form master went to his desk.

"Tubb!" he called.

George Tubb grinned. The master of the Third had not forgotten, but for once

Tubb was not alarmed at being remembered.

"Yes, sir."

"You have done your translation?"

"Yes, sir," smiled Tubb.

"Bring it to me at once!"

"It's on your desk, sir," answered Tubb; adding under his breath: "Just under your silly nose."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Wiggins. "So it is! Dear me!" Mr. Wiggins adjusted his glasses and examined the translation. "Dear me! Your writing is very bad, Tubb. Your spelling is faulty. You have made several blots. You must strive to cure yourself of this slovenliness, Tubb. But your translation is good—very good indeed."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Tubb.

"This shows, Tubb, what even a dull boy can do when he seriously applies himself to a task," said Mr. Wiggins. "For once you have given me a translation that is not full of the most ridiculous mistakes. I commend you, Tubb."

And prep commenced in the Third Form room.

After prep, when the Form master was gone, and the fags were left to themselves, Tubb bore down on Levison minor. Frank, under the impression that the mopping-up process was about to begin, was on his guard. But George Tubb extended a grubby hand in which was a packet of toffee.

"Have some?" he inquired.

Levison minor stared for a moment, and then laughed.

"Thanks," he said.

And he had some.

"Hallo, pallin' with that St. Jim's sweep?" asked Paget in surprise. "You were going to lick him, Tubb."

"Well, I'm not going to lick him," said Tubb gruffly.

"Gettin' funky in your old age?" inquired Percival Paget pleasantly.

"I'll show you!" answered Tubb.

And the next moment Tubb and Paget were mixed up on the floor with a considerable quantity of dust. Friendships in the Greyfriars Third were subject to these interludes.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

SKINNER & Co were feeling backed. It was an evening of happy anticipation to them.

Most of the Remove were interested in the trouble that had developed between the Bounder and the junior from St. Jim's. But nobody was so keen on it as Harold Skinner. Skinner, who prided himself upon believing in nothing, did not, of course, believe that the change in Ernest Levison meant anything except that he had grown circumspect. He had told Snoop and Stott that they "would see," at the little party in Smithy's study. Now they had seen, certainly; but they had not seen what Skinner had expected. That was disappointing to Skinner, and irritating to him; and, in addition, Levison, in taking the key of the study from him, had handled him as easily as an infant. For all these reasons Skinner was glad to see the Bounder on fighting terms with the St. Jim's fellow. He would have given half a term's pocket-money to see Levison thrashed; though not for the pocket-money of three terms would he have attempted that task himself. The Bounder was the man to do it; and the Bounder was fairly committed to it now.

Even if he did not defeat Levison when the combat came off, at least he would give him a severe handling before

his own defeat. And the fight would embitter the quarrel, and the Bounder would be on Skinner's side in his feud with the fellow whom he disliked and almost hated, for no better reason than that he knew him, at the bottom of his heart, to be a better fellow than himself.

Skinner gritted his teeth when he remembered how he had crumpled up in Levison's grasp. He looked forward with happy anticipation to seeing the new fellow face an adversary who was made of much sterner stuff.

It was very unlike the Bounder to keep out of the way of trouble, whether with men in his own Form, or with prefects, or even masters. But on this occasion he seemed in no hurry.

After tea, Skinner & Co. expected to see something happen. Nothing happened after tea, excepting that the Bounder went for a stroll with Tom Redwing.

After prep it was bound to happen. But after prep the Bounder dropped into Johnny Bull's study, where Wharton and Bob Cherry happened to be, and talked football. There was a match coming along with Highcliffe, and the Bounder seemed more interested in that than in his row with Levison.

In the Rag, where the fellows mostly gathered for a chat before dorm, Skinner was assured that it would come at last. He smiled when Ernest Levison came into the Rag. He looked for Smithy to follow.

Smithy did not follow.

"I say, is Smithy getting cold feet?" Snoop asked him.

"Looks like it," observed Stott.

Skinner shook his head.

"It looks like it," he admitted. "But we know jolly well that Smithy never gets cold feet. He's putting it off till dorm."

"But if he's going to meet Levison in the gym, with the gloves on, he's had lots of time to fix things up," remarked Snoop. "Lots of fellows would be his second."

"I fancy he'd rather have it without gloves on," said Skinner. "That's why he's leaving it till dorm."

For once, Skinner was anxious for bedtime. He was quite pleased when Wingato of the Sixth shepherded the Remove off to their dormitory.

He eyed Levison and Smithy anxiously in the Remove dormitory. They took no notice of one another.

After lights-out, Skinner waited for the fun to begin. Even then the Bounder seemed in no hurry. Perhaps he was waiting till the prefect had safely cleared off, but Skinner was beginning to have some angry doubts now. The usual chatter ran from bed to bed, but the Bounder's voice was not heard.

"Smithy!" called out Skinner at last.

"Hallo!" replied the Bounder's sleepy voice.

"Aren't you turning out?"

"Why?"

"I've got a candle here," said Skinner.

"Look here, Smithy, I thought you were waiting for dorm to handle that St. Jim's cad!"

"Shut up, Skinner!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Go and eat coke!" retorted Skinner. "You're not going to stop Smithy from doing just as he likes."

The Bounder sat up in bed.

Skinner grinned gleefully. Smithy was on the move at last. He struck a match and lit his candle.

"Levison!" called out the Bounder.

"Hero!" answered Levison's quiet voice.

"I want a word with you."



Levison minor, defending himself valorously, was getting some severe punishment from his overwhelming enemy when Bob Cherry strode up and grasped Skinner by the collar, and dragged him backwards. "Let me go!" yelled Skinner. "Yes! Let him go!" panted Levison minor. "Let him come on!" (See Chapter 8.)

"As many as you like."

"We had a row in my study this afternoon. I lost my temper. My fault entirely, and I'm sorry."

"Oh!" ejaculated Levison in astonishment.

Skinner gasped. This, then, was the "word" that the Bounder wanted with Levison. It was not the word that Skinner wanted to hear.

"I know it was rather thick, askin' you to my study, and pitchin' into you," went on the Bounder, "I lost my temper, as I've said. You got my rag out. I'm sorry."

"It's all right," said Levison. "No harm done, old scout—except to my nose, and that will mend."

"Well, I think my eye got off rather worse than your nose. If you want the gloves on with me, I'm ready, of course."

"I don't!" said Levison.

"Well, if you're satisfied to chuck it, I am."

"Quite!"

"Done, then!" said the Bounder.

Skinner, for some moments, could not speak, so deep and bitter was his chagrin. But he found his voice at last.

"Congratters, old chap," he said, "on your moral courage, and all that. Some fellows would call you a funk for callin' off a scrap like that. But I can see it's moral courage, such as you read of in stories of Eric and Good Little Georgie. Fine thing!"

There was a chuckle in the Remove dormitory.

"Thanks!" said the Bounder calmly.

"Your congratulations are accepted and appreciated, old bean."

Skinner gritted his teeth.

"But if you've got any doubt on the subject," went on the Bounder, "I'm willing to turn out of bed at once, Skinner, and put it to the test. With or without gloves, just as you choose."

"Go it, Skinner," chuckled Bolsover major.

Skinner blew out his candle.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Frank Levison on the Warpath!

"E. LEVISON."

That name, in the football list posted up in the Rag, was regarded with great interest by many of the Remove. Most of the fellows approved, some disapproved, and one or two were deeply incensed. Levison, by that time, had been little more than a week at his old school; and his name was posted in the list for the match with Highcliffe. Skinner bit his lips as he saw it. Bolsover major snorted. Frank Levison, the new fag in the Third, read it there with great pride and satisfaction.

It was just as it should be, in Levison minor's opinion. His brother had been a great man at games at St. Jim's.

Any football captain who knew his business would be glad to bag Levison for his team, in Frank's opinion. Levison's name in the list for the Highcliffe match meant that the captain of the Remove knew his business.

"Playing new kids!" grunted Bolsover major.

"Levison isn't exactly a new kid," remarked Squiff. "He's been here before, you know. And he's a good man."

"Plenty of good stuff in the Remove, without bagging a fellow from another school," growled Bolsover major.

Bolsover major apparently regarded himself as the good stuff that had been overlooked.

"That man Levison always could wind fellows round his finger," remarked Skinner. "I remember that! He's deep!"

"Rot!" remarked Nugent.

Skinner gave him a sneering look.

"There goes your chance of figuring in the Highcliffe match, anyhow," he said. "Wharton's given Levison your place."

"My dear man, Levison can play my head off at soccer," answered Nugent cheerfully. "What would be the good of blinking at that? Any man in the Remove would tell me so, if I didn't know it."

"Well, he's going over to Highcliffe on Wednesday," said Skinner. "He

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(Continued from page 13.)

will find some old pals there. Pensonby and Gaddy will be glad to see him. I dare say they'll stand him some smokes in their study after the game."

"Oh, cheese it, Skinner," said a quiet voice behind the cad of the Remove, and he glanced round at Frank Levison.

"Did you tell me to cheese it, you cheeky young sweep?" asked Skinner, with a glitter in his eyes. He did not care for trouble with Levison major; but Levison minor had no terrors for him.

"Yes, I did," said Frank coolly. "You know jolly well that my brother would do nothing of the kind at Highcliffe."

"I know he jolly well would, if he was sure of not being spotted," said Skinner.

"That's not true!"

"What?"

"Or if you want it in plain English, it's a lie!" said Levison minor, "and you know it, too!"

Some of the Remove fellows laughed.

"So you're calling me a liar?" said Skinner, with an evil look.

"If I am, it's what most of the fellows have called you, one time or another," retorted the fag. "If you don't like it, stick to the truth."

"Your brother was kicked out of Greyfriars once," said Skinner, "and now it seems that both of you have been kicked out of St. Jim's. Goodness knows why the Head let you wedge in here. But if you think you've come here to cheek Remove men, you cheeky little beast, you're making a mistake."

"Oh, rats!"

"Bang his head on the wall, Skinner," suggested Snoop.

"I'm going to!"

Frank Levison jumped back. He put up his hands, and faced Harold Skinner undauntedly. There was a loud laugh from the crowd of fellows who had been reading the football notice. Skinner of the Remove was not much of a warrior; but he was, of course, an overwhelming adversary for a fag of the Third Form. But Levison minor was evidently undaunted.

Skinner made a grasp at him, and his hand was promptly knocked aside. It was a hard rap, too, and Skinner gave a little yelp.

The next moment he would have been rushing on the fag, hitting out, but Nugent stepped in the way.

"Chuck it, Skinner," he said tersely.

"Get out of the way!" snarled Skinner.

"Rats! You hook it, young Levison," said Nugent. "I'll keep Skinner busy."

"I'm not afraid of him," answered Frank.

"Hook it, you young ass!"

Levison minor did not seem disposed to hook it. He stood where he was, his eyes flashing at Skinner.

Skinner dodged round Nugent and rushed at the fag.

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"Oh, let the kid alone, Skinner," growled Bolsover major.

Skinner did not heed.

He came at the fag savagely, hitting out as if he were attacking a fellow of his own size and weight.

He had not the slightest doubt that the fag would be knocked spinning. But Levison minor was rather tougher than he supposed. He gave ground under Skinner's attack, but he met it with his hands up, and without flinching. And Skinner, to his surprise, received a sudden drive on the nose that sent him staggering, and he sat down abruptly.

"Man down!" chortled Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, Skinner!" gasped Snoop.

"Oh, my hat!"

There was a roar of laughter in the Rag. Skinner scrambled to his feet, crimson with rage.

He fairly hurled himself at Levison minor.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the row?" Bob Cherry came tramping into the Rag.

One glance at the scene was enough for Bob. Levison minor, defending himself valorously, was getting some severe punishment from his overwhelming enemy. Bob Cherry strode up and grasped Skinner by the collar, and dragged him backwards.

"Let me go!" yelled Skinner.

"Let him go!" panted Levison minor.

"Let him come on!"

"What a giddy little bantam!" chuckled Squiff. "If you know when you're well off, kid, you'll hook it!"

"Well, I won't!"

"What's the row about?" asked Bob Cherry, still with a grip of iron on Skinner's collar. "You're a bit too keen on bullying fags, Skinner."

"Mind your own business!" howled Skinner. "That little cad has cheeked me and punched my nose, too!"

"Yes, it looks as if it had been tapped," agreed Bob. "But let's hear the rights of the matter. What did you do first?"

"Find out!"

"That's why I'm asking!"

"Let go my collar, you fool!"

"Mustn't call people names!" chided Bob. "It's bad manners, and it makes me shake you—like that!"

"Yow-ow!" gasped Skinner, as he shook like a jelly in Bob's muscular grasp.

"It's Skinner's fault!" said Nugent.

"He was slanging the kid's brother, and the kid told him to cheese it!"

Bob Cherry grinned.

"You don't think your major is able to take care of himself, kid?" he asked.

Levison minor flushed.

"You mustn't punch Remove noses!" went on Bob. "Skinner's nose doesn't matter very much of course—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it's the principle of the thing. Now hook it!"

"I'll hook it when I choose!" snapped Levison minor.

Bob Cherry pushed Skinner away and released him. Then he turned on Levison minor.

"Travel, kid!" he said laconically.

"I'll see that Skinner doesn't bully you!"

"You needn't trouble! I can see to that!" retorted Frank.

"I'll see to it, all the same, in case you're not the mighty warrior you seem to fancy you are!" smiled Bob. "Run away to the Third now, and don't kick up rows in the Rag! Bad form for little kids to kick up a shindy in the

presence of their elders and betters! Besides, you're frightening us all! Look at all the fellows trembling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm going to lick that young cad!" roared Skinner.

"Lick me first!" said Bob. "I'm spoiling for a scrap! When you've done with me, you can start on Levison minor—if there's anything left of you! Run away, kid!"

Frank Levison walked out of the Rag, with his ears burning. Skinner made a movement to follow.

"Stay where you are, Skinner!" said Bob. "You're no end of a fascinating chap, and I don't want to lose your society for a few minutes! Besides, there's something I want to ask you."

"What is it?" snarled Skinner.

"How long do you think it will be before you're sacked from Greyfriars?" asked Bob agreeably. "This term or next?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner slouched away, with a savage face. But he did not go in pursuit of Levison minor. But if anything had been needed to add to Skinner's bitter rancour against the Levisons, it had been added. Levison major and Levison minor had an enemy in the Remove, all the more dangerous because he was not likely to come out into the open.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

An Eye on Levison!

COKER of the Fifth frowned.

Coker was adorning one of the ancient stone buttresses with his burly, if not elegant, figure, leaning there with his hands in his pockets, when two Remove men came sauntering along. They were Vernon-Smith and Ernest Levison.

The two juniors took no heed of Coker, and did not even seem to see him. That in itself was an offence. Coker was a fellow to be regarded by all the Lower School in fear and trembling—at least, in his own opinion, which was the only opinion that mattered to Coker. As a matter of fact, Smithy and Levison were discussing the coming Highcliffe match, and they were too interested in that topic to have any attention to waste even on the great man of the Fifth.

"I'm jolly glad you're coming, Levison!" the Bounder was saying, as the two juniors passed Coker.

"I'm jolly glad to be coming, too!" said Levison, with a smile.

"You'll be glad to see the Highcliffe fellows, too."

"Yes, rather! I'm looking forward to Wednesday!"

Then they passed out of Coker's hearing.

Coker frowned after them portentously. Coker was still suffering from his perpetual malady—a total incapacity to mind his own business. He had told the one-time scapegrace of Greyfriars that he was going to keep an eye on him. He was keeping it.

Of course, a fellow like Coker could not give his whole attention to so unimportant an individual as a Remove junior. Many other matters claimed Coker's attention. He felt called upon to criticise Wingate's selection of men for the first eleven. He had to argue with Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, about Fifth Form games. He had to manage things for Potter and Greene, his study-mates, and constantly to remind them what footling asses they were. He had his little troubles with

Mr. Prout, who, for reasons inexplicable to Horace, expected Coker to learn something in class. He had to see that Hobson of the Shell was not cheeky. He had to cuff fags of the Second and Third who forgot the respect due to the Fifth, and especially to Coker of the Fifth. He had, in fact, to butt into nearly everything that did not concern him, with the very best intentions and a lofty sense of duty.

Even the Head was not above Coker's criticism. He was far from satisfied with that gentleman's methods. Coker, indeed, resembled the gentleman in the story, who was persuaded that, had he been on hand in the days of the creation, he could have given some good advice on the subject. Coker naturally gave little heed to what other fellows thought, for Coker did not merely think—he knew!

With so many matters on his hands, Horace Coker was a busy man. But he had not forgotten Levison. His opinion was that the fellow was a young rascal. He was, therefore, a young rascal, Coker's opinion being final and beyond appeal. Moreover, Levison had cheeked Coker—had even lent a hand in rolling him in a puddle. If that was not proof of a guilty conscience, Coker did not know what proof was.

Coker went thoughtfully into the House. He came on Wingate and Gwynne of the Sixth, and stopped to speak. Both the Sixth-Formers smiled. They supposed that Coker was going to speak about football, so, naturally, they smiled. Coker's game, and his opinions on the game, added considerably to the gaiety of existence at Greyfriars.

But it was not football this time.

"You fellows call yourselves prefects, I believe?" was Coker's first genial remark.

Wingate ceased to smile.

"Is that meant for cheek?" he inquired.

"I'm asking you a plain question," said Coker. "The Head appoints prefects only from the Sixth Form. It's a mistake, but there it is. He does. I don't think much of the Sixth. I've told you before. Still, you're prefects. It's up to you to see that a young rascal doesn't disgrace the school! Young Levison—"

"Is he a young rascal?" asked Wingate mildly. "My impression is that he's a very decent kid."

"I'm not surprised at that! It's what you would think!" answered Coker. "That's why I'm telling you that he's a young rascal!"

Wingate stared.

"What has he done?" he inquired.

"It's not a matter of details. He's a young rascal! Are you keeping an eye on him?"

"In this school," said Wingate, "it's very unusual for a Fifth Form man to be called up for a prefects' beating. But such things have happened, and may happen again. At the present moment it looks to me very likely that such a thing may happen again very soon! That's a tip, Coker!"

Horace Coker gave a snort and walked on. This was the kind of thing he usually got from Wingate; even the captain of the school cheeked Coker. He never showed the slightest gratitude when Coker took his duties off his hands.

Potter and Greene were in the study, and they read the signs of wrath in the great Coker's brow when he came in.

"Pretty state of affairs!" said Coker. "I told you fellows that I was going to keep an eye on that young rascal Levison."

"Did you?" murmured Potter.

"Don't you remember?" snapped Coker.

Potter might have explained that he never took the trouble to memorise all Coker's asinine observations. He would have needed a whole library of little grey books to enable him to remember them all. But he did not explain that. From long experience he knew that it saved time and trouble to give Horace his head. So he nodded.

"Well, he's up to his old games!" said Coker.

"Let him rip! It's the business of the prefects!"

"I've just spoken to two prefects about it, and they simply took no notice—only cheeked me!" said Coker.

"Then let it drop!" suggested Potter.

"It's not a matter I can let drop, Potter. The prefects are not doing their duty. It's up to me. You can see that, I suppose?"

"Not quite!" demurred Potter.

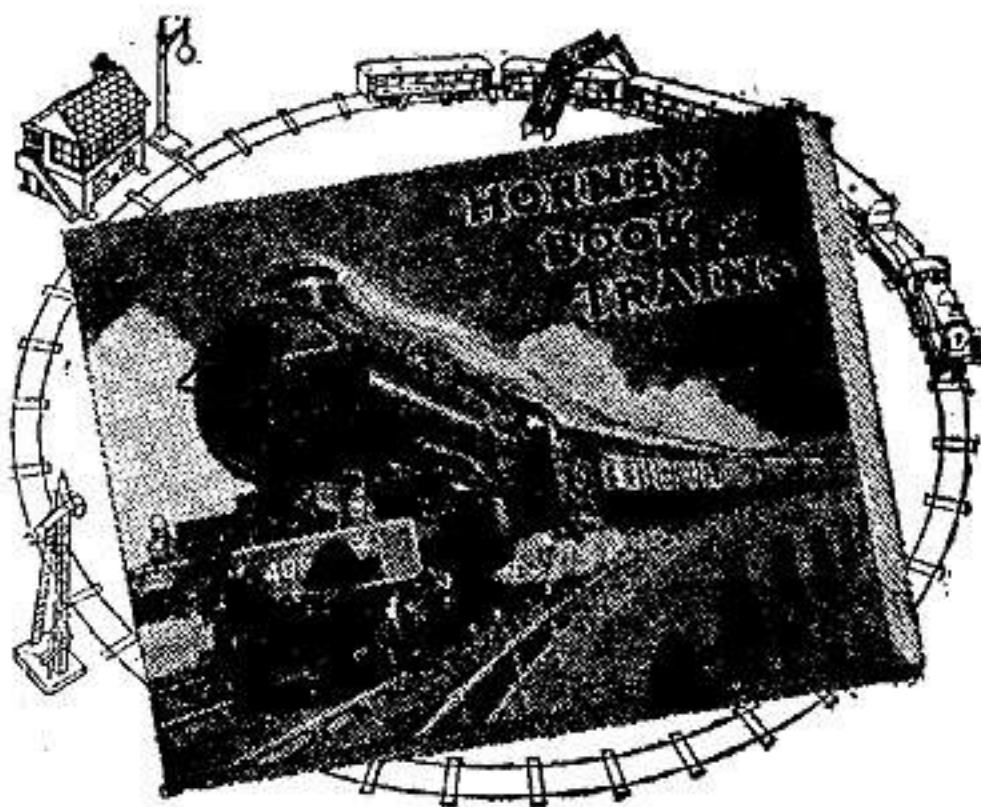
"I've told you before that you're a silly owl, Potter. Now, I've just heard that young rascal talking with another bird of the same feather—that young rascal, Vernon-Smith. Under my very nose they were talking of some shady excursion out of bounds. They did not seem to care whether I heard or not."

"Perhaps they thought it didn't matter!" suggested Greene.

"Perhaps they did; they're cheeky enough," assented Coker. "But I'm taking the matter up, of course. They're planning to go over to Highcliffe and meet some of

(Continued on next page.)

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LEVISON MAKES GOOD!

(Continued from previous page.)

the young rotters there. You know what some of those young cads at Highcliffe are like. Fancy this sort of thing going on under the noses of masters and prefects, and no notice taken!"

"Awful!" said Potter, as seriously as he could.

"Well, it's not exactly awful," said Coker. "But it's pretty serious. This Levison is a wary young scoundrel. There's been nothing found out against him since he came back here."

"Perhaps that's because there's nothing to be found out."

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"Hem!"

"They were arranging to meet some of those shady young rascals belonging to Highcliffe School. They didn't care if I heard them. Well, I'm looking into this."

"They may be going over for a football match!" suggested Greene. "I believe the juniors have some fixture with Highcliffe."

"That's the sort of idiotic suggestion you would make, Greene."

"Oh!"

"If they're carrying on this game under cover of a football match, that makes it all the worse," said Coker. "I suppose even you boneheads can see that."

"What does it matter to us, anyhow?" demanded Greene. "We're not prefects."

"We ought to be—at least, I ought to be. I'm going to put a stop to it," said Coker. "This is my school, and if the prefects don't take care of its reputation, it's up to me. They're planning this blackguardly game for Wednesday. I heard Levison say distinctly that he was looking forward to Wednesday. Now, Wednesday's a half-holiday. We shall be on hand."

"Shall we?" murmured Potter.

"If I catch the young scoundrel in the act, I shall march him straight to the Head. Dr. Locke may possibly see then that he had better appoint a Fifth Form prefect if he's not too doddering to see anything. You fellows will help me. I may need your assistance, and I rely on you."

Potter and Greene exchanged a glance.

"Wednesday afternoon?" said George Potter thoughtfully.

"Yes."

"What time will you want us?"

"Say about two."

"Two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon," said Potter. "We must remember that, Greene."

"We'll remember," assented Greene.

And Coker, for once, was satisfied with his study-mates. He would not have been so satisfied had he not possessed an infinite capacity for having his leg pulled.

Potter and Greene undoubtedly remembered that Coker would want them at two o'clock on Wednesday. For, at a quarter to two on Wednesday they slipped away quietly to the bike-shed and wheeled out their machines. When two chimed out from the old clock tower, Potter and Greene were pedalling cheerily along the Lántham road, with their backs to Greyfriars, and a good mile between them and the school. They quite enjoyed their spin that afternoon. When Horace Coker was some miles away from a fellow that fellow would have been hard to please had he not enjoyed a half-holiday.

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THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bad Form!

"YOU can come, young Levison," said Tubb of the Third.

Tubb was in a gracious mood.

So far from having mopped up the Third Form room floor with Levison minor he had become quite friendly with that youth. Paget followed his example, having really taken a liking to Frank, and feeling quite chummy, so far, of course, as was permitted by the aristocratic nonchalance that Percival Paget so carefully cultivated.

Levison minor, indeed, was as much liked in the Greyfriars Third as he had been in the St. Jim's Third. He was well up in the class, and at the same time quite unassuming. He was always ready to help a lame dog over a stile, as in the case of Tubb and his translation, and at Latin all the Third were, more or less, lame dogs. Frank was of rather a studious turn, without being a swot, and he had the belief—almost unheard of in the Third Form—that he was at school to learn things.

He could absorb more knowledge in a week than Tubb was likely to digest in a term. But when he gave Tubb a helping hand, it was without the slightest air of superior knowledge. He was unoffending and disliked getting into quarrels. That he was no funk, however, was proved by the circumstance, known and discussed by all the fags, that he had stood up to a Remove man in combat. The Remove man was only Skinner, certainly. Still, Skinner was far beyond a fag's weight, and all the Third said that it was plucky of him. After a week or so in the Greyfriars Third, Levison minor was on his way to becoming one of the most popular fags in the Form.

So now that Tubb & Co. were discussing an excursion for the half-holiday, Tubb graciously included Levison minor. Tubb and Paget were going, and Bolsover minor and Wingate minor, and the "captain" of the Third told Frank that he could come.

"Come, by all means, dear boy," added Paget civilly. "We'll be glad to have your company." Only Percival Paget, in all the Third, ever spoke in that nice, polite way. His elegant little ways shone by contrast with the general manners and customs of his Form.

"Thanks!" said Levison minor, but he seemed to hesitate. "Are you going over to Highcliffe?"

The fags stared at him.

"Why the thump should we go over to Highcliffe?" asked Tubb.

"The football match—"

"What football match? The Third don't play away matches."

"I mean the Remove match."

"Blow the Remove match!" answered Tubb.

"The Third don't take any notice of Remove matches, dear boy," said Paget. "We ignore the Remove."

"My brother's playing," remarked Frank.

"Have you a brother in the Remove?" asked Paget politely.

"Why, you know I have."

"I make it a point not to remember anything against my friends," explained Paget solemnly. "I suppose you know it's against a fellow to have a brother in an Upper Form?"

"Oh, come off!" said Bolsover minor. "I've got a brother in the Remove."

"I've got a brother in the Sixth!" said Wingate minor, with a grin. "Is it up against a fellow to have the

captain of the school for a brother, Paget?"

"Horribly!" answered Paget. "That's the worst of all. These things are better not mentioned. Don't talk about your major in the Remove, young Levison. I'm givin' you that as a tip to a new kid. It's bad form to have a brother in an Upper Form."

"I'd like to see him playing at Highcliffe," said Frank.

"That's rot, of course!"

"Don't be an ass, young Levison," said Tubb. "Now, look here, we're all going over to Woodend. The pond's frozen there."

"Why not come along to Highcliffe and see the game?" asked Frank. "It will be worth watching."

"Remove matches are never worth watchin'!" said Paget.

"This one will be."

"I don't see anythin' special to distinguish this match from the rest."

"My brother's playing," said Frank simply.

Paget yawned deeply. For a fellow at school to display any personal attachment to a relative in the same school was, in this elegant young gentleman's opinion, horribly bad form. There was no doubt that Frank was guilty of that bad form. He was attached to his brother in the Remove, and did not even think of making a secret of it.

"That's enough about your brother," said Tubb brusquely. "Did you jaw about your brother in the Third at St. Jim's?"

"I dare say I did."

"They must have got awfully fed-up with you!"

"Anyhow, that's enough about him now," said Bolsover minor. "Now, the sooner we get off the better. It's a good step to Woodend."

"Let's get going," said Wingate minor. "Come on, young Levison!"

"Thanks all the same, but I'm going over to Highcliffe," said Frank. "I want to see the game there."

"I've told you we ignore the Remove, young Levison," said Paget.

"Oh, that's rot, you know!"

"You're going to follow the Remove, instead of coming along with us to Woodend, when we've asked you?" demanded Tubb belligerently.

"Yes, if you don't mind."

"I do mind!"

"Well, if you do mind, then," said Frank.

"That does it!" said Tubb. "I'll give you backing up an Upper Form, you young sweep! Blow the Remove and blow your major! Collar him!"

"Here, I say— Oh! Ow! Yaroooh!"

Bump! Frank Levison sat down in the quadrangle with a heavy bump. His cap was jammed down his back, and a handful of mud plastered on his hair, and then his friends walked away and left him—having thus testified their opinion of a fellow who abandoned his own Form and backed up the Remove.

"Hallo, young 'un!"

Levison of the Remove came up and gave Frank a helping hand to rise. The fag staggered to his feet, rather bewildered.

"Trouble in your Form?" asked Levison.

"Oh!" Frank gasped for breath. "Not exactly! Ow! They're my friends, you know. Ow!"

"And this is how they testify their friendship?" asked Levison gravely. "I see!"

Frank coloured and laughed.

"They're waxy because I'm coming over to Highcliffe to see the match, instead of going to Woodend to slide on the pond," he explained. "They wanted me to come. At least, they asked me."

"I see," said Levison. "Better go with them, kid."

Levison minor's face fell.

"I wanted to see you play in the match, Ernie."

"I know, and I'd be glad to see you there; but you're in the Third, old man, and the fags don't like a man hanging after his major in an upper Form. It's always better for a fellow to stick to his own Form." Then, as the fag's face clouded, Levison dropped a kindly hand on his shoulder. "Frank, old man, you know I'm giving you a tip for your own good."

"I know, Ernie; but—All right, I'll take your tip," said Frank, forcing a smile.

"That's right, kid!" Levison smiled, too. "Better go and get that mud off your napper and make it up with them."

Frank nodded, and cut off to the House. When, a quarter of an hour later, Tubb & Co. started from the gates, Frank Levison was with them.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Schemes!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Want anything?"

The Remove footballers were preparing to start for Highcliffe. A brake was to take them over, as well as the greatest possible number of followers that the vehicle would hold. Coker of the Fifth appeared in the offing when the juniors were taking their places in the brake.

There was a portentously serious expression on Horace Coker's face. He was on the path of duty. Coker of the Fifth took himself very seriously—the only fellow at Greyfriars who did. Basely deserted by Potter and Greene—though he had told them distinctly that he would want them that afternoon—Coker was by no means giving up his self-imposed duty. Masters and prefects failed to handle the lower Forms to Coker's satisfaction, so, obviously, Coker had to take the matter in hand. The simple expedient of minding his own business had not even occurred to his powerful brain.

"Oh, you're here, young Levison!" said Coker, taking no heed of Cherry. Levison glanced round.

"Yes, I'm here," he assented.

"Going over to Highcliffe—what?"

"Yes," answered Levison, in surprise.

Coker's interest in his proceedings was rather mystifying to him.

"I thought so," assented Coker. "Making out, I suppose, that you're interested in football—what?"

"Well, I'm slightly interested in it," said Levison. "Just a trifle. I happen to be in the eleven, you know!"

"Deep!" said Coker.

"Eh?"

"Deep! But not quite deep enough for me," said Coker, shaking his head. "I'm no fool!"

"Isn't that rather a mistake on your part?" inquired Levison. "You look like one, at least. And you can't deny that you're talking like one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Coker!" remarked the Bounder commiseratingly. "It's come at last! His people ought to be told. Has it been coming on long, Coker?"

"Eh? Has what been coming on?"

"This mental breakdown!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites,

there with his machine, rather to the surprise of the other fellows. Nobody in the Remove expected Skinner to be interested in football matches. Coker dropped a hand on his shoulder.

"Hold on a minute!" he said.

"I'm in a hurry!" grunted Skinner.

"Hold on, all the same—unless, of course, you'd like me to mop up the road with you!" said Coker pleasantly.

"What the thump do you want?"

"You're in the Remove, and you've seen a lot of Levison since he came," said Coker. "I'm keeping an eye on that young sweep!"

"Oh!" said Skinner.

"You're rather a dingy little beast yourself," went on Coker agreeably. "I fancy you know all about his games."

Skinner stared at him. He did not

The Third Form fags collared Levison minor and sat him down in the quadrangle with a heavy bump. His cap was jammed down his back, and a handful of mud plastered on his hair, and then his friends walked away and left him—having thus testified their opinion of a fellow who abandoned his own Form and backed up the Remove. (See Chapter 10.)



greatly tickled by the expression on Horace Coker's countenance.

"You cheeky young sweep——"

"Cut off, Coker!" interposed Harry Wharton. "You're in the way, and we're too pressed now to watch you doing a funny turn! Travel!"

This was really not the way to speak to a Fifth Form man, especially when that Fifth Form man was Horace James Coker. But as there were about twenty Remove fellows on the spot, Horace decided to let it pass. With a significant look at Ernest Levison—upon whom the significance of the look was wholly lost—Coker turned loftily away.

The Remove fellows might have wondered what on earth Coker had been driving at, had they thought about Coker at all. But they didn't. They had matters to think of that were much more important than Coker.

The brake rolled away, and some of the Removites mounted bicycles to follow. Skinner of the Remove was

yet realise that Coker had assigned to himself the task of carrying out duties neglected by the Head, the staff, and the Sixth Form prefects.

"You know that young blackguard Ponsonby, at Highcliffe," resumed Coker. "Is Levison thick with him? Mind, I know he is, so if you tell me any lies I shall bang your head on that tree at the start—see?"

Skinner grinned. Coker's method of obtaining information was, at least, fairly certain to elicit the kind of information he wanted to hear.

"Thick as thieves!" said Skinner.

He was well aware that Levison had not, in all probability, even seen Cecil Ponsonby since his return to Greyfriars. But he did not want to have his head banged on a tree.

"I thought so," assented Coker. "I mean, I knew it. And he's pretending to go over to Highcliffe to play football, just to get into some quiet corner to

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smoke and play cards with Ponsonby—what?"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Skinner.

"Rather surprises you that I'm wise to it—what?" said Coker complacently. "You see, I'm taking this matter in hand, as the prefects are neglecting it. I'm going to stop that young scamp disgracing the school!"

"Oh! I—I—I—see!" stuttered Skinner. "Of—of course, you're right, Coker. Ain't you always right?"

"Exactly! This football match is just an excuse—what?"

"Just that," agreed Skinner meekly. "My belief is that Levison will make some excuse for standing out of the game, and go off with Ponsonby or Gadsby. I see you know all about it, Coker. I wish you were a prefect!"

Coker nodded and turned thoughtfully away. Skinner mounted his bicycle and pedalled off, grinning. He had told Coker what he had wanted to hear, and he had not been sorry to malign Levison, even to a Fifth Form man, who did not matter to the Remove. In fact, he rather liked Coker of the Fifth just then; anyone who was down on Levison was sure of some measure of Harold Skinner's esteem.

Skinner sighted the brake, crowded with cheery juniors, ahead of him on the Courtfield road. But he did not overtake it. He turned from the road into a short cut across the common, and pedalled with a vigour to which he was very unaccustomed. He arrived at Highcliffe a good time ahead of the footballers.

On Little Side at Highcliffe, Frank Courtenay and his men were already on the ground, some of them punting a ball about while they waited for the visitors. But Skinner's business was not with the footballers. His destination was the study of Ponsonby, of the Fourth.

He found the dandy of Highcliffe there, lolling in an armchair and smoking a cigarette, and talking to Gadsby, of the Fourth, on a topic that was of inexhaustible interest to Ponsonby & Co.—that of "gee-gees." The two nuts of Highcliffe gave Skinner a languid nod apiece.

"Not over here for the footer?" asked Ponsonby.

Skinner sniffed.

"Not likely! I told you that cad Levison had come back to Greyfriars?"

"Yes; and you told me he had turned pi," yawned Ponsonby.

"He's in the team coming over here to play Courtenay's crowd this afternoon."

"That's rather a change from his old style," remarked Gadsby.

"Humbug, of course!" said Skinner. "He's playing a deep game. Even Coker, the biggest fool at Greyfriars, can see through him; but he takes in a lot of fellows. I don't like humbugs. Look here, I've got a wheeze."

Skinner shut the door and proceeded to explain his "wheeze" in a low voice, little above a whisper. Ponsonby and Gadsby stared at first, and then laughed.

"You're on?" asked Skinner eagerly.

"Anythin' to oblige," drawled Ponsonby. "I'd walk a mile any day to pull the leg of a pi cad. And this only means walking down to Little Side."

"Good man!"

Skinner left the study and strolled down to the football ground, with a satisfied expression upon his thin, malicious face. He had put, as he expressed it, a spoke in Levison's wheel; and, unless Skinner's scheme miscarried, Levison was not likely, after all, to

play in the Highcliffe match—and his absence from that match was likely to give a severe shock to his friends' faith in him.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Hand of the Enemy!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. chatted cheerily in the brake as it rolled on the road to Highcliffe School. Every face in the crowded vehicle was cheery; and perhaps the brightest of all were Levison's and Tom Redwing's. Levison was keen on the game, and made no secret of the fact that he was glad to have been picked out to play for the Remove.

Redwing was a half-back in the team, and as keen to play as Levison could be; but the chief cause of his satisfaction now was derived from the Bounder. Herbert Vernon-Smith sat beside Levison, and was chatting to him in the most friendly manner in the world, as if they had never had a word of disagreement. Since the row in the Remove passage the Bounder had not come much in contact with the junior from St. Jim's, but whenever they had met Smithy had been extremely cordial. Evidently he wanted to make up for past offences, and Levison was only too glad to meet him half way.

The Bounder was, in fact, thoroughly ashamed of that episode in the study. He had half believed in Levison then, but, with a kind of sardonic, impish humour, he had placed temptation in his way, prepared to derive a cynical amusement from Levison's fall, if Levison fell to it. He had lost his temper simply because Levison had come through the test well. But he had the grace to be ashamed if it, and to make amends, as far as he could. And Redwing, who had been on the verge of a serious break with his friend, was immensely relieved at the change in him. Tom's friendship with the Bounder had had many ups and downs, but for the present, at least, all was calm and bright again.

Ernest Levison had his enemies at Greyfriars, but he had no more trouble to look for from the Bounder.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "There's jolly old Coker!"

Zug-zug-zug! came from the road behind.

All eyes in the brake turned on the motor-cyclist.

Bob Cherry waved his hand.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Coker!" he roared. "Coming over to see us play football?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The idea of the great Coker condescending to follow a junior team to see them play Soccer, tickled the Removees. Certainly, Coker of the Fifth might have picked up many tips by watching a Remove game, but Coker was not likely to recognise that fact.

Coker came whizzing by on his jigger.

He affected to take no heed of the brake; but the juniors did not affect to take no heed of him. In fact, they took a great deal of heed of the great Coker.

He was going at a great speed, as Coker always did on his motor-bike; he took chances on the road that might have made any other fellow's hair turn grey. Properly speaking, Coker of the Fifth ought to have been killed—or at least, seriously damaged—every time he mounted that motor-bike. But it was agreed that there was such a thing as fool's luck. Coker always came up smiling after his hair's-breadth performances. He was within earshot of the brake only for a matter of seconds. But in those few seconds the whole party in the brake addressed quite a lot of remarks to Coker. They told him what they thought of his features, of his manners, of his intellect, of the way he handled a motor-bike, and many other things. Coker, with all his lofty disregard for mere fags, had burning ears when he left the brake behind, a roar of laughter following him up the road—where he barely shaved a market-cart, nearly ran over a dog, and scattered a number of fowls and geese before he vanished from sight.

The brake rolled on and arrived at Highcliffe.

Harry Wharton & Co. descended, and were cheerily welcomed by Courtenay, of Highcliffe, and his inseparable pal, the Caterpillar, and the other footballers. The afternoon was fine, and clear, and cold, and both sides were looking forward to a great game.

"Haven't I met you before somewhere?" the Caterpillar remarked to Levison.

Levison smiled.

"I used to be at Greyfriars; I've come back this term."

"I remember. You were rather pally with some Highcliffe chaps then."

Levison coloured.

"Yes," he said, rather shortly. He was not particularly pleased to be reminded that he had once been pally with Ponsonby & Co., of the Highcliffe Fourth.

The Caterpillar, who was very quick on the uptake, dropped the subject at once. He realised that there must have been a very considerable change in a fellow who had once been Pon's pal and was now a member of Harry Wharton's football team.

Levison, in fact, glad as he was to play in the Highcliffe match, was rather sorry that it was taking place on the Highcliffe ground. He wanted to avoid, if he could, any meeting with the black sheep of Highcliffe, with whom he had once been friendly.

But it was unlikely enough that Pon or any of the nuts would be on Little Side, or taking any interest in Soccer. That kind of thing was not in their elegant line at all.

So it was a surprise—and not a pleasant surprise—to Ernest Levison when the dandy of the Highcliffe Fourth



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lounge into the doorway of the visitors' dressing-room.

"Chap here named Levison?" called out Ponsonby.

"Here!" said the St. Jim's junior quietly.

"Message for you."

"Oh!"

"I won't butt in, dear men!" said Ponsonby, with an engaging smile to the Greyfriars footballers. "If you'll step outside a minute, Levison—"

"Very well."

Levison stepped outside.

Ponsonby was regarding him rather curiously. But his manner was quite casual, and he seemed to have no intention of claiming Levison as an old acquaintance.

Indeed, from his manner, one might have supposed that Levison was a stranger to him, and that he had simply called him out because he had a message to deliver, as he had said. It was rather a relief to Levison. If Pon had forgotten him, he was only too glad to be forgotten by Pon.

"Man wants to speak to you," explained Ponsonby. "He's waiting. You've got a minor or somethin' at your school—some kid—"

Levison started.

"What do you mean? Has something happened—"

"Don't be alarmed," said Ponsonby soothingly. "From what I can gather, it's nothing serious. But the man came to fetch you to him. It's an accident of some sort. Mr. Mobbs told me to run down here and call you. The man said you were here."

"Where is he?" asked Levison, his face suddenly pale.

It was good advice he had given his brother, to stick to his friends in his own Form. But it came to him with a pang now that Frank would have been at Highcliffe that afternoon, safe and sound, otherwise. Levison caught his breath, and the sudden paleness in his face made even Ponsonby feel something like remorse.

"Nothin' serious, I'm sure," he said hastily. "I feel sure of that. Just hear what the man says, that's all."

"Quick, then!"

"This way!"

Levison hurried off the football-field with Ponsonby. For the moment he had forgotten the match. He was unconscious of the fact that many glances were turned on him in surprise as he hurried away with the dandy of Highcliffe.

"Where is he?" panted Levison.

"Waitin' at the porter's lodge. Here, cut across the old courts—it's quicker. I'll trot, if you like!"

Levison would gladly have run at top speed, but he had to accommodate his pace to Ponsonby's. He did not know his way about Highcliffe. They quitted the playing-fields, and disappeared from sight round the corner of a building, and then entered the old courts—a remnant of the ancient building that had once occupied the site of the school.

It was a short cut—if it had been followed. But under a shadowy stone arch there was a sudden rush of feet, and Levison, before he knew what was happening, was on his back on the old stone flags, and three or four fellows were holding him down.

He struggled and panted.

"Let me go! You fools, this isn't the time for larks!"

"All serene, old bean," drawled Ponsonby. "Let me relieve your mind. There isn't any man at the porter's lodge, and nothin's happened to your

BOWLING OUT A ROTTER!

There are very few good turns standing to the credit of Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove. But it must be placed on record that, in a burst of gratitude for a good turn Levison does him, Skinner tries to square the account. The good turn Skinner does certainly saves his one-time enemy from the sack, and shows up Edgar Bright, the Toad of the Remove, in his true colours.

Magnetites will enjoy every line of next week's thrilling school story. Make a note of the title:

"SENT TO COVENTRY!"

By Frank Richards

and be prepared for something extra good.

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minor, so far as I know, at least. Just pullin' your leg, old scout."

"Oh!" Levison understood, and he gave the dandy of Highcliffe a bitter look. "This is what you call a jest, I suppose?"

"Just that," smiled Ponsonby.

"It's in your style!" said Levison bitterly. "Well, now you've had your joke, such as it is, let me go. I've got to get back to the football."

There was a chuckle from Gadsby and Monson and Vavasour and the other nuts.

"The jest isn't played out yet," grinned Ponsonby. "Yank him along, you men."

"What-ho!"

Levison struggled furiously. But the odds were too heavy, and in less than a minute he was bundled headlong into a dark, damp corner behind a thick stone pillar. There Ponsonby produced a cord, and while the other fellows held the Greyfriars junior, he coolly bound his hands and feet, and stuffed a folded handkerchief into his mouth, tying it there with a string.

"Sorry to leave you, dear man," smiled Ponsonby. "Only a jest. I'm sure you'll laugh at it yourself presently. I remember you always had a sense of humour. We'll come along for you presently, and take you back to your friends, and you can tell them what a rippin' time you had with us, and how much you lost at banker. Ta-ta!"

Ponsonby & Co. walked away, laughing.

"We'll get out of gates for a bit," yawned Ponsonby. "They'll never find the chap there, even if they look for him. Follow me, my infants."

Levison, left to himself, struggled furiously with his bonds, but he struggled in vain. He understood at last the trick that had been played, and

his rage was deep and intense. Ponsonby had tricked him with the utmost ease. He had fallen into the trap like an infant.

Yet he could hardly blame himself. For who could have imagined such a trick? He had not known that Ponsonby was even aware of his return to Greyfriars. So far as he knew, Ponsonby had never heard of his minor. He realised that some enemy from Greyfriars must have inspired this "jest." Skinner or Bright—it did not matter much—the knowledge was useless to him now. He was helpless to stir, helpless to call out, in a dark, deserted corner of the old buildings, where no footstep was likely to penetrate.

Levison was not to play, after all, in the Highcliffe match, and what would the fellows think? He could tell them what had happened; but all they knew was that he had walked away of his own accord with Ponsonby, once his associate in shady ways. They would believe him—But would they believe him? savagely, desperately, Ernest Levison struggled to free himself. But Ponsonby had done his work too well; and he ceased his efforts at last in sheer exhaustion and despair.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Left in the Lurch!

"LEVISON!"
"Where's Levison?"
"Bless the fellow!"
The Greyfriars men were ready. It was not yet quite time for the kick-off, but it was close on time. To the utter amazement of Harry Wharton & Co., Levison had not come back. Some of the Greyfriars men, and

plenty of the Highcliffians, had seen him walk away with Ponsonby. That was all they knew. Why he had not come back was an inexplicable mystery.

"Anything up?" asked Courtenay, as he observed the group of Greyfriars men in worried discussion.

Wharton was frowning.

"One of my men has walked off," he said. "I can't make it out. You've seen nothing of Levison?"

"The chap who went away with Ponsonby?"

"Yes."

"I haven't seen him since. He can't have forgotten the time, I suppose?" said the Highcliffe junior captain.

"Hardly. Can't imagine what's keeping him," said Harry, biting his lip. "He's not changed yet, and he's not leaving himself time."

"I suppose he must have gone up to the House with Ponsonby," said Courtenay, in surprise. "I'll send a man to ask, if you like."

"Thanks!"

Courtenay called to a Highcliffe junior, who cut away to the House to look for Levison.

"Where's Levison?" asked Skinner, strolling up to the group of footballers. "Isn't he playin'?"

"He seems to have taken French leave," grunted Johnny Bull. "He cleared off with Ponsonby while we were changing."

"Old pal of his," remarked Skinner.

Harry Wharton started a little. He had not thought of that. But it was surely impossible that Levison was in Pon's study, talking over old times, and forgetful of the football match! Besides, Levison was not the Levison of the old days, and talking over shady old times with Pon was not likely to appeal to him.

"They haven't met for a long time, you know," remarked Skinner. "I'll go up to the House, if you like, and tell him to get a move on."

"A Highcliffe man's gone to tell him," answered the captain of the Remove shortly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes!" said Bob Cherry.

The Highcliffe junior came back. But he came back alone.

"Your man doesn't seem to be in the House," he said. "Ponsonby's gone out with his friends. He must have gone with them, I fancy."

The Greyfriars fellows looked at one another. The Highcliffe man, with a rather amused look, strolled away.

"What on earth does it mean?" asked Bob Cherry. "Levison can't have walked off and left us in the lurch like this!"

"Impossible!" said Redwing.

"Terrific! Impossible!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Wharton set his lips.

"Where is he?" he said abruptly.

"Goodness knows."

"There's some trick in this," said the Bounder quietly. "Pon is as full of tricks as a monkey. He's played tricks on us before. I know he locked a man in a study once just before a footer match."

"Levison can't be locked in Pon's study."

"Well, no! But—somethin'." The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "I don't trust Ponsonby."

"That seems like rot to me," said Squiff. "Levison used to be a friend of his, and they've not met since Levison came back to Greyfriars, so they can't very well be enemies now, I suppose. Why should Ponsonby pick Levison out to play such a trick on?"

"Ask me another," said Vernon-Smith. "I know it seems thick, but why should a man come over here to play football, and walk off just before the match?"

"Might be gettin' into a game with an old pal, and forgettin' all about such things as footer," suggested Skinner.

"Oh, shut up, Skinner."

"Chuck it."

"That's the kind of suggestion you would make," said Tom Redwing scornfully.

Wharton knitted his brows.

"I can't see where any trick came in," he said. "Ponsonby called to Levison, and Levison walked away with him of his own accord. He need not have gone."

"That's so," admitted the Bounder.

"Skinner's off-side—as per usual," said Bob. "Levison knows that if he left us in the lurch to go hob-nobbing with Pon, his life wouldn't be worth living in the Remove afterwards."

Skinner laughed.

"Levison's wide," he said. "He would tell you some cock-and-bull story to account for it. He was always a dab at that. I remember once, in the old

days, he spoofed Quelch with a yarn about a telephone call, when he wanted to get off to the races with some Highcliffe men."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"It's impossible," he muttered.

"Well, where is he?" said Skinner.

"I don't know."

"I'll go up to the house," remarked Skinner. "Some of Pon's friends may be about, and may have seen them together."

Skinner walked away, leaving the footballers with clouded brows. Wharton glanced at Nugent.

"You've got your things with you, old chap?"

"Yes, that's all right." Nugent was a reserve, though he had had little hope of being wanted.

"If Levison doesn't turn up, you'll play, of course."

"Glad to. But I hope he'll turn up," said Nugent honestly. "You can ask Courtenay to hang on a little, and give him a chance. It may not be his fault."

Wharton nodded, and crossed over to where Courtenay was standing. He was conscious that some of the Highcliffe men were smiling, though Courtenay was politely grave, and the Caterpillar had an aspect of great seriousness. As a matter of fact, the incident had a rather comic aspect to the Highcliffians. A man who came over to play football and walked off and disappeared just before the match, made them smile. Certainly it was a very curious incident.

"Your man not come back?" asked Courtenay.

"No." Wharton's cheeks burned. "I think something must have detained him, somehow." He hardly liked to tell the Highcliffe junior captain that there was a lurking suspicion in his mind that some dirty trick had been played by a Highcliffe man. "I—I was going to ask you if you'd mind hanging on—a few minutes—"

"Not at all. Take your own time."

"Man sufferin' from loss of memory, perhaps!" remarked the Highcliffe goalkeeper, with a droll look. There was a chuckle among the Highcliffe footballers.

Wharton's face was crimson with discomfort. If Levison was keeping away of his own accord, he had placed his captain in an utterly ridiculous position—a position that the captain of the Remove was never likely to forget or to forgive.

But Wharton would not believe that while a possibility of doubt remained. He had had faith in the junior from St. Jim's, and he would not give it up lightly.

At least, he would hear Levison's explanation, which must be given sooner or later, and judge for himself. Until then, he would not condemn him.

"Will you give us a quarter of an hour?" he asked, rather abruptly.

"Certainly."

"Done, then."

Wharton went back to his comrades, and there was a broad grin in the Highcliffe ranks. The Caterpillar gave his captain a comic look.

"The way of the transgressor!" he murmured. "Pon's a fascinatin' chap, and he seems to have exercised his fascinations on this man Levison—his jolly old acquaintance. It's too bad." He smiled. "Judgin' by the expression on Wharton's speakin' countenance, he will find the way of the transgressor hard."

"It's not like Wharton to pick out a man who leaves him in the lurch like this," said Courtenay. "I fancy he will drop him out of the team like a hot potato. I know, I should."

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Skinner came back from the House.

"Well?" said Wharton sharply.

"Pou and his crowd are gone out, right enough," said Skinner. "I asked Monson major—he saw them go. He said there was somebody with them whom he doesn't know by sight."

"Oh!" said Harry.

"My hat!" murmured the Bounder. "Is that it, after all? Was the fellow pullin' my leg in my study all the time! Oh, my only summer bonnet—have I let myself be taken in in my old age?"

"No!" said Redwing quietly.

"Begins to look like it, old bean," said the Bounder.

It was beginning to look like it to other fellows, as well as Herbert Vernon Smith. Certainly every man there had made up his mind that if Levison did not return for the match, his explanation would have to be very explicit and very convincing, to make them believe that he had not fallen under the old temptations among old shady associates, and left his new comrades in the lurch.

"Anyhow, we can't wait longer than the time Courtenay's given," said Harry Wharton.

"We're looking a lot of fools already." He glanced up at the Highcliffe clock-tower. "Five minutes more—and if Levison isn't here by then, we play without him."

"Only thing to be done," agreed Bob Cherry.

And many eyes watched the clock, as the big hand crawled slowly round.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Comes in Useful!

HORACE COKER knew.

Coker, of course, always knew.

He was blessed with an implicit faith in his own judgment. Other fellows might doubt his judgment; Coker himself, never. When Coker had decided, the thing was settled. Not all the king's horses, or all the king's men, could affect the matter after that.

But, accustomed as he was to relying with absolute faith on his sagacity, Coker could not help feeling that, on this special occasion, he had surpassed even himself.

Everything had turned out exactly as Coker had foreseen—or at least, fancied that he had foreseen.

Levison, once a rather doubtful character at Greyfriars, was just what he had always been; and only Coker knew it, and was keeping an eye on the young rascal. Coker knew—what nobody else knew—that Levison was going over to Highcliffe that afternoon to "blag" with the young blackguards of Highcliffe. Coker knew—what nobody else even suspected—that with astute cunning, Levison was covering up his tracks, so to speak, by pretending

that he was going over to Highcliffe to play football. Coker knew—and only Coker—that the wary young rascal, having taken warning by what had happened before, was acting with extraordinary duplicity, in order to avoid being caught out in his rascality.

Coker being the only person who knew all this, naturally felt rather disposed to pat himself on the back.

So far as Head and masters and prefects were concerned, Levison had pulled the wool over all eyes. Fortunately, for the well-being of Greyfriars generally, he could not pull the wool over Coker's eyes. Coker knew!

The young rascal had nothing to fear from masters and prefects, owing to the extraordinary cunning which Coker had discovered in him. But he had much to fear from Coker, the self-constituted guardian of Greyfriars. Coker of the Fifth was on his track.

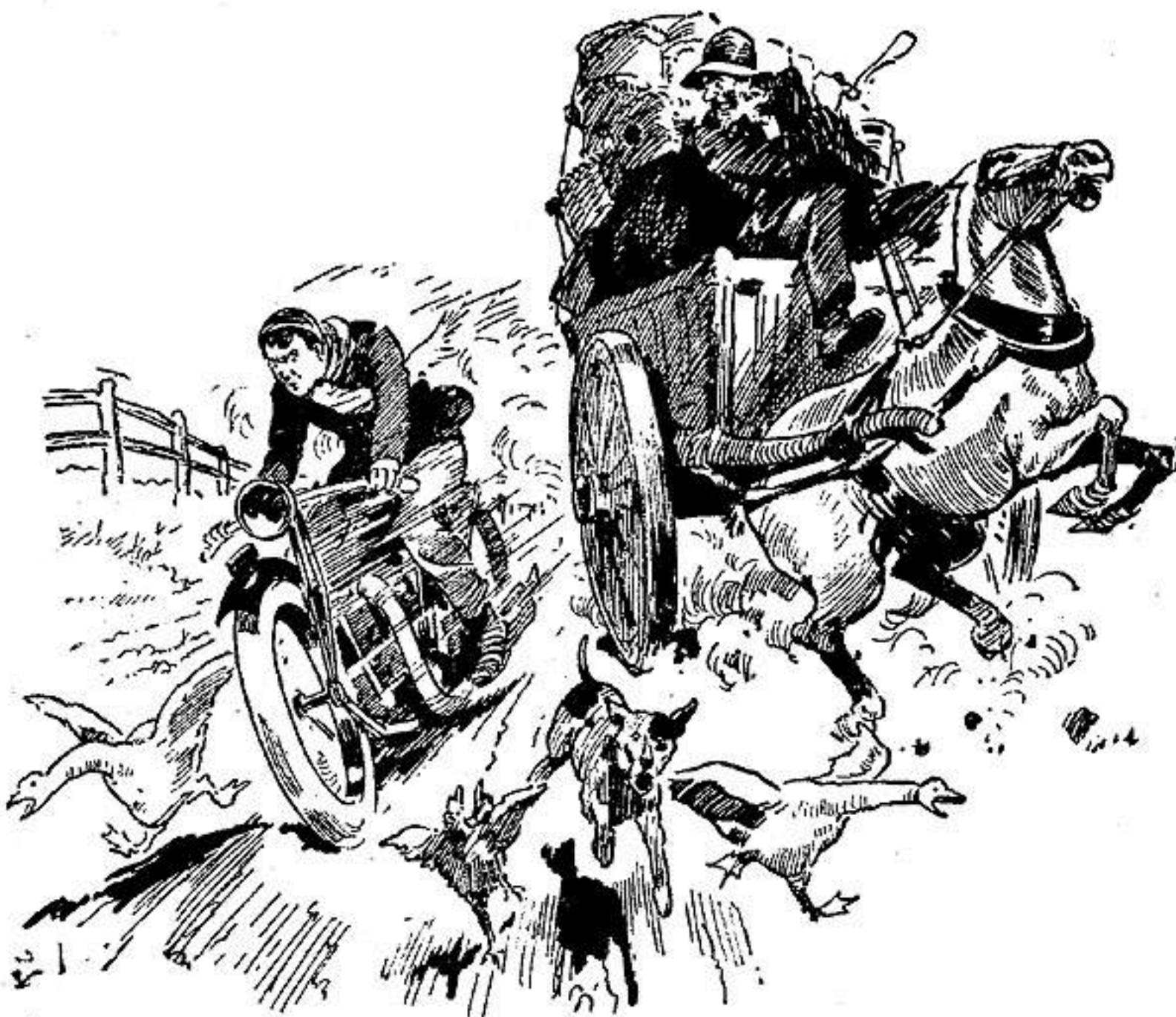
Coker had beaten the brake on his motor-bike easily, of course. He had put up the motor bike and walked into Highcliffe.

Not a man in the Remove supposed for a moment that when Coker chug-chugged past the brake he had been heading for the same destination as themselves. But he had been, and now he was there.

Coker knew one or two fellows in the Fifth at Highcliffe. But he was not seeking his acquaintances now. It was beneath his dignity to appear among the juniors on Little Side. He merely kept an eye open from a distance—the eye he had promised to keep on Levison. So Coker—like a score of other persons—saw Levison walk away with Ponsonby.

He smiled as he saw.

He had expected this. At all events, he had expected something, and this



Horace Coker, on his motor-bike, took chances on the road that might have made any other fellow's hair turn grey. He barely shaved a market cart, nearly ran over a dog, and sent a number of geese scattering in all directions. (See Chapter 11.)

had happened. As soon as anything happened, Coker had an immediate persuasion that he had foreseen it.

The football was, as he had suspected, merely a blind. Levison was walking off with his old acquaintance, to some secluded spot where banker and smokes would be the order of the day. Coker knew!

With an air of exaggerated carelessness, which certainly would have caused surprise had anybody been giving Coker attention—which nobody was—the great man of the Greyfriars Fifth strolled at a distance after the two juniors.

So it was that Coker was the only fellow who saw them enter the old courts, which were out of sight of the playing-fields.

When they had vanished into the secluded quarter, Coker leaned on an ivied wall and smiled.

In the circumstances, surely Coker was justified in smiling with complacent satisfaction. For everything had gone just as he expected—the footballers left to play their game by themselves, Levison hidden in a deserted corner with the Highcliffe nuts. That Ponsonby had gone on through the old courts, and departed on the other side, did not occur to Coker. He had not the slightest doubt that in those very moments the young Greyfriars blackguard and the young Highcliffe blackguard were playing cards and smoking, probably with several other young blackguards.

Coker was in no hurry to act.

He gave the young rascals plenty of time to get fairly going before he butted in.

Caught with the cards or dice in his hands, with the cigarette in his mouth,

(Continued on page 24.)

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Levison would be utterly convicted. Coker pictured Wingate's face when the head prefect of Greyfriars learned that he, Horace Coker, had nailed this cunning offender, unsuspected by the prefects. He pictured the wrath in the Head's face, directed at Levison, and the warm and admiring approval directed at himself. Surely, after this, the Head would see that he could scarcely avoid appointing at least one prefect from the Fifth Form—Horace Coker. As a self-appointed prefect, Coker would have won his spurs, as it were.

So Coker smiled cheerily.

As for the young scoundrel who had deceived his headmaster, deceived his Form master, deceived everybody but Coker, the Fifth-Former had no mercy for him. The sooner such a cunning young rascal was shown up and kicked out of Greyfriars the better for all concerned.

Coker went into the old courts at last, treading lightly on the moss-grown flagstones.

To his surprise, the old courts were deserted.

Had the young rascals gone through and hidden themselves in some other spot—some spot unknown to Coker? This consideration, obvious as it was, now occurred to Coker's powerful intellect for the first time. He frowned darkly. But it was quite likely that the shady young scoundrels had seen him coming, or heard him, and taken cover somewhere behind the old stone pillars. And Coker, with grim determination in his rugged face, rooted through the old courts from end to end, and suddenly, in a dark corner, he stumbled over a figure stretched on the ground.

"Why—what—Hullo!" ejaculated Coker.

He stared down at the recumbent figure.

In the dusky spot behind the massive old stone pillar, close to a corner of the old wall, it was shadowy enough, and Coker, for the moment, only saw a figure stretched at his feet. Then he recognised Levison, but did not observe that he was bound.

"You!" exclaimed Coker. "You! I knew it! Here, but where are the others? Where have they cut off to?"

No answer from Levison, for a good and sufficient reason. Only the faintest of mumbles came through the gag.

"Not that they matter," grinned Coker. "I've no business with Highcliffe rotters; they can rip. You're my game, and I've caught you. You're going to the Head! See?"

Mumble.

Even upon Coker it dawned that there was something very queer in the junior lying there in the shadows, without movement save a wriggle, or a sound save a faint mumble. It began to penetrate into Coker's intellect that this junior was not dodging in cover to escape his eagle eye. He bent over Levison and discerned that he was bound hand and foot, and that a gag was tied in his mouth. Levison could not speak, but the look in his eyes was eloquent of many things.

"Oh, great Scott!" gasped Coker.

He was so utterly astounded by this discovery that he could only stare at Levison, with dropped jaw and wide-open eyes.

For a full minute he stared, agape.

Then, realising that the bound junior was a prisoner, and could not move or speak, Coker began to remove the gag from his mouth. Levison gasped with relief when it was gone, and he found his voice.

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"Coker, let me loose—quick!"

"What—what—what does this mean?" stuttered Coker. "What's this game?" Coker's head was almost turning round in bewilderment. He had not made a mistake, of course. Coker never made a mistake. But if he had not made a mistake, what did all this mean?

"Cut me loose!" panted Levison. "Thank goodness you found me! I'm still in time to play, perhaps!"

"To—to—to play cards?" stuttered Coker. His mind was still running dizzily on Levison's supposed occupation with Ponsonby & Co.

"Eh? To play football! I'm here for the match."

"But, what—what—what—"

The impossible had happened, apparently: Coker had made a mistake! What was still more impossible, he was beginning to understand it.

"Those cads got me here by a trick, and fixed me up like this!" panted Levison. "They want to keep me out of the match. For goodness' sake, Coker, let me loose—quick! I can't imagine how you got here—but you're here, thank goodness! Let me loose!"

Horace Coker drew a deep, deep breath.

He understood now.

It was a blow to him! All his sage reasonings, all his masterly deductions, had been wide of the mark. Levison was at Highcliffe to play football; he was eager to play football; and, so far from consorting with Ponsonby & Co., he had been tricked and practically kidnapped by those young rascals! Coker was no longer sorry that Potter and Greene had deserted him this afternoon. He really would not have liked them to be witnesses to this.

It was a blow!

But be it said, in justice to the ineffable Horace, that he played up manfully. As soon as he understood, he released Levison quickly enough, and the junior, with a hurried word of thanks, ran out of the old courts. Coker followed him more slowly, still in a bewildered state. Coker returned to the spot where he had left his motor-bike, and departed, still dazed by the extraordinary discovery that his judgment was capable of being at fault. But by the time he met Potter and Greene in the study at tea, Coker had quite recovered his equanimity. Potter and Greene eyed him rather dubiously, wondering how he was going to take their desertion. But Coker made no reference to that. And Potter, from sheer curiosity, asked him at last about the job he had taken on the afternoon. What about young Levison?

"Eh? Oh, I looked into the matter," said Coker. "I find that he's quite a decent kid—quite."

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WELL IN ADVANCE!

"Oh!" said Potter and Greene.

"Quite!" said Coker. "It was up to me to look into the matter. I've looked into it. I'm satisfied. It's scarcely fair play to have it up against the kid that he was in trouble when he was at the school before. He's all right, and I'd prefer not to hear you fellows say anything more against him."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"I tell you he's all right, and that's enough!" said Coker. "You can let it drop."

"But it was you!" gasped Potter.

"You said—" stuttered Greene.

Coker raised his hand.

"Let it drop!" he repeated. "I've said the kid is all right. That settles it. Leave him alone."

"But you—"

"You—"

"I've said let it drop and leave him alone," said Coker severely. "I repeat it. Do you want me to shout it?"

Potter and Greene let it drop.

"Time!" said Bob Cherry.

Tom Redwing uttered an exclamation. "Levison!"

The last minute had ticked away, when a hurrying figure was seen in the distance. Ernest Levison came up breathlessly.

All eyes turned on him.

"Am I in time?" he panted.

"We've waited for you," said Harry Wharton curtly. "Where have you been all this time, Levison?"

Levison glanced at Skinner, who was slinking quietly away with a dismayed face.

"I think very likely Skinner could have told you," he answered. "But I can't say for certain—I've no proof. I've been tied up in a corner, and I should be there now, only Coker of the Fifth came along—goodness knows how or why! Anyhow, he came, and let me loose."

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"Ponsonby?"

"Yes!"

"The rotter!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"He spoofed me into going with him—with a yarn about an accident to my brother," said Levison quietly. "The other rotters were waiting for me in the old courts. Shall I change?"

"Yes—and quick!"

"I won't keep you a minute."

"By gum," said Johnny Bull, "we'd better have this out with the Highcliffe men—they're grinning at us for keeping them hanging about! We'd better let them know why."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"We don't want a row here," he said. "No harm done, as it turns out. Besides, those cads must have been put up to it by a Greyfriars man."

"Skinner!" said Bob.

"We shall see about that later. We've got to think about the game now."

"Skinner can wait," agreed Bob.

Skinner was gone, dismayed and furious. Levison very quickly rejoined his comrades, and went into the field with them. And all thought of Ponsonby & Co., and Skinner, and everything but Soccer, was dismissed as the whistle went and the Greyfriars footballers plunged into the game. And they were glad enough that they had waited for Levison when, in the first ten minutes, the ball went into the net, and there was a roar from the Greyfriars fellows round the field.

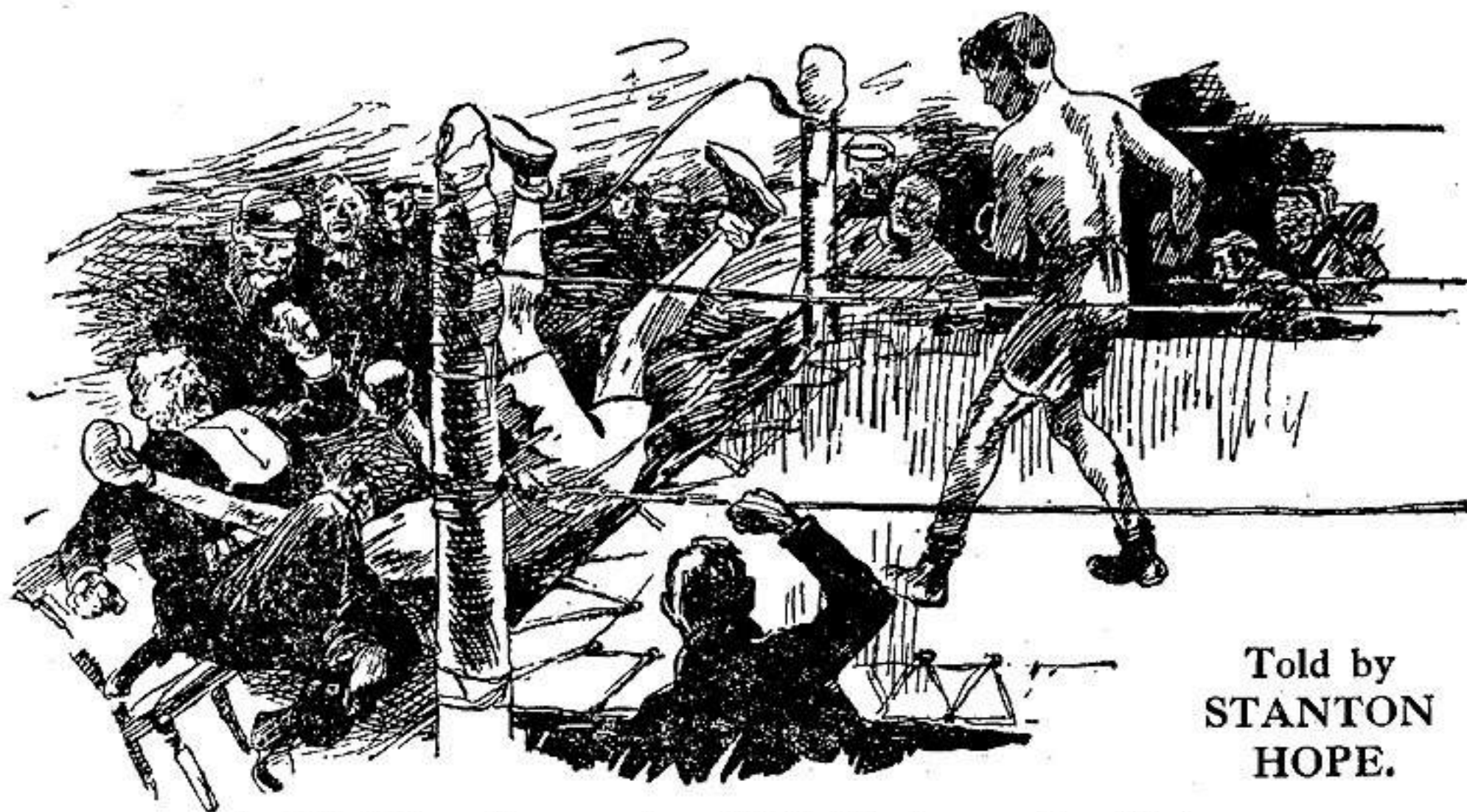
"Goal!"

"Good man, Levison!"

THE END.

THE UNEXPECTED! The odds are all against Jack Orchard, the Britisher, beating the hefty Yap Hemmens in a set to with the gloves, but the unexpected happens; sheer grit and the will to win vanquish a boxer whose reputation is sky high!

GOLD FOR THE GETTING!



Told by
**STANTON
HOPE.**

A Thrilling Story of a Gold Rush up the Yukon.

A Gruelling Contest!

FURIOUSLY angry, Yap Hemmens scrambled to his feet, gave a tug of his red trunks, and wiped a ribbon of crimson that clove his chin from his cut mouth. It was first blood to Jack.

Rushing in, Yap tried a hook to the head, which the English boy caused him to miss by a lightning side-step. Before he had time to recover himself the gong clanged, and the first round was ended.

"Keep your pecker up, me bhoys," remarked Terry cheerily, as he flapped a towel over Jack's head in the corner. "Shure Yap thought you were meat for him, and 'tis riling him that he's not having things all his own way. As ould Pat Flanagan advised at Mither McGinty's party afther he had laid out all the other gentlemen with his shillelagh, 'always keep your timper.'"

Jack grinned, then gasped, as Terry whipped a shower of ice-cold water on his face and again vigorously flapped him with a towel.

The short respite was soon over, and Jack and the Swede began the second round with some hammer-and-tongs, toe-to-toe fighting which fairly "brought down the house."

"Good boy, Jack! Wire right in!"

"You're doin' fine, Britisher!"

"Prodooce the sloopin' mixture, Yap!"

The last bellowed remark was from Yap's own second, but partly owing to lack of opportunity and partly lack of desire, Hemmens did not oblige with the requested knock-out.

When at the end of the second round Jack was still on his feet, though more battered than the Swede, a fresh cheer resounded in the hall. The English boy was not exactly the chopping-block for the professional pug that everyone had expected.

True, he was not showing the fighting brilliance or ring-craft of the Swede, but obviously he was a born scrapper. Moreover, he had got that wonderful fighting spirit which refuses to acknow-

ledge defeat while an ounce of strength remains.

Back in his corner again, Jack lolled in the chair with his arms limply hanging over the ropes, and gazed upon the sea of faces, part hidden in the blue veil of tobacco smoke. Meanwhile, Terry vigorously wielded the towel and kept up a running fire of advice, which passed in one ear and out of the other.

For Jack's mind was occupied with thoughts of his uncle who, in the guise

of a Chilkoot Indian, was somewhere in the hall, probably at the back of the gallery or conveniently near the exit. He could not recognise him, though he was able to faintly distinguish several coloured men among the crowd. But the knowledge that he was present was as great a tonic as the draught of air from Terry's vigorously-flapping towel.

The third round was a repetition of the second, save that Jack was hammered rather more badly.

Once he was sent down for a count of six, but came up smiling again to the lusty encouragement of the crowd. Here was a boy after the fans' own heart—grit to the core, and a glutton for punishment. And certainly Jack absorbed enough punishment to have finished anyone not so tough and wiry as himself.

Meantime Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons, who had joined his pardner at the ringside, chewed tobacco and looked on with a fierce joy.

Surprised though they were at Jack's fine showing against Lone Bear's substitute, they had no doubt as to the end of this unequal contest.

When all was said and done, Jack was but a smart and plucky amateur. Yap Hemmens had earned his living in the ring, and knew every trick, fair and foul, of the pugilistic game. Thus the crooked pardners reasonably presumed that Hemmens was simply following out instructions—to first give young Jack a thorough hammering before finally putting the lad out for the count.

So the precious pair silently gloated over what they thought would be the coming knock-out, and mentally counted their winnings over the fight.

But counting chickens before they're hatched is always a mug's game. Indeed, in the next round, the dishonest promoters almost had to figure out their losings when a snorting upper-cut from Jack barely missed the red-stained chin of the Swede.

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INTRODUCTION.

Jack Orchard arrives in San Francisco to find his uncle, Dave Orchard, missing, having, apparently, absconded with a bag of gold. Jack falls in with Terry O'Hara, a cheery Irish boy, and Clem Hardy, an old prospector, with whom he joins forces in a gold rush up the Yukon. At intervals the trio have trouble with Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons, two shady camp followers. Later, Clem Hardy is identified as Dave Orchard and arrested; but he manages to escape again. Then Jack falls foul of Lone Bear, an Indian. The pair agree to Morgan's suggestion, to settle their differences in the boxing-ring. When the time arrives, however, Jack is forced to fight Yap Hemmens, a professional pug.

(Now Read On.)



Subsequently the ref had to warn Yap Hemmens two or three times for doubtful tactics. So clever was the pug, though, that he managed to get home several kidney punches and foul blows with the lace of the gloves undetected. In the clinches he trod on Jack's toes, attempted to butt with his head, and twisting his pug face into a distorted smile, taunted the English boy with being yellow.

If Terry had been the other principal in this scrap, the hot-headed Irish boy would have lost his temper and thus been beaten for a certainty. Jack, who had more self-control, steeled himself against the muttered taunts of Hemmens and the jeers of the Swede's second, and refused to be rattled. His lips tight-pressed, he fought with brain as well as brawn, and several of the rough-necks present began to make offers on his lasting the full ten rounds.

At the end of the seventh round Jack was still on his pins, though badly damaged. Back in his corner, he had to listen to more vivacious advice from the excited Terry O'Hara. And, forgetting to wield the sponge and towel, Terry began to demonstrate a means whereby his man could bring this fight to a swift and satisfactory conclusion.

"Whin he drops his left, Jack, as he sometimes does," he muttered, "feint wid your right for his chin, loike this"—and he hooked his right, just missing Jack's jaw.

"C-crumps! Steady, old chap!" panted Jack, throwing himself back in the chair.

"Thin put him in dreamland wid a left upper-cut, loike this!"

"My hat! Steady, I tell you! Cut the lecture and get on with the washing, old man."

So Terry resorted to the wet sponge again, and in his own vigorous way mopped Jack's blood-stained face and chest and flapped the towel as though he were cracking a whip.

The eighth round found Yap Hemmens full of beans, and to end the scrap, he came at Jack like a human whirlwind.

In the chaos of fists which were flung at him, the English boy was driven round the ring. Those terrible, battering fists came hurtling from all directions, and the great hall resounded with the dull, repeated thud of sodden leather on living flesh. Ugly red patches showed up startlingly again on Jack's body, and for the first hectic minute of that round he scarcely got home a blow in answer to the Swede.

"Youse got him, Yap! Youse got him!"

The coarse, jubilant voice of Hemmens' second brought the grin back into the Swede's face. He was cocksure now he had the English boy whacked, but the upper-cut with which he hoped to finish the scrap failed to connect by an inch, and the lace of his glove badly tore Jack's cheek and ear.

That cocksure, triumphant grin had a curious effect on Jack. It sent his thoughts back in a swift rush to that day he had visited Terry in the Dawson hospital.

He had seen an exactly similar grin on Yap Hemmens' face then as when the Swede had sat up in his bed hugging the empty jar of jelly. And the thought of that mean theft brought with it a fierce desire to knock that grin off the Swede's face, if it was the last thing he did on earth. He swung his right with all his

force, but Yap dropped with lightning swiftness, and the avenging glove only fanned the Swede's yellow hair.

After that, Yap grinned more broadly than before, but despite his own distress Jack noted with elation that his foe was fast showing signs of "bellows to mend." Heartened, Jack put every ounce of his remaining strength into a great effort for victory, and exulted as the Swede, in his turn, went reeling back across the ring.

Had a dead husky suddenly sprung into vigorous, tearing life, the crowd could not have been more surprised or electrified.

"Jack! Jack! Go to it, boy!"

"Don't let up on him, son!"

"Where's your right, bud?"

The response to the question came as Jack's right shot out straight from the shoulder and caught Hemmens between the eyes, sending the Swede hurtling like a sack through the ropes into the

pital, which remained to be knocked off. He set about the task again in earnest, and after driving home a few short jabs, connected heavily on the side of his opponent's neck with his left. The Swede's arms dropped to his sides, and his knees sagged.

A gleam of triumph in his eye, Jack followed up, to land a knock-out. But in a flash the muscles of Yap's body tautened, and one of his drooping fists came shooting upward with devastating force. A swift warning shout from Terry coincided with a surprised gasp from Jack as he flung his head sharply backward—just in time to avoid an upper-cut which would have laid him as senseless as a log on the canvas.

This cunning trick of the prize ring had the effect of sobering Jack. He had got Yap groggy, but the Swede, like a badly wounded snake, was still capable of dealing destruction.

Breathing hard, Jack weaved his way in again, blocked a heavy right to the ribs on his left forearm, and crashed home a hook to Yap's cauliflower ear.

Down went the Swede on his knees, with the deliberate intention of taking a few seconds' breathing space. Hardly, however, was he in that attitude of repose than the gong sounded the end of the round. And thus Yap had the chagrin of having to walk across the entire width of the ring to his corner, while Jack was able to nearly drop down in his own chair.

"You've got him, me bhoy! You've got him!" cried that ministering angel, Terry. "Don't let up on him for a minute. Remember the dirty trick he played in hospital, and say to yerself: 'Tis meself that's going to put the spalpeen back there again, bedad!' Use your right more, me darlint! He's got no friends, unless they're the Brothers Crook—Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons. Take one big belt at the mark, me bhoy, and try to put your fist clean through him. He'll not break, and if you can bend him you'll get a chance of putting him safe to sleep wid your left in the arms of Morphia, or phwativer the gentleman's name is. There ye are, ould chum! One last swab wid the sponge and your mither would nigh be able to recognise ye if she was here, bless her heart!"

Clang!

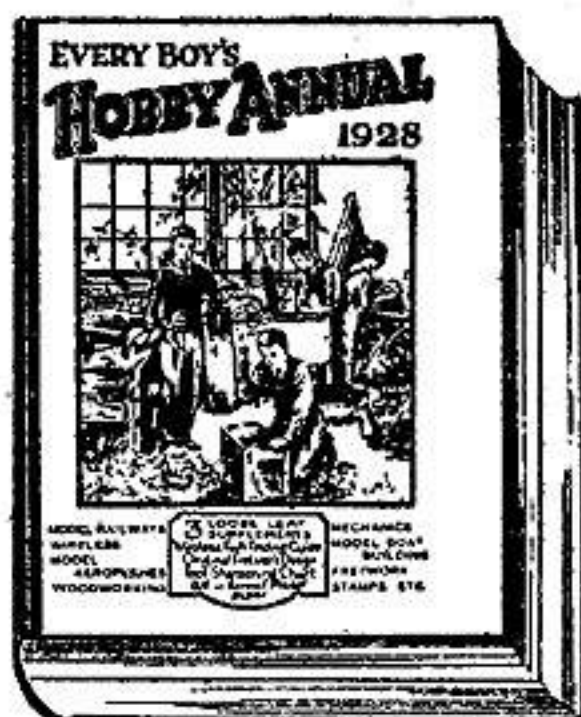
The ninth round, and the assembly half out of their seats with the excitement of it.

No smile was there on Yap's face, nor on the rough-and-ready features of his secret supporters, Morgan and Simons. In the brains of the crooked pair was the burning question-mark: Could this English boy achieve the miraculous, and beat the pug whom they had so confidently selected to hand him a thundering good thrashing? From the way that Yap came from his corner, with dull eyes and sagging knees, it seemed that the Swede had almost shot his bolt. Not for a moment was Jack taking any chances, though. Already he had had one experience of Yap's "ring generalship."

Like a bear at bay awaiting the attack of a husky, Yap stood swaying, a yard or two out from his corner. Eyeing him suspiciously, Jack got to close quarters and led with his left. Promptly Yap stumbled forward and fell into a clinch, then drove in a hard jab a couple of inches below the English boy's belt.

With a gasp of pain Jack rolled writhing to the canvas.

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Jap of Bull Morgan, who was sitting below!

Hurt though he was by the impact of the bruiser's body, Morgan nevertheless lost no time in shoving him back towards the ring.

"Go to it! Out him!" he bellowed angrily. "What are y' waitin' for?"

Jack's own brain was reeling as he stood aside and saw Hemmens clamber painfully back into the ring. He saw him through the choking veil of blue tobacco-smoke, and Sergeant Curtis, standing by, addressing something to him. To his battered ears the uproar of the crowd sounded like the thunder of heavy surf.

Now there was no grin on Yap's face, but to Jack's rather distorted vision there still remained that aggravating smile, such as he had seen in the hos-

The Knock-Out!

"FOUL! Foul! Disqualify the spalpeen, sargeant!" Young Terry O'Hara, Jack's second, was dancing wildly on his pins by the ringside as his man writhed on the canvas.

"Foul!" yelled some of the rough audience.

Most, however, had not seen that the blow struck by Yap Hemmens was below the belt, and some of the Swede's backers, including the rogues Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons, bellowed with triumph.

"Bully for you, Yap!" roared Morgan. "Ye've outed the cub this time!"

But the uproar subsided when it was realised that the ref-Sergeant Curtis, of the Royal Mounted Police—was not making the count. Instead, his steely eye was upon Hemmens, and he was issuing a warning.

"Hit low again, my lad," said the sergeant, "and I'll disqualify you and award the fight to Orchard!"

"Bedad, that's the stuff!" hooted Terry. "Up you get, Jack, me bhoy, and knock seven bells out of the waster!"

Slowly Jack rose and faced his unscrupulous foe. He was pale and shaken, but still grit to the core.

"Yah, it was da accident!" grunted the Swede.

Jack nodded. A thorough sportsman himself, he was inclined to give his cunning opponent the benefit of the doubt.

"Waal, fight on, y' swab!" growled Yap, edging back. "This time I will knock da hide off you, Eenglish pig!"

He concluded his remark with a tantalising grin, and Jack's blood rose again to fever-heat. Leaping in, he went hammer-and-tongs for the Swede.

Stole Terry's jelly, did he, the cad! He'd teach him to rob an invalid! Crack! Thwack! His zipping fists snapped home alternately on either side of the pug's grinning mouth. Thud! He sent him reeling back against the ropes, and hit him again on the rebound.

Thud! Thwack! Thud!

Yap Hemmens might as well have tried to have fought back the hurtling rocks of a mountain avalanche as the lashing fists that hammered terrifically against his already bruised and crimsoned body.

The crowd were on their feet, a-roar with the excitement of it, urging on the fighting English lad—goading him with frenzied yells to greater fury. This was what they had come to see—the real goods—a fight to a finish!

A terrific left got Yap an inch above the belt, and his knees sagged in real earnest. For the first time during the battle his glazed eyes fell from Jack's set face to the boy's right glove. It was as though he were hypnotised. In the brief moment that was left to him he regarded that glove as a rabbit watches the flat head of the snake that will destroy it.

A quiver of the glove brought no response from his tired, bruised muscles, and he made no effort to avert the blow that lashed upward with the force of a mule's hoof to his chin. Lifted clean off his feet, he fell flat on his back, and lay there spread-eagled on the canvas, with the hard white glare of the light pouring down on his battered face.

"Seven—eight—nine—out!"

It was doubtful whether any of the madly-yelling crowd heard the count by Sergeant Curtis. None of them expected Yap Hemmens to rise and continue—nor did he.

The fight was over. The ref held aloft Jack's right glove in token of victory, and exuberantly awarded his congratulations. Terry came through the ropes like an aerial torpedo, threw half a dozen hand-springs, and concluded with a wild Irish jig.

Among the cheering of the throng, jubilant that they had got their money's worth and more, came a shout that reached the tingling ears of the victor.

"Well done, Jack!"

For one awful moment Jack thought that Uncle Dave's indiscretion would have serious consequences as Sergeant Curtis gave a slight start. But to the sergeant it was like a voice from somewhere out of the past, and, luckily, he did not associate it with the fugitive whom he had been so ardently seeking.

"Me bhoy! Me bhoy!" cried Terry, wildly clapping a heavy hand on Jack's bare back. "Ye've beaten the spalpeen! I'll bet he'll never bone calves'-foot jelly again! Now to get changed, and we'll watch the other events, bedad!"

But the rest of the programme had no interest for the promoters, Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons. In silence they slunk away to a barely-furnished little office in the building, there to figure out their losings on the fight.

(It is a bitter blow to Bull Morgan and Lefty Simons, but the rascally twain are not prepared to lie doggo for long. Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's gripping instalment of this great adventure serial. There's a thrill in every line of it!)

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FAMOUS FOOTBALL CLUBS.

(Continued from page 2.)

Haworth is a goer, and it takes a fleet-footed wing man to slip past him.

As the Wanderers have a fisherman in goal, it is right and proper that they should have Alec Finney at left full-back. This player shows that you have to get up early in the morning to catch the Bolton manager asleep. Finney was with New Brighton, but at the end of one season they didn't put him on their retained list. So the Wanderers stepped in and signed him on.

There are many Internationals on the books at Burnden Park, and one of them is Harry Nuttall, the right-half. He got his first cap against Ireland this season. He is the player I referred to previously as being the son of a former groundsman, and he was born in a cottage which is actually a part of the Burnden Park grounds, on which the Wanderers play. When we talk about local lads, Nuttall should surely come first.

But there are other Boltonians bred and born in the team, too. Jimmy Seddon—long Jimmy they call him—who plays at centre-half is another of them. Fair of hair and long of leg, Seddon is

a real giant in every sense. He has legs like telescopes, as one player described them. He has also played for England.

By way of completing an

All-Bolton Born

half-back line there is Elijah Thornborough. He has taken the place of Jennings, a Welsh International, and if not yet as good as Jennings at his best, he is going to be.

This half-back line is very solid, and it supports a forward line which, although out of luck and not too impressive at the moment, nevertheless has much football in it. Inside-right, David Jack is a star swerver, and the son of a former player who is now manager of Plymouth Argyle. David Jack cost the Wanderers a lot of money, but nobody has ever hinted that he wasn't worth every penny, and then some. He is an income-tax expert, and is also interested in a headache cure, in which he and Vizard are partners. On the field, David Jack's partner is Billy Butler. He, like Haworth, comes from Atherton, and will also show you International caps if you ask him nicely. John Smith recently vacated the centre-forward berth in favour of Harold Blackmore, for whom the Wanderers paid a big fee

to Exeter City. The left-wing pair are George Gibson, the only Scot now in the side regularly, and Albert Picken. Gibson came from Hamilton Academical, and is said to have cost four thousand pounds. Unfortunately, he has not scored goals in Joe Smith's place as regularly as it was expected that he would do. Outside-left, Picken may suffer a bit from the fact that there is always a tendency to compare him with Vizard. And you have to be a real player to stand that sort of comparison.

At Burnden Park there is a thoroughly up-to-date ground, and George Eccles, the trainer, sees to it that the men who play in white jerseys are always in the pink of condition.

Apart from the playing staff, a really interesting personality connected with the Bolton Wanderers Club is Manager "Charlie" Fowleraker. Most big club managers have been experts at the game. Mr. Fowleraker says that he never played enough Soccer to be able to boast about it, but he played a fair amount of rugby. During the War, when he had a railway post, he was induced to put in some of his spare time keeping the books of the Bolton Wanderers club. That was in 1916. Seven years later he was the full-blown manager of the team which won the Cup.



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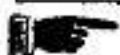
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"CAVE!"

The word flew round the Fourth, as the heavy footprints of Dr. Birchmell echoed in the corridor outside the Form-room. And immediately, a change came over the Fourth.

Before the approach of the dreaded Head of St. Sam's, the Fourth had been taking things easy. Mr. Lickham, the Form-master, had been taking a nap; Jack Jolly & Co. had been taking the make out of the Honorable Guy de Vere; Loyde and Trewe had been taking pot-shots at Mr. Lickham with their ebony rulers, and the rest of the Form had been taking an interest in sundry comic papers.

But all that changed as the Head's unmistakable footprints echoed outside—Dr. Birchmell's temper was very uncertain, and he was certain to object to such easy-going proceedings in class.

Consequently, Mr. Lickham hastily jumped to his feet, assisted by a well-aimed ruler from Loyde—and started pointing to a map on the wall, as if he was lecturing on geography, while the rest of the Form did their best to look intelligent—which for most of them was no easy task.

By the time Dr. Birchmell entered the room, the Fourth looked a very harmless lot of lambs—at all events, they managed to pull the wool over the Head's eyes all right!

"Ah! Busy, I see, my dear Lickham," observed the Head, coming in. "Sorry to interrupt, I'm sure, but I want to speak to your Form for a few moments, if you don't mind!"

"Not at all, sir; not at all!" said Mr. Lickham obligingly. "We have been working so hard that I know the boys can do with a breather!"

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Jack Jolly, and there was a chuckle from the Fourth.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows!" began Dr. Birchmell, fixing his eyes on the Fourth. "I have an important announcement to make regarding a new-comer to this Form! You are going to have an addition to your ranks this afternoon!"

"I say an addition to your ranks—and from what I can see of it, he's a pretty rank addition, too! You will see what I mean in a minute."

"The Peace Scholarship, which was founded by Charles Peace, one of the first Governors of our School, has been awarded this year to a cove of the name of John Steady," continued the Head.

"John Steady will be placed in the Fourth and that's what I'm hear about."

"On the bawl, sir!" cried out Jack Jolly encouragingly.

"Now I don't want anyone to run away with the idea that I'm a snob," continued Dr. Birchmell. "I detect snobs with all my heart and soul!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth, rather artlessly. They didn't eggerally appreciate the Head's occasional humorous sallies. But it was just as well to humour the old tyrant.

walls, does give me the fair pip! But I can't stop him!"

"Hard cheddar, sir!" said you this, my boys," continued the Head, warmly. "I intend to make things hot for the boundary, and I want you fey young spirits to help me!"

"Oh, okay!" "For once in a way, I want you to drop the Good Little Eric stuff, and make the life of this stervious young marine store dealer at St. Sam's unbearable!"

"Few!" "I know there are some black sheep among you, went on the Head, stroking his beard thoughtfully. "Cyril Snarl, and Leonard Leer, for example, will, I am sure, be up against the new cad at once, if not sooner!"

"What-ho, sir!" said the 2 leaders of the cad's brigade of the Fourth, with cynical grins on their diales.

"Good egg!" exclaimed the Head delightedly. "Go to it, my boys! I wish you all success, and I hope the rest of the Form follow your egg-sample. Of course, give the new lad fair play. But if you can get him falsely akeweised of robbery or forgery or blackmail, by all means do so!"

"Eye, eye, sir!" chorried the black sheep.

"John Steady arrives by the ten o'clock train at Muggleton this morning. It is bound to be several hours late, as usual, so if you all go down after dinner, you ought to be in good time to give him a warm reception," said the Head. "Arm yourselves with peashooters and plenty of rotten eggs, my boys! Cook will supply the latter, and the former you will obtain from the school armory. Cheerio, old beans!"

And having made those remarkable statements the Head trotted out, leaving the Fourth in a buzz.

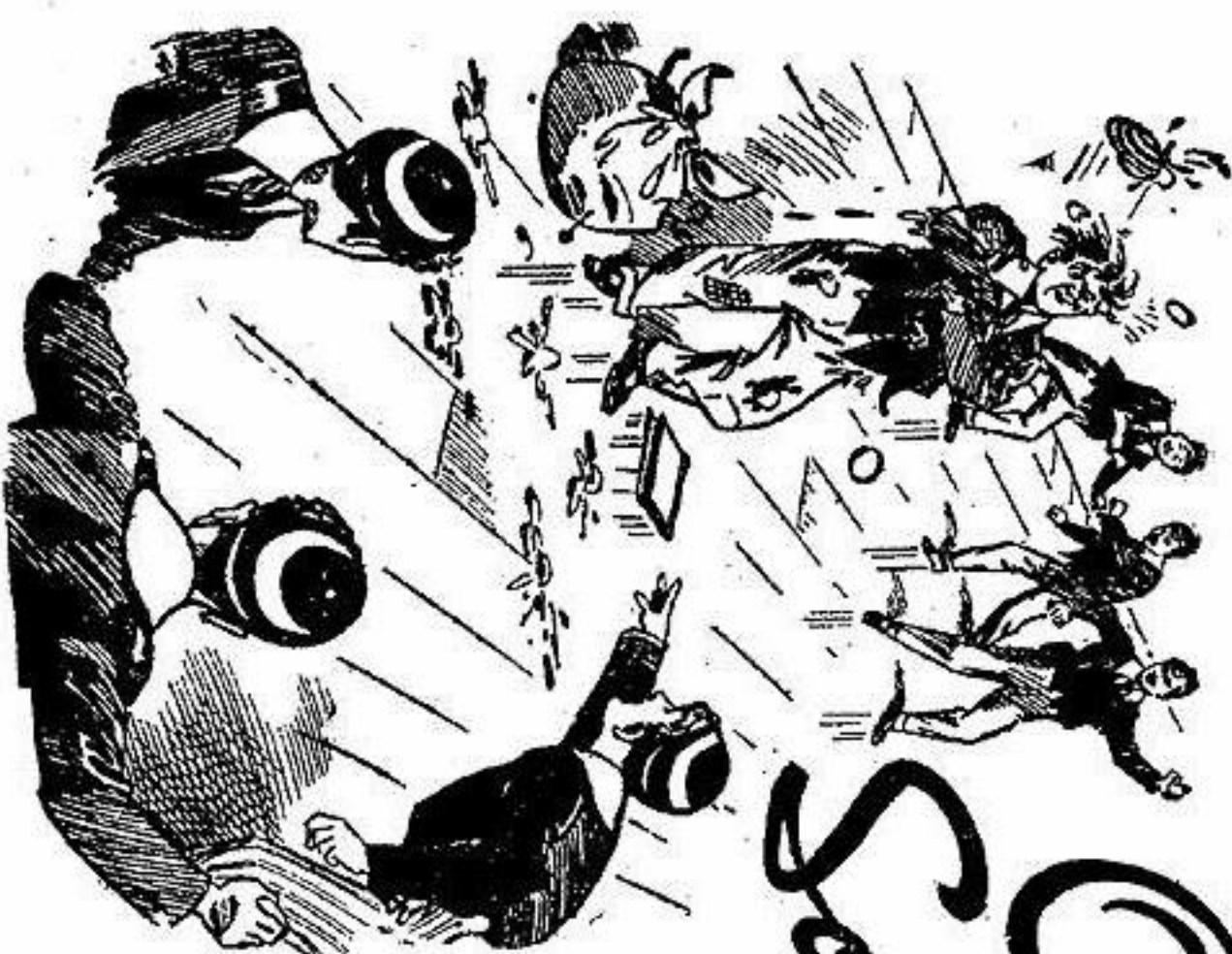
II.

ING-LING-TING! Honk, honk! The great express rolled majestically into Muggleton Station, and stopped with a jerk.

Among the passengers that alighted was a young fellow in a jon jacket and corded trousers, who gazed about him enquiringly.

There was nothing about him to suggest that only the previous day he had been assisting his father in a rag-and-bone round. True, his face was grimy, and his jon jacket was several sizes too large for him, and covered all over in patches.

But apart from those small details he looked like any other public schoolboy. Yet the young fellow was none other than John Steady, the rag-and-bone boy who had won the Charles Peace Scholarship to St. Sam's. And a very fine healthy young fellow he looked, too. He was tall and clean limbed, and his eyes shone with a clear,



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DICKY NUGENT

the "genius" of the Second Form at Greyfriars, whose literary efforts—so it has been said—are sufficient to make a cat laugh!



honest light, throwing a slight illumination over the dingy platform.

A shrewd observer would have guessed that he came from a humble home, seeing that his luggage consisted only of a few pieces of old iron, carefully wrapped up in a red spotted handkerchief. It was evident, however, that he was a staid and sober fellow, for he carried with him a copy of the latest number of the "Sweeney Todd" Library.

No sooner had he got out of the train than he was surrounded by a crowd of juniors of his own age, all wearing St. Sam's caps.

"Here he is!" "Here he is!" "Here he is!" cried the scholars in a chorus.

John Steady looked in surprise at the mocking faces around him. The juniors noticed that he had a mop of black hair, a red nose, pink cheeks, and green eyes. He culled slightly, as they looked at him.

"Are you John Steady?" demanded Cyril Snarl, his handsman dial twisted into a cynical sneer as he spoke.

"That is my name," agreed the new boy quietly, dropping his luggage on the platform with a terrific crash.

"Only this!" replied Snarl, and with calculated cruelty, he deftly flung an antiquated egg into the new boy's face.

At the same moment, Leonard Leer pushed another egg down Steady's neck. That was the signal for a terrific fusillade of eggs from the rest. They fairly pelted the unfortunate scholarship lad from all sides. John Steady, however, did not show the white feather. Obviously he was not chicken-hearted.

Some who were there took no part in the affair, but looked on with frowning brows. Jack Jolly, and his chums, Merry and Bright, and Frank Fearless, did not altogether approve, in spite of the Head's attitude. But for once they were in a minority. The Fourth Form at St. Sam's resented the idea of a rag-and-bone merchant joining them, and they were abhorring their resentment in no uncertain manner!

At last the supply of eggs came to an end, and the Fourth stood round John Steady, staring with hatred at their handiwork.

The Scholarship lad was cowered from head to foot in fowl-smelling yolk. It was no joke. His jon jacket, which his mother had so carefully selected from their stock, was cowered to a depth of two or three inches. It really was a bit thick.

Yet, through it all, John Steady stood with folded arms, his lips parted in a slight smile. The only reason an onlooker might have had for thinking he was angry was that his nostrils were dilating, and even that wasn't much to go on, for the fearful smell of those ancient eggs was making a good many nostrils dilate!

"So much for that!" remarked Snarl, beating his teeth in a cruel grin. "Let that teach you we don't want any marine-store dealers at St. Sam's!"

"Is that why you treat me thus?" asked John Steady in a husky voice. The fresh culler had gone out of his dial now. He looked aged and yellow, all of a sudden.

"Take our advice, and hop it!" said Leonard Leer. "St. Sam's is a school for the sons of gentlemen. My father's a professional blackmailer, and Snarl's father's a well-to-do mobster, and you can take it from me that people in our walk of life don't want anything to do with the likes of you!"

"Shame!" "Shame!" "Shame!" cried the boys in a chorus.

The cry burst from Jack Jolly. The sollo-bated kapitan of the Fourth could stand it no longer. With flashing eyes he strode into the centre of the ring. The Fourth regarded him uneasily.

"How can Steady help his humble upbringing?" he asked, with an eloquent gesture. "That's no disgrace to him. I'm going to back him up!"

"Same hear!" said Merry. "And me!" cried Bright and Fearless. Snarl and Leer smiled sardonically, and the rest of the Fourth looked resentful. It was obvious that apart from that little band of 4, John Steady was not going to have any friends in the Form.

Nevertheless, he seemed pleased enough to have found any friends at all, and he

shook hands with them immediately and swore he would stick to them through thick and thin. The eggs had made his hands so sticky that his promise seemed very easy to keep; in fact, for a while it looked as if he couldn't tear himself away from them!

While they were shaking hands Snarl and Leer exchanged a few whispered words, and at the first opportunity, the former spoke.

"I, o k here, you better," he said pleasantly, addressing John Steady, my pal and I have just been jawing it over, and we've decided to give you a sporting chance. The two of us together will fight you. If we win, it's agreed that you catch the next train home. If you beat us, we'll allow you to stay on without further interference. Now, what about it?"

"Done!" said John Steady, while the Fourth gasped, aghast. Snarl and Leer were considered to be as good as most boxers in the Fourth, and together they could beat almost any fellow of their own size. They were powerful fellows, tho they were only 14 years of age. Their constitution, however, were rather undermined by heavy cigar-smoking.

"Well, where does this merry battle take place?" asked Steady coolly, his blood boiling at the thought of the indignities to which he had been subjected.

"What's wrong with that yard yonder where they're throwing milk-churns about?" suggested Jack Jolly. "It seems a nice quiet spot!"

The three principals agreed, and the whole crowd trooped over to the station yard.

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A cunning kick from Leer brought Steady to the ground, and a moment later, Snarl was holding him down by the collar, while Leer jumped on his chest.

It was a fine exhibition of boxing, and the spectators who watched it held their breath. John Steady also held his breath—he couldn't very well help it!

Only the call of "Time!" saved John Steady. Jack Jolly, seeing what a plight his newly-found friend was in, generously called "Time" 2 minutes before it was dew, and John Steady breathed again.

A short interval, and the battle was raging again. Jack Jolly announced the second round at a most convenient moment, when Snarl and Leer were bending over trying up their shoe-laces. John Steady took full advantage of his opportunity by landing each of them a terrific kick from the rear.

This put things on an altogether different footing. John Steady followed up his advantage by banging his opponent's heads together, and pushing him into their mouths. The skill with which he worked made it evident that the rag-and-bone merchant of St. Sam's was a scientific boxer, and that Snarl and Leer would find him a hard nut to crack.

The third round found Snarl and Leer looking very groggy, while Steady, on whom the yoke of many eggs had now become a smooth coating, looked as fresh as paint. The round did not last long. It came to a swift end in the complete victory of the new lad.

To gain that victory, he used his master-stroke. Dropping his hands all of a sudden he pointed eggstically up to the sky.

"Grate pip!" he said, in tones that sent a thrill through the crowd. "Look at that atropian over there!"

Everybody, including Snarl and Leer, looked up at once, and in an instant, Steady, with two terrific upper-cuts, had laid out his opponents.

"What's the joke?" asked Jack Jolly, who, like the rest, was staring up.

"Oh, nothing!" said the scholarship lad, nonchalantly. "That was only a piece of boxing strategy on my part. It looks as if it succeeded, too!"

"Grate scott!" "What a boxer, tho!" "Few!"

In spite of their aversion to him, the Fourth had to admire the new lad's wonderful resource.

The crowd broke up, discussing the scrap eagerly. It had certainly been the cleanest and most scientific exhibition of boxing they had seen for a long time.

"Well, that's that!" remarked Jack Jolly, with a grin, putting his watch back in his pocket. "You've won the scrap, and you stay on at St. Sam's all right now!"

"Good egg!" said John Steady. "Perhaps you fellows will now show me up to the school."

"We'll show you up, John Steady, never fear!" but Snarl, rising dizzily to his feet.

"Remember! Snarl and Leer never forget!" ground out Leer, growling painedly up again. "Our time is coming!"

With those terrible words ringing in his ears, John Steady tramped off towards St. Sam's, with Jack Jolly & Co.

He tried to look cheerful, but it was only a grimace, and his eyes were misty, his smile was gone, his legs were misty, his brain in a fog. Could he last out? It was doubtful weather he could!

THE END.

(Note the title of the next forthcoming yarn in this series: "SCORNED BY ST. SAM'S!")

It's a top-notch, chums!

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