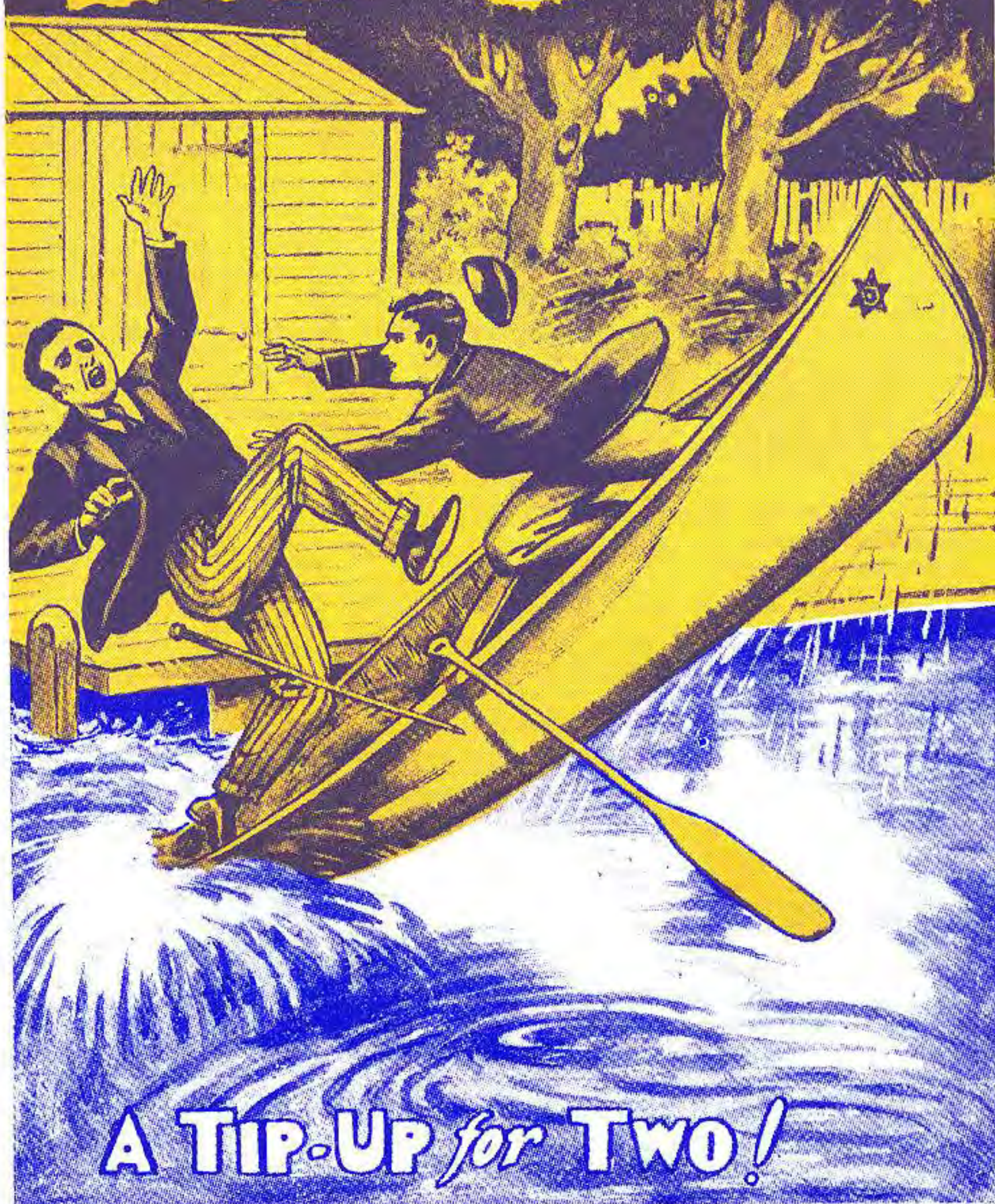


"JOHNNY BULL ON THE RUN!" 99 SUPER COVER-TO-COVER
STORY OF WORLD-
WIDE FAVOURITES . . . **Harry Wharton & Co.**

The Magnet ^{2^D}



JOHNNY BULL *on the Run!* By FRANK RICHARDS



Featuring Harry Wharton & Co., the Cheery Chums of Greyfriars.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Little Misunderstanding!

"YOU cheeky rotter!"

Harry Wharton jumped, and almost dropped the receiver. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, standing by his side at the telephone at Wharton Lodge, heard the words that came over the wires as plainly as Wharton did. And his eyes opened so wide that they looked like starting from his dusky face.

Both of them knew quite well the voice of their chum, Johnny Bull, of the Greyfriars Remove. Neither of them, most certainly, had expected that well-known voice to utter such startling words.

But there was no mistake about it! It was Johnny Bull speaking, from his home in far-off Yorkshire, to Harry Wharton, at Wharton Lodge, in Surrey! And that was what he said.

Wharton, after jumping, stood as if petrified. The receiver remained in his hand, but not at his ear. A faint sound from it indicated that the fellow at the other end was speaking, but he did not hear the words. He was too astonished to heed.

"Did you hear that, Inky?" gasped Harry.

"The hearfulness was terrific and amazing!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Has he gone mad, or what?"

"Esteemed goodness knows!"

Harry Wharton lifted the receiver—but he lowered it again. If that was what Johnny Bull had to say on the

phone, he most decidedly did not want to hear any more.

But it was amazing—startling—inexplicable, unless Johnny had suddenly gone off his rocker. Only a week ago they had parted on the best of terms.

The friendship of the Famous Five, of the Greyfriars Remove, doubtless had its little ups and downs. Generally, it was, as the poet expresses it—roses, roses all the way! But there had sometimes been rifts in the lute!

But not of late! They had spent the summer vacation together, on a cycling tour round the coast of Sussex and Kent, winding up at merry Margate. After which they had scattered to their various homes for the last days of the holidays.

Frank Nugent was in Wiltshire, Bob Cherry in Dorset, Johnny Bull in Yorkshire, and Hurree Singh, whose home was at Bhanipur, in far-off India, had come back with Harry to Wharton Lodge. But there had been a postcard from Johnny, saying that he would give Wharton a look in before the new term began at Greyfriars School. Which was quite good news to Wharton and Hurree Singh. And now—

"Perhapsfully," murmured Hurree Singh gently, "the esteemed Johnny is speaking to some other absurd person—"

"Perhaps!" said Wharton dryly. "But I suppose he doesn't speak to his father like that!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur grinned. Harry Wharton's face was rather set. It was a trunk call, from Wharton Lodge to Moor Fell, in Yorkshire, and Harry had had to wait to get through. And as soon as he got through, that was

what he got from Johnny! It really was not nice!

However, he put the receiver to his ear again. If Johnny had been speaking, he had left off. Wharton spoke into the transmitter.

"Are you there? Is that you, Bull?"

"Yes," came Johnny's voice in reply. "Is that Wharton speaking?"

"Yes; I was going to ask you about your train to-morrow. But what the thump did you mean—?"

Wharton was interrupted.

Loud and clear on the telephone came the voice of Johnny Bull, as sharp and clear as if he had been standing, like Hurree Singh, at Wharton's elbow:

"Shut up! Can't you leave me alone, you pushing cad? Shut up, I tell you!"

Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

He had had enough of that—rather more than enough.

"My esteemed chum—" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Inky's dusky face was deeply distressed. Standing close to his chum, he had caught those astonishing words over the wires as well as Wharton. But his bronze hand caught Wharton's wrist as Harry was about to replace the receiver on the hooks and cut off.

"Hold on, my esteemed and absurd Wharton—"

"I've had enough from Bull, Inky!"

"But—"

"Let's get out! I fancy Bull has changed his mind about coming here! Goodness knows what's biting him; but he can't talk to me like that! By Jove"—Wharton's eyes gleamed—"I'd jolly well punch his head if he wasn't at the other end of a telephone wire!"

"But—" repeated the nabob.

"Oh, cut off, and let's get out!" exclaimed Wharton impatiently.

"There is some ludicrous and idiotic error," said the Nabob of Bhanipur, gently but firmly. "Speak to the absurd Johnny again—"

"I'm fed-up!"

"Then let me do the absurd speechfulness."

"Please yourself!"

Wharton allowed the nabob to take the receiver, which Hurree Singh placed to a dusky ear. Johnny Bull's voice was coming through.

"You there, Wharton? I say, I can't hear you! Are you there?"

"It is my unworthy self, my excellent Johnny—"

"Oh, you, Inky, old man!" came Johnny's voice, from far-off Yorkshire. "I was going to say— You rotten, meddling fool, will you shut up and leave a fellow alone?"

The Nabob of Bhanipur started violently. Wharton, beside him, heard, and gave him a sarcastic look. Inky was getting some of it now!

"Like that style of conversation, Inky?" asked the captain of the Greyfriars Remove.

Inky stood silent. But he kept the receiver to his ear.

"Oh, cut off!" snapped Wharton.

Wharton was angry, and, like the prophet of old, he felt that he did well to be angry.

Hurree Singh was prepared to be angry, also, with good cause; but he was going to make sure that there was good cause first. Really, there seemed to be no explanation, unless Johnny, at his home, was having a row with somebody while occupied in answering a telephone call. That seemed improbable enough, but it seemed, to the cool-headed nabob, still more improbable that Johnny was slanging his old friends for nothing at all.

The voice at the other end ran on:

"Will you mind your own business? Who asked you to butt in? I tell you I'm fed-up with you—up to the back teeth!"

The nabob listened in silence. Wharton caught his arm.

"Haven't you had enough yet, Inky?" Inky shook his head.

"That's enough from you!" went on Johnny Bull's voice. "Keep away from this phone, and keep away from me!"

"You can have the rest yourself, Inky!" said Harry Wharton, and he left the telephone cabinet, which opened off the hall in Wharton Lodge.

Colonel Wharton, who was reading his newspaper by the window, glanced rather curiously at his nephew's flushed face as Harry passed him. He raised his grizzled eyebrows slightly, but made no comment. Wharton, with a knitted brow, went out on the terrace.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh stood at the telephone, the receiver clamped to a bronze ear. Johnny's voice came:

"You there, Inky?"

"I am stillfully here, my idiotic Johnny," said the nabob quietly.

"Oh, all right! I was saying— For the last time, you cheeky rotter, will you clear off and leave me alone? If you interrupt me again, Lucas, I'll punch your face, and chance what the pater says about it. I mean that!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned.

Johnny's voice came again.

"Inky, old man, it's all right! I'm coming along to-morrow—three o'clock train at Wimford. Trot along to meet me if you've got nothing else on hand."

"The trotfulness will be a pleasure, my excellent Johnny."

"Right-ho! Good-bye, Inky!"

"Good-bye, Johnny!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur put up the receiver, and left the telephone cabinet. With a lurking grin on his bronze features, he went out on the terrace and joined the captain of the Remove there.

Wharton looked at him with a knitted brow.

"It is all right, my worthy chum!" smiled the nabob. "The excellent Johnny's train is three o'clock at Wimford to-morrow."

Wharton stared.

"He's coming—after what he said!" he exclaimed.

"Quitefully so! The absurd Johnny was not addressing those surprising and reprehensible remarks to you, my esteemed chum—"

"What rot!"

"Is your name Lucas?" inquired the nabob.

"Eh? You know it isn't!"

"Is my name Lucas?" further inquired Hurree Singh.

"No, ass! What do you mean?"

"I mean that the worthy Johnny was speaking to some person of the esteemed name of Lucas, who seems to have interrupted him at the telephone!" grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Probably it did not occur to his powerful intellect that what he said was also heard at this end."

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

He stared blankly at his dusky chum.

YORKSHIRE GRIT!

Like any other schoolboy, Johnny Bull, of the Greyfriars Remove, objects to the idea of hard work in the holidays! But when it comes to danger, he'll face it like a man—he's Yorkshire!

"I—I say, are you sure of that, Inky?" he exclaimed.

"Quitefully certain! Some unpleasant person of the excellent name of Lucas seems to have been trying to stop the worthy Johnny from phoning, and our esteemed chum was blowing off steam at him—not at our ridiculous selves."

"Oh!" repeated Wharton.

He coloured.

"Well," he said, "what was a fellow to think?"

"Anything," said the nabob gently, "except that it was the proper caper to take offence where none was intended."

"Oh, rub it in!" said Harry. "I—I'm glad you went on with the call, anyhow. But what the dickens can be happening up there? Johnny's got a cousin named Lucas Bull—I've heard of him—they're not very pally, I believe. I suppose his cousin can't be bully-ragging him, in his father's house? Blessed if I can make it out."

"Perhapsfully the esteemed Johnny will explain when we see him to-morrowfully!" suggested the nabob. "Anyhow, so far as our absurd selves are concerned, it is all right rainfully!"

And it was left at that.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Man from Yorkshire!

"HERE'S the train!"

The following afternoon, at three o'clock, Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were standing on the platform at Wimford Station.

They watched the train as it came in, and the doors flew open, and passengers alighted. Both of them were very keen to see their chum from Yorkshire.

That peculiar talk on the telephone the day before, made it clear that there was some sort of trouble going on at Johnny's home. They could guess that that was why Johnny had announced his intention of paying Wharton a visit before the new term—an announcement that had been welcome, but unexpected. He had reasons for wishing to finish the holidays away from home. That telephonic talk had very nearly led to a painful misunderstanding. All the more for that reason, Harry Wharton was anxious to see his chum, and give him a particularly warm welcome.

But the two juniors scanned the train, in vain, for the sturdy, stocky figure of Johnny Bull. He was not among the passengers who alighted, and the train rolled out of the station.

"Missed the train!" said Harry.

"There is a terrific lot of changefulness on a railway journey from esteemed and remote Yorkshire," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur. "It will not hurt us to wait an absurd hour for the next."

Harry Wharton nodded. It was a long trip down from Yorkshire to Surrey certainly, and Johnny had to change in London. But it was not like him to lose a train, all the same. Johnny Bull was an extremely careful, practical, and methodical youth, with a full share of the keen canniness of his native county. A fellow like Billy Bunter would miss a train as easily as he would miss a goal. But Johnny never missed trains.

However, it was clear that he had missed this one; and his friends had to wait an hour for the next. So they walked out into Wimford, and strolled about the little Surrey town till it was time to come back to the station.

Five minutes before the four o'clock train was due, they were standing on the platform again, watching for Johnny.

The train came in and disgorged its passengers. In great surprise, they found that Johnny Bull was not among them.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Wharton. "Has the silly ass missed two trains, one after another?"

"The lookfulness is like it!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "or perhapsfully he has been prevented from coming."

"How could he be prevented, fat-head! His father must have given him leave to come; and there's nobody else to stop him."

Hurree Singh made no reply to that. He was puzzled. It was clear, at all events, that Johnny had not arrived by the four o'clock train.

The passengers cleared off along the platform, with one exception. That exception was a man of about thirty, with a reddish face, that seemed to be moulded in iron, so hard were the features and the expression.

He stood on the platform, his keen, sharp, searching eyes, gleaming from his brick-like face, scanning the place as if in search of someone. His keen eyes, sharp as a hawk's, fastened on the two Greyfriars juniors. Wharton and Hurree Singh, observing it, gave the man a glance. They had never, so far as they knew, seen him before; but there was a touch of familiarity in his features as if he resembled someone they knew.

"That sportsman seems interested in us!" Harry Wharton remarked carelessly; and the nabob nodded.

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They walked out of the station, undecided what to do, whether to return to Wharton Lodge, or to kill another hour, and look in for the five o'clock train, in the hope that Johnny would arrive by it. As they strolled down the road debating that point, the man with the brick face followed them from the station.

At a little distance, the juniors turned back. It was rather a weary business to walk about aimlessly for an hour waiting for another train—especially as they could now feel far from certain whether Johnny was coming. However, they decided to do so, and turned back, and came face to face with the hard-faced man.

Instead of passing them, he stopped, and planted himself directly in their path. In sheer surprise, the two juniors stopped also.

"A word with you, please!" said the hard-featured man, in a voice as hard and sharp as his face.

"Two, if you like," answered Harry.

"I think I know you!"

"The knowfulness of your esteemed self is not terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—a remark that made the hard-faced man start and stare at him. If, as he said, he knew the juniors, he evidently did not know the nabob's unusual variety of the English language.

"I think I have seen you in a photograph of the Remove football eleven at Greyfriars School!" snapped the brick-faced man. "I do not know your names, but I certainly know your faces."

"If you've seen a photograph of the Remove eleven, no doubt you've seen us in it!" said Harry. "I can't imagine where you've seen the photograph, though."

"That is easily explained. It hangs on the wall of my cousin's room at Moor Fell, in Yorkshire."

"Oh!" Wharton looked at the man with new interest. "I suppose that means that you are Johnny Bull's cousin?"

"Precisely!"

"The esteemed Lucas?" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. This evidently was the man who had been interrupting Johnny at the telephone the previous day; and to whom Johnny had addressed emphatic remarks.

"My name is Lucas Bull!" rapped the hard-faced man. "I have come here to take John back home. Where is he?"

"You've come here to take him back?" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Are you deaf?"

"Hardly."

"Then you heard what I said."

Harry Wharton knitted his brow. Most certainly he did not want a row with any relative of his Yorkshire chum. But Lucas Bull's manner was about as unpleasant as a man's manner could be. That he was a man of aggressive and overbearing nature, was easily read in his hard, obstinate-looking face. If he was an inmate of Moor Fell, it was not surprising that Johnny wanted to finish his holidays elsewhere.

"I've no time to waste!" went on Lucas, before the captain of the Remove could make up his mind what to answer. "Where is my cousin?"

Wharton looked at him coolly, steadily, and contemptuously. Possibly the man did not intend to bully, or did not realise that he was bullying; but that was exactly what he was doing, and the captain of the Greyfriars

Remove was not the fellow to take it patiently.

"Do you hear me?" snapped Lucas. "I've just informed you that I'm not deaf!" answered Harry coolly; and the nabob grinned.

"I've said that I've no time to waste!" said Lucas, raising his voice a little.

"Then there's no need to say it again, is there?"

The hard, square jaw shut like a vice, and the sharp eyes glinted. Lucas Bull made a step towards Wharton, as if with the intention of taking him by the collar.

However, if that had been his intention, he restrained it.

"Will you answer me?" he said.

"I don't see why I should," said Harry coolly. "I can't see that you've got any right to ask me questions. Even if you have, you'll have to put them a bit more civilly if you want an answer."

Again Lucas made a motion towards his collar. It was evident that he had a temper, not easy to restrain. But again he restrained it.

"Perhaps I'd better explain," he said.

"Perhaps you had," agreed Wharton. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh added that the perhapsfulness was terrific—a remark that drew another stare from Lucas Bull.

"John is in my charge, during his father's absence from home," said Lucas Bull. "I have forbidden him to spend any further time in idle loafing with idle friends—"

"Little us?" asked Harry.

"Including you, as I have no doubt that you are the friend he was intending to visit, and to whom I caught him telephoning yesterday. I have forbidden John to visit you. He has come here, in spite of my authority. Is your name Wharton?"

"Right in one!"

"Then there is no doubt. He has defied me by coming here. I have followed him to take him back. Now tell me at once where he is?"

Harry Wharton laughed. As he had not the remotest idea where Johnny Bull was, he could hardly have passed on the information to Lucas, if he had desired to do so.

"You will find that this is not a laughing matter," said Lucas Bull grimly. "I have no doubt that you are acting in collusion with John to defy authority—and I am the very last man to tolerate anything of the kind. Tell me, this instant, where to lay my hands on John?"

"Go and eat coke!" was Harry Wharton's answer.

"What?"

"Coke!"

Hurree Singh chuckled.

But his chuckle changed the next moment into a yell, echoed by a roar of rage from Wharton as the brick-faced man, grabbing both of them suddenly, knocked their heads together with a resounding crack.

Crack!

"Wow!"

"Ow!"

"Now," said Lucas Bull grimly, "tell me where John is, or I will knock your heads together again, and — Yaroooh!"

It was Lucas' turn to yell as the two Greyfriars juniors, grasping him together, whirled him over, and landed him in the Wimford road, with a crash, on his back.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Muddy!

"YOU cheeky rotter!" roared Harry Wharton, unconsciously repeating the words that had so startled him on the telephone the previous day.

"You execrable and ridiculous tick!" yelled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

They glared down at the man sprawling on his back in the dust of the road, and rubbed their heads as they glared.

It had been quite a hard crack as their heads came together, and it had left a pain. But the pain really mattered less than the man's cheek in fancying that he could collar Greyfriars fellows, and bang their heads together at his own sweet will. He had discovered his mistake now, at all events.

Lucas Bull sat up, gasping. It was clear that he was a hard-fisted man, very ready with the use of his hands, and he had had no doubt that he would be able to extract the required information from Johnny's friends by the simple process of knocking their heads together. He was taken quite by surprise by his sudden bump on the hard road.

He scrambled to his feet. His brick-red face was crimson with rage, his eyes flashing. He made a swift movement towards the two juniors, and they immediately stood shoulder to shoulder with their hands up.

Only too plainly they were going to hit, and hit hard, if he laid hands on them. And though the stocky, solidly built man was much more than a match for either of them, it was very doubtful whether he was a match for the two together. He checked himself.

"Oh, come on!" said Harry Wharton disdainfully. "You cheeky cad! No wonder Johnny wants to get clear, if you're the kind of rotter he's got to stand at home!"

Lucas Bull panted.

"Will you tell me where John is? I have followed him to take him back, and nothing will induce me to go back without him."

"If you'd asked me civilly, I'd have told you I don't know where he is!" snapped Wharton.

"That is untrue! He left Moor Fell this morning to come here. You are the friend he set out to visit. He came here—"

"He did not come."

"You will not expect me to believe that. I know that he came, and I can guess that you, his friends, waited at the station to see whether he was followed," snarled Lucas.

Wharton gave an angry laugh. He could guess that Johnny had found that his cousin, and temporary guardian, was following him, and had dodged Lucas somewhere on the long journey from Yorkshire to Surrey. But from Lucas Bull's point of view, it looked as if Johnny had arrived at his destination, and cleared off, leaving his friends to spot a pursuer.

"You don't believe me?" asked Harry.

"Certainly not!"

"Then you can please yourself! Go and eat coke, as I said before! Come on, Inky! I've had enough of that rotter!"

"Will you tell me—"

"I've told you!"

"I do not believe—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Wharton unceremoniously.

And he turned and walked up the road with Hurree Singh, leaving Lucas Bull brushing dust from his coat and trousers, and glaring after them.

"May as well get back, Inky," said Harry. "No good hanging up at the station any longer. Goodness knows when Johnny will come, or whether he will come at all now!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh nodded, and they walked on towards Wharton Lodge a mile away, occasionally rubbing their heads as they went.

Glancing back a few minutes later they saw the brick-faced man—following at a little distance behind, and keeping pace.

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"See that, Inky? That brute's going to keep us in sight. He can't take our word, and he thinks we shall guide him to Johnny."

"He will have his absurd trouble for

tyrannical exercise of authority, and it was not surprising that a fellow like Johnny, with a full allowance of Yorkshire determination, kicked against it. Anyhow, he was not going to butt into Wharton Lodge in search of his cousin—if Harry Wharton could stop him. And he could!

They reached the pond, and halted. As they faced round Lucas Bull came steadily on. He stopped, facing them.

"I'm glad you've decided to tell me where John is!" he barked. "I suppose you can see now that I intend to keep you in sight till I find him. Now waste no more time."

"You're making a little mistake," said Harry coolly. "What we've decided to tell you is this—we're fed-up

pond. There was almost a waterspout as he landed there.

He struggled to his feet, smothered with mud, spluttering for breath, the muddy water washing round his knees. His hat was gone, he was crowned with a thick cake of mud in place of it. Water and oozy mud ran down him in streams. The juniors burst into a roar of laughter, as they looked at him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yurrrrggh! Urrrgh!"

"Come on, Inky! He can follow on like that if he likes!" said Harry, laughing.

"Urrgh! Wait till I—gurrgh!" spluttered the man in the pond. "I will—urrrgh!"

But the juniors did not wait! To



"Yow! Ow! Wow! Stop it, Fishy, you beast!" The repose of Gosling in his lodge was interrupted by a series of yells. Looking out of his lodge, the school porter had a view of a fat figure dodging, sprinting and skipping, with a long, lean figure in fierce pursuit, a bony hand brandishing a poker. Gosling grinned a crusty grin.

his ridiculous pains," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a grin.

"We don't want him barging in at home," Wharton set his lips. "We'll give him a chance; but if he follows us as far as Giles' pond, he's not following us any farther."

Hurree Singh chuckled.

"Good egg!" he agreed.

The two juniors walked on—Hurree Singh grinning, and Wharton with his brows knitted.

A backward glance every now and then showed Lucas Bull still at the same distance behind. Giles' pond lay at the wayside, half-way between Wimford and Wharton Lodge. That was the limit fixed in Wharton's mind for Lucas Bull. If he was still following when the pond was reached, he was going to stop—in the pond!

Whether the man had, or had not, authority to prevent Johnny from visiting his friends in the holidays, the chums of the Remove did not know—they had, at any rate, only Lucas' word for it. Even if he had, it was a

with you, and it's time for you to clear off about your own business. Get going!"

"I shall not stir one step!" said Lucas.

"You will!" said Harry. "Go it, Inky!"

There was a sudden rush. Lucas Bull staggered back as the two juniors crashed into him. He stumbled, and went down in the grass beside the road.

He would have been up again in a moment—but a moment was not given him. Before he could gain his feet the two juniors grasped him, and rolled him headlong over.

Splash!

Water and mud flew up in a shower as he rolled into the pond. There was a foot of water, and at least a foot of mud under it. Lucas Bull had plenty of both as he rolled in.

"Urrrrrrgh!" came in a spluttering gasp.

He scrambled up wildly, slipped in the soft mud, and went over headlong, splashing out into the middle of the

Lucas Bull's present horrid, sticky state, they did not want him at close quarters.

They went down the road at a trot, chuckling as they went. When they looked back, they saw that Lucas was not following. A mud-bespattered figure sat by the roadside, frantically rubbing off oozy mud and slime with bunches of grass. Lucas, evidently, was too busy to think of further pursuit or even to bother about exercising his authority over his cousin John! He had plenty to do at present, cleaning off mud—and the Greyfriars fellows, chuckling, trotted on and cheerfully left him to it.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Both Yorkshire!

"JOHNNY!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "The ridiculous Johnny!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

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A sturdy, stocky figure rose from a chair as Wharton and the nabob came in. The expression on Johnny Bull's face had been serious and perhaps a little glum, but he grinned cheerfully at the sight of his chums.

"Your jolly old butler, Wells, told me you'd gone to the station for me," he said. "Awfully sorry—I had to change my route and I couldn't let you know—"

"Right as rain, old bean," said Harry. "You've got here all right, anyhow. I fancy I can guess why you changed the route."

"The guessfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Johnny looked puzzled.

"We've met your affectionate relative at the station," explained Harry, "I suppose you dodged him coming."

"You've seen Lucas?" exclaimed Johnny Bull, with a start.

"Yes, we've seen the dear man."

"Where did you leave him?"

"In the pond on the Wimford road."

"Wha-a-at?" gasped Johnny.

"I hope you don't mind us handling your relation a bit, old chap! He asked for it—in fact, begged and prayed for it. And we sort of gather that you don't love him a fearful lot."

"Handle him all you like," said Johnny. "Do you know that the rotter is after me?"

"Sort of."

"I spotted him when I changed in London," said Johnny Bull. "Naturally, I didn't want to arrive here with him and treat you to a family row on your doorstep. So I dodged him and took another train—and did the trip down here partly by train, partly by motor-bus, and partly by taxi. I've been here

half an hour, and I've seen your uncle and aunt. But tell me—"

Wharton explained what had happened at Wimford. Johnny Bull's brow grew grimmer and grimmer.

"He won't have the cheek to bargo in here after me—I hope!" he said. But he spoke a little dubiously. "Lucas is a sticker—all Yorkshiremen are stickers, you know. He's not a credit to his county, but he's got that quality. But I'm rather a sticker, too."

"The stickfulness of our esteemed Johnny is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin.

"Come up to my den, and tell us the trouble!" said Harry. "I'll ask Wells to bring our tea up—it will be like a spread in the old study at Greyfriars, what?"

"Good egg!" said Johnny.

They went up to Harry Wharton's den, a bright and cheery room, with a balcony over the garden. Tea was brought there—and Johnny stood looking out of the window till Wells was gone. Then the three chums sat down round the table. Johnny was hungry after his journey, and he gave his first attention to the spread. But his face was overcast with thought all the time.

His friends waited for him to speak. They were rather curious to know what could have happened at Moor Fell. It was clear that things were not normal in Johnny Bull's home. Whatever was the row, they were prepared to stand by their chum to the last shot in the locker.

"I'd better explain," said Johnny, at length. "You mayn't want me here when you know how it stands—"

"Rot!" said Harry at once.

"Well, I'll tell you. My father's gone to New York on business and won't be

back for a good many weeks, and the mater has gone with him. He's left Lucas in charge—at the works, where he's manager, and at the house—where he fancies he is, but jolly well isn't! I believe you know about the jolly old works—machinery and all that—Lucas has been manager, under my father, for years. Now the pater's away he's top-dog—and he's started biting."

"He looked it!" agreed Harry.

"Mind, he means well, in his way!" said Johnny, rather unexpectedly.

"The wayfulness of the esteemed Lucas is preposterous!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"He isn't a bad chap in his own weird way. But his way isn't my way! Hard as nails—obstinate as a mule—absolutely unable to see more than one side to a question—never giving an inch! What are you grinning at?"

"Nothing, old chap! Carry on."

Johnny's description of his cousin Lucas was, in point of fact, not quite inapplicable to Johnny himself! It was clear that there was, at least, a strong family resemblance in character among the Bulls.

"Lucas was brought up hard," went on Johnny. "Hard work and hard sense and hard everything! He has no use for frills, and prides himself on it! As honest as the day, but he has never given anything away in his life, and never will! He would no more part with anything of his own than he would touch anything belonging to anybody else. You know the sort—though there's more in the north than in the south. You're a bit soft down here."

"Thanks! Get on."

"Lucas has had a tough training, and despises everybody who hasn't!" went on Johnny. "The mere mention of a Public school makes him snort! So you can guess what he thinks of Greyfriars and of my being there."

"No bizney of his, surely!" said Harry.

"He doesn't worry about minding his own bizney! He thinks me a lazy young slacker—me!" said Johnny, breathing wrath. "You know we had a bike trip in the hols—well, Lucas thinks I'd much better have put in the time at the works, under his orders, picking up the business."

"Lots of time for that!"

"Lucas has never wasted a minute in his life. I suppose you've come across people who mistake meddling for a sense of duty. That's Lucas—and he's got it strong. He couldn't keep civil if he saw me with a Latin school-book. He would be ashamed to know a word of Latin. You can't talk to commercial travellers about machine parts in Latin—see?"

"Dear man!"

"He's got it fixed in his head that when I come to handle the big business later on it's going to the dogs, rack and ruin, and the bankruptcy court, because I'm a Greyfriars man—and soft!" Johnny snorted. "Me soft! He's going to stop it if he can—and the pater being away, and leaving him to carry on, has given him the chance he's been longing for. He doesn't even understand that what he's doing, really, is throwing his weight about."

"Zeal, Mr. Easy!" grinned Wharton. "All zeal!"

"But I want to give him his duel!" Johnny, in his Yorkshire way, was as anxious to do strict justice to a man whom, evidently, he disliked intensely. "You see, he's worked hard in the pater's business, and helped to make it what it is, and takes a personal pride

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in it. It would break his heart if Bulls, Ltd. ever closed down. He fancies it will when the time comes for me to take control, unless I change—and he thinks that if I become like him it would be a change for the better." Johnny snorted expressively. "Now he's got an opening, he's going to make me toe the line if he can! Obstinate fool, you know! Obstinate as a mule! Why, I wouldn't give way the millionth part of an inch!"

Johnny paused, as he detected a grin, again, on his chum's face. He did not see, himself, anything at which to grin.

But Harry Wharton immediately became serious once more, and his chum from Yorkshire went on:

"The pater's had him as his trustworthy right-hand man at the works for ever so long—he started there as a kid, and worked up. So he left him in charge of everything when he went to New York—including me. He broke out at once. It was just the chance he wanted. Mind, he doesn't know himself that he's a bully and a meddling ass—I'll do him that justice. It's his nature. That's why I sent you that postcard telling you that I'd come here to wind up the hols. I'd had enough. But he put the stopper on that!"

"Like his cheek!"

"He said there had been enough idling and slacking. He had the cheek to forbid me to come here. That settled it—I came. Yesterday, when I was answering your phone call, he ordered me away from the telephone. I called him some names."

"We heard you!" murmured Harry. And the nabob grinned.

"This morning he stayed away from the works—first time in donkeys' years—to see that I didn't cut. Well, I cut—and he seems to have cut after me. He nearly got me when I changed in London. From what you say he's followed on here—but I hope he will be fed-up with what he's got. He has the manners of a rhinoceros—but he can't very well barge in here, I think. Now he's lost me I hope he'll go home, and enjoy himself at the works! It must have given him a pain already not to have heard machinery whirring for a whole day."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"If he barges in we'll give him some more!" he said. "Anyhow, it will take him some time to clean off the mud!"

"Cheeky rotter!" said Johnny. "Now he's got the upper hand he's going to drive hard—just as hard as he can. But, by gum, he will jolly well find that I'm Yorkshire, too!"

Johnny's eyes glinted and his teeth set. He looked at that moment rather like the "tyke" of his native county, reputed to bite alive or dead!

"But," he went on, "I don't want to land you in a family row! If you'd rather I cut, tell me so plain—we speak plain up in Yorkshire, and don't take offence about nothing."

Harry Wharton coughed, and he remembered how very nearly he had taken offence about nothing the previous day.

"My dear chap," he said, "if you think of cutting I'll grab you by your back hair and pull you back again! Is that plain enough?"

Johnny Bull chuckled.

"Right!" he said.

And Johnny stayed; and that evening, at all events, nothing was heard from the man who had pursued him from Yorkshire. And the three juniors hoped that Lucas had tired of pursuit and retreated northward, to enjoy once more the whirr of machinery at the works.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Fierce for Fishy!

FISHER T. FISH of the Greyfriars Remove stood in the doorway of the House and looked out into the quadrangle with a morose eye.

Most of the Greyfriars fellows, scattered north and south, east and west, were enjoying the summer holidays. But the junior who had had the distinction and advantage of being "raised" in New York found the vacation very long.

Fishy's home being on the superior side of the pond, it was not practicable for Fishy to go home for the holidays. He stayed at the school.

Greyfriars fellows might have asked him home if so disposed—but no Greyfriars fellow seemed keen on seeing more of Fishy than he had to. Fishy's conversation, when it was not about money, was always about the vast superiority of his own country to any other. Fishy enjoyed it; but nobody else did. Gentle hints from Fishy were, therefore, disregarded by Greyfriars fellows when the school broke up—and Fishy drew a line at planting himself, in Billy Bunter's style, on fellows whether they wanted him or not.

So there was Fishy on his own—with nobody to speak to but old Gosling, the porter, Trotter, the page, or Mrs. Kebble, the House-dame—and with infinite quantities of unuttered conversation bottled up inside him. Not another man was left at the school. Other fellows had far-off homes—but somebody was always glad to ask Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, or Squiff, the Australian, or Tom Brown, the New Zealander; even little Wun Lung, the Chinese, was welcome in many places. Fisher T. Fish had Greyfriars School to himself; even Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was away—and the Head and his family—all the staff, in fact—if Fishy could have found comfort in the society of beaks! And as the vacation lengthened out Fisher T. Fish guessed, calculated, and reckoned that it was the bee's knee, and the elephant's side-whiskers, and then some.

Now the holidays were drawing to a close—to the satisfaction of Fisher T. Fish, though probably to no one else. He longed for the day when the deserted quad would be crowded once more; when the passages, now so silent, would echo to the tramp of innumerable feet. Even grinding Latin with Quelch in the Form-room would have been a pleasant change. He would have been glad to hear Johnny Bull's voice once more in Study No. 14, if only to hear Johnny calling him a mean worm!

Looking out into the quad, brilliant in the September sun, Fisher T. Fish counted the days to the end of the hols.

But solitary as he was, there was still, so to speak, balm in Gilead. A fellow who had the whole place to himself had other things to himself—such, for instance, as a feed in the study. If Fishy, in a moment of rare extravagance, stood himself a cake, nobody expected him to whack out that cake. Not that Fishy would have whacked it out, in any case. But when there were other fellows about it was a little awkward, even for Fishy, to keep everything he had absolutely and entirely for his own behoof. It was a departure from schoolboy custom that caused fellows to call Fishy a worm, and a toad, and a swob, and a scug, and other unpleasant names. Indeed, on one occasion Johnny Bull and Squiff, who

shared Study No. 14 with Fishy, having discovered him in the enjoyment of a secret and hidden feast of jam tarts, had actually pushed those jam tarts down the back of his bony neck as a lesson to him not to be such a worm, toad, swob, and scug.

That, at all events, couldn't happen now. And now, as it happened, there reposed a cake on the table in Study No. 14 in the Remove—a cake that Fisher T. Fish had bought with his own money, and which, therefore, it would have given him a severe pain to share with anybody.

Fishy had had his tea with Mrs. Kebble, and eaten all he could. His meals being paid for, Fishy would have regarded it as idiotic, if not actually sinful, to miss one of them. The cake was a special titbit to follow—one of Fishy's rare—very rare—treats. It had cost him two shillings and sixpence—two severe pangs and a half. Fishy was not going to eat it all at once. He was going to have a slice every day till it was gone—after which he was going to mourn sadly over the half-crown he had spent on it.

"Oh shucks!" said Fisher T. Fish, addressing space. "I guess I wish these pesky hols was over. I'll tell a man. They're a bunch of all-fired boobs and jays and boneheads, but I do wish they were back. Sure!"

There was the sound of a bell from the direction of Gosling's lodge.

Fisher T. Fish glanced in that direction.

"Gum!" he ejaculated.

A fat figure rolled across the quad to the House, the fat face adorned by a large pair of spectacles that gleamed back the September sun.

"Bunter!" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish.

What Billy Bunter, the fat Owl of the Remove, was doing at the school before the new term began Fishy could not guess.

But he was glad to see even Bunter! Seldom, if ever, was anybody glad to see Bunter. But Fishy, in the circumstances, was!

Billy Bunter rolled into the doorway and blinked at the American junior through his big spectacles.

"Oh, you're here!" he said.

"Yep!" assented Fishy. "What you doing here?"

Snort from Bunter!

"Staying," he grunted. "When I got back home from Margate what do you think I found at home?"

"Brokers in?" asked Fishy.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" grunted Bunter. "You see, I was fixed up for the whole vac, and told my people I shouldn't be back till the last day. So they didn't expect me home till then, and when I went I found the house shut up—even the servants away—everybody gone, Pater and mater and Sammy and Bessie—all gone, and the servants given a holiday."

"Hard luck!" said Fishy sympathetically.

"You see, what I had on fell through," explained Bunter. "And I refused to go home with Wharton—"

"I can hear you doing it!" grinned Fisher T. Fish.

"I declined absolutely to stay with Bob Cherry; and, as for Nugent, I told him plainly that I couldn't stand his brother Dicky and his cackling sisters," said Bunter. "And when I phoned to Bull some beast with a voice like a file answered the phone, and said that if I came there he would kick me out again. That's how Bull's relations talk to his Greyfriars pals."

"And so the poor dog had none!" grinned Fisher T. Fish.

"So there was nothing for it but to

put in the rest of the hols here," said Bunter. "The pater had arranged that, in case my holiday fell through—I suppose he thought it might! Bit thick, isn't it, for a fellow like me sticking at school in the hols like a fellow like you, Fishy?"

"You pesky jay——"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled on into the House. Fisher T. Fish chuckled. He was not surprised that Bunter's holiday had fallen through—people did get tired of Bunter, somehow. He was rather surprised that the fat junior had not succeeded in hooking on to some member of the Famous Five; but evidently that resource had failed Bunter this time. The Owl of the Remove was down to his very, very last resource—school in holiday-time, and the company of Fisher T. Fish!

Fishy, on the whole, was rather pleased. Any company was better than none! It even crossed his mind to ask Bunter into Study No. 14 and offer him a whack in the cake there.

But he shook his head at that thought. Bunter would want to scoff the lot. He knew Bunter. The only way he could save even half that cake for himself, if he let Bunter into the study, would be to eat as fast as Bunter!

And that cake was scheduled to last Fisher T. Fish a whole week, at least. Only by making it last as long as possible, or longer, could he console himself for having spent money on it.

"Nope!" said Fishy, in answer to his own thought. "Nope! I guess not! Nope!"

Bunter had gone in to scrounge a late tea with Mrs. Kebble. Fisher T. Fish walked out into the quad, to stroll about there, till Bunter was available for conversation.

But the fat junior did not appear, and Fishy decided, at last, to go up to his study, and negotiate the slice of cake which was going to be his allowance for the day. It was rather a good idea to get through, and get the cake safely locked up, before Bunter saw it.

Fishy's long, thin legs negotiated the Remove staircase. Bunter passed him on the landing, coming down. Bunter had been up to his study, apparently. He passed Fishy rather hastily, and rolled downstairs. Neither did Fishy seek to detain him; he did not want Bunter's company till he was through with the cake.

He whisked along to Study No. 14, at the end of the Remove passage. The door stood open—and Fisher T. Fish remembered that he had left it shut.

With a sudden pang of alarm, he ran into the study.

"Oh!" gasped Fishy. "Oh! Wake snakes and walk chalks! Oh, great jumping Jehosaphat! Carry me home to die! I'll tell a man, this is fierce!"

He gazed at the study table. On that table lay the paper wrappings of a cake! The cake itself was not to be seen. A few scattered crumbs remained of it.

Fisher T. Fish gazed at the scene of disaster with starting eyes. Really, he might as well have whacked that cake out with Billy Bunter. In that case, he might have secured half, or nearly half! Now——

"I'll sure scrag him!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

The cake was gone. So was Bunter. It was only too clear that the cake had gone as an inside passenger.

"I'll tell a man. I'll lynch him!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

He stayed only to grab the poker from the grate. Then he sped away in search of Bunter—and vengeance!

A few minutes later, the repose of Gosling, in his lodge, was interrupted by a series of fearful yells.

Gosling looked out of his lodge, and had a view of a fat figure dodging, sprinting and skipping, with a long, lean figure in fierce pursuit, a bony hand brandishing a poker. And Gosling grinned a crusty grin.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

"Hop!"

"**W**ARE tykes!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"Eh, what?" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"The estimable Lucas!"

It was a mild September morning—the morning following Johnny Bull's arrival at Wharton Lodge.

Three cheery juniors were walking down to the lake in the park.

On that little lake there was a rather ancient boat—which, ancient as it was, afforded schoolboys a good deal of pleasure in the holidays. Harry Wharton was carrying a light mast under his arm—Hurree Singh carried a tiller—and Johnny Bull a furled sail and tackle. These were to be fixed up in the old boat, which was then to be sailed on the lake. It was not a large lake, and there was not a lot of distance for a sail—but the sailing-boat would be able, like the music in the song, to go round and round. On a windy autumn morning, that was quite a happy occupation for three cheerful schoolboys, and they were looking merry and bright.

But as they went, a stocky man with a brick-red face appeared on the drive from the gate, spotted them in the distance, and cut across towards them. It was Lucas Bull, who, only too evidently, had not returned to the "works" to enjoy the whirr of machinery, after all.

Apparently, Lucas had put up for the night somewhere, and started in the morning to look for Wharton Lodge—and had now found it.

Johnny Bull looked grim.

"Come on!" he said. "Never mind that cheeky tick!"

The three juniors walked on through the park. There was a patter of feet behind them as Lucas broke into a run. His voice was heard:

"John! Stop!"

Nobody heeded the call. Neither increasing nor slackening their speed, the chums of the Remove went on their way.

"Stop! Do you hear me, John?" roared Lucas Bull.

Patter, patter, patter!

The brick-faced man overtook the juniors, circled round them, and planted himself in front of them, rather breathlessly. Then they stopped.

"Good-morning, Mr. Bull!" said Harry Wharton politely. "Walk on to the lake with us, will you? Only a few minutes."

Lucas stared at him.

"What do you mean?" he snapped.

"You're looking for another ducking, aren't you?" asked the captain of the Greyfriars Remove. And Johnny and the nabob chuckled.

"That will do, Wharton!" rapped Lucas. "I have nothing to say to you. John, I am here for you. I am here to take you back to Yorkshire."

"Guess again!" said Johnny Bull.

"I am not anxious to use force!" said Lucas grimly. "But I shall certainly use it, if you do not obey my orders, John."

"Better get on with it, then!" said Johnny. "I can't quite see myself obey-

ing the orders of a cheeky, meddling ass!"

Lucas made a movement towards him. Johnny Bull stood like a stone statue, immovable, with clenched hands.

Harry Wharton hastily interposed.

"Hold on, Mr. Bull!" he said. "Nobody here wants a row, if it can be helped. What's the matter with Johnny staying with his friends, as he's done a dozen times before? His father has always been pleased for him to come here."

"You may be unaware how the matter stands now," said Lucas. "John's father, my uncle, is away in the United States, and I am left in control. John will hardly deny that he was left in my charge. With all his faults, I believe that he is truthful."

Snort, from Johnny Bull.

"To disobey me is practically to disobey his father!" went on Lucas. "His father's authority has been placed in my hands."

Another snort from Johnny.

"The pater never knew how you were going to begin throwing your weight about as soon as his back was turned!" he grunted. "If he'd known that——"

"Your father has known me all my life, and trusted me!" said Lucas Bull. "He acted with his eyes open, in leaving you in my charge. That he indulged you far more than I intend to do, is no doubt true, but it makes no difference. I have unquestioned authority, as you know perfectly well."

Snort!

"But where's the harm——" began Wharton pacifically.

"I am not bound to explain myself to an impertinent schoolboy!" said Lucas. "But I may say that I have never approved of John's friends. Slacking and idling and loafing are not my way. I believe that your influence over John is bad—thoroughly bad."

"Thanks!" said Harry dryly.

"The thankfulness is terrific."

"I am not empowered," went on Lucas, "to prevent John from returning to Greyfriars next term. Otherwise I should certainly do so. I disapprove strongly of Public schools—devoted to games for the most part, and for the rest, to wasting valuable time learning useless things. I regard all such institutions with utter contempt."

"Even you, Mr. Bull, might learn something useful at Greyfriars," said Harry.

"And what is that?" sneered Lucas, contemptuously.

"Manners!" said Harry.

"That will do! Are you coming with me, John?"

"Hardly!" answered Johnny.

"If you prefer to make a scene, that is as you please!" said Lucas grimly. "I should prefer to avoid it, but it is, after all, immaterial. I shall take you to the station with my hand on your collar, if you will not come of your own accord. Now——"

He pushed Wharton aside and grasped Johnny Bull by the collar.

Johnny's eyes flashed.

"Hands off, Lucas!" he said between his teeth.

"Come with me."

"I won't!"

"You will!" said Lucas, and he jerked Johnny Bull along the path with a strength that Johnny, sturdy as he was, could not resist.

"Rescue!" yelled Johnny, struggling.

His chums were not likely to pass that call unheeded. Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh rushed at Lucas Bull. They grasped him unceremoniously, wrenched him away from Johnny, and tipped him over in the grass.



With his right leg bent up and tied to his wrists, Lucas Bull hopped wildly on his left leg to keep his balance. "You look like taking me to the station, with your paw on my collar, don't you?" said Johnny Bull. "Come on, you men—we're through with him." "I will thrash you within an inch of your life, when I get you home!" yelled Lucas.

Lucas sprawled, panting for breath. Johnny Bull coolly set his collar straight. But the brick-faced man was on his feet again at once.

"Better cut!" suggested Harry Wharton. "You're not handling our pal, Mr. Bull, and the sooner you get that into your thick head, the better!"

Lucas' reply was a rush. Overbearing, dictatorial, obstinate, narrow-minded, he might be—but he had the dogged determination, if not the other good qualities, of his county. He had come there to carry out his purpose, and nothing, if he could help it, was going to stop him.

But he was stopped, all the same. Three pairs of hands were laid on him at once, and strong as he was, he had no chance. He went down again heavily, and this time, Johnny Bull put a knee on his chest and pinned him down.

The brick-red face was crimson with rage as Lucas struggled furiously under that gripping knee. But as Wharton and Hurree Singh were also grasping his wrists, his struggles were unavailing.

"Now," said Johnny, "if we let you go, Lucas, will you clear off quietly and mind your own business?"

"I shall take you back to Moor Fell with me!" panted Lucas.

"You won't go without me?"

"Never!"

"Right! Mind if I use some of this cord, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Use the lot, if you like," he answered.

Johnny Bull uncoiled the cord from the sail he had been carrying. There were a good many yards of it.

"Hold him!"

Struggling frantically, Lucas Bull was rolled over and his hands pulled behind his back. Quietly and steadily Johnny Bull tied his wrists together with the cord. Lucas' face was changing from red to purple now. He breathed fury.

"Will you clear off now, Lucas?" asked Johnny.

"No!" yelled Lucas.

"All right. Twist his leg up!"

Lucas' right leg was bent up at the knee. Johnny Bull took a turn of the cord round his ankle and tied it round him.

"Now stick him up!" he said.

Grinning, the juniors lifted Lucas from the ground, standing him on his left leg—the only one available!

The brick-faced man hopped wildly to keep his balance.

"You look like taking me to the station with your paw on my collar, don't you?" said Johnny. "Come on, you men, we're through with him."

"Release me instantly!" yelled Lucas. "Rats!"

"I will thrash you within an inch of your life when I get you home to Moor Fell!" shrieked Lucas.

"I shall be there when you do it!" said Johnny. "And you may find out that we learn how to punch at Greyfriars, among the other things you don't like."

"Will you release me?"

"Rats! You men coming?" asked Johnny.

He walked off towards the lake, and his friends followed him.

Lucas Bull was left hopping wildly on one leg. He stumbled, he lurched, and he swayed—but he had to hop, and hop, and hop, to keep from falling. The chums of the Remove went cheerfully down to the boat.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Mad!

"GOOD gad!" ejaculated Colonel Wharton.

The old colonel was standing in the doorway at Wharton Lodge, looking out into the mild September morning. He sniffed the fresh air, he looked at his old trees, in their autumn brown, but suddenly he gave quite a jump.

An extraordinary figure dawned on him, coming up to the house.

For a moment or two the old military gentleman could scarcely believe his eyesight. Had a playful schoolboy approached the house, hopping on one leg, he would have thought it frivolous and absurd. It was amazing to see a man of thirty doing so. But that was what the man was doing. Keeping his hands behind him, and one leg tucked up, this extraordinary man was coming up the drive, hopping on one leg!

It was no wonder that the colonel was astonished.

The man was a stranger to him. He looked respectable—he was quite well dressed. The colonel could hardly suppose that he was some disreputable person who had sampled the liquid refreshment at the Red Cow not wisely but too well. But the alternative to that was that the man was a lunatic. A sane man, so far as Colonel Wharton could see, would never pay a morning call hopping on one leg!

Almost mesmerised by the extraordinary sight, Colonel Wharton gazed blankly at the man, as he drew nearer and nearer—hopping all the way!

Not once did he let his right leg fall to the ground. The colonel could not see the reason; and he could only suppose that the red-faced man was keeping that leg tucked up of his own

accord. It was enough to astonish any old military gentleman!

"Good gad!" repeated the colonel, almost dazedly. "Here! Wells! Look at this!"

Wells, the butler, came to the door and looked out. He almost fell down as he saw the hopping man.

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Wells.

"A lunatic!" said Colonel Wharton. "Why he is coming here I cannot imagine, but it is clear that he must have escaped from some asylum. He must be secured, Wells!"

"Yes, sir! Um, sir!" said Wells, not very enthusiastically.

Wells was elderly and portly; far from keen on handling escaped lunatics.

"Call Robert—and Arthur!" said the colonel. "Force may be required! Madmen often have unusual strength, Wells. We must not hurt the poor man, but he must be secured, for his own sake, and taken back to the place he has escaped from. Someone is very much to blame for this—some careless attendant at the county asylum, I have no doubt."

"He—he—he looks very excited, sir!" murmured Wells.

Wells felt rather uneasy. There was no doubt that the approaching man looked excited. He looked wildly excited. His face was crimson. His eyes blazed with fury. Wells had a full allowance of sympathy for any person who was so unfortunate as to be deranged in his intellect; but he really did not want to get too near that furious-looking gentleman.

"They do get excited, Wells," said the colonel. "Poor fellow—poor fellow! Call Robert and Arthur at once, and we will secure him without delay. Why, he might have fallen into the lake—he is coming from that direction. There might have been a fatality, Wells. We must secure him; he might wander out on the roads, and be knocked over by a car! Lose no time, Wells!"

"Very well, sir!"

Colonel Wharton stepped out of the house. Robert and Arthur, two sturdy young men, came at Wells' call, and followed him. Wells brought up the rear.

Lucas Bull was glad to see them coming. He had hopped quite a considerable distance, and his leg was feeling the strain—indeed, it threatened every moment to give way under him. It was not a warm morning, but his brickly face streamed with perspiration from his exertions. His hat was on sideways, but, with his hands tied behind him, he could not, of course, set it straight. It did not occur to him that the dwellers in Wharton Lodge took him for an escaped lunatic; but, really, what else were they to think of a man who hopped along on one leg, with his hat on sideways?

He ceased to advance as the colonel came towards him—he was glad of a rest! But he had to keep on hopping to keep his balance.

Wells was uneasy; Robert and Arthur looked rather nervous. But the colonel advanced resolutely. He was an old campaigner—a man who had been through the War, from beginning to end, was not easily frightened. He marched steadily on. But he was on his guard. A lunatic might spring at him. He did not want to hurt the poor fellow—far from it!—but he was prepared to deliver a hefty knock if he sprang.

"Hurry up!" called out Lucas. "Come here, please! For goodness' sake, get a move on! I shall fall down in a minute!"

"Poor fellow! Poor fellow!" said the

colonel. "Don't be alarmed. You are in friendly hands, you will be taken care of."

"What?" yelled Lucas. "What the dickens do you mean?"

"Be calm—as calm as you can!" urged the colonel. "You have nothing to fear—absolutely nothing. No one will hurt you."

Lucas stared at him, dumbfounded—and hopped.

"What do you mean?" he roared.

"Are you mad?"

"Poor, poor fellow!" murmured the colonel. "That is quite a common symptom with them—they think others are mad. Now, take him suddenly—before he can spring! He is keeping his hands behind him—a trick, evidently, to make a sudden grasp at anyone who comes within reach. He must be seized suddenly, and overpowered—"

"Will you come here and release me, you old fool?" shrieked Lucas.

"Release? The poor fellow thinks he is still in the asylum, I suppose. Take every care. You go to his right, Robert, you to the left, Arthur. I will take him in front. And you get behind him, Wells, in case he makes a sudden bolt. He may do so if he suspects that he is to be taken back to the asylum—and, for his own sake, he must not be allowed to get away."

The colonel's forces advanced in open order. Lucas showed no sign of bolting—much to the relief of Wells, who was far from anxious to bar his retreat if he did. Robert took the right, Arthur the left, the colonel marched straight on, while Wells circled round uneasily to the rear. Then, at a sharp word of command from the old military gentleman, they concentrated, in a sudden rush, and secured him.

Lucas, taken by surprise, wriggled wildly in four pairs of hands. He yelled frantically.

"Hold him!" panted the colonel. "Grasp his arms. He may have some weapon, for all we know. Grip him! Now we have him! Be calm, my poor fellow! I repeat that you are in friendly hands, and will not be hurt if—"

"You old fool, will you release me?"

"Be calm—as calm as you can! You are in good hands, my poor fellow! I will order my car to take you back—"

"Are you mad?" raved Lucas.

"Will you untie me, you old idiot?"

"His—his hands are tied, sir!" gasped Wells. The butler, from his post in the rear, made that discovery.

"Indeed! All the better!" said Colonel Wharton. "It will make it easier to get him away in the car. Someone must have caught him already, I suppose, and secured his hands—but clearly he has got away again!"

"His leg's tied up behind him, sir!" gasped Wells, making further discoveries.

"What—what?"

"You thundering old idiot, will you release me?" shrieked Lucas. "I demand to be released instantly! You fool—idiot—madman—dolt—release me at once!"

"I shall certainly do nothing of the kind," said Colonel Wharton warmly, "and if you were in your right senses, you would make no such request! You are safer—far safer—as you are—until you get back to the asylum."

"What?" shrieked Lucas. "What do you mean? I am tied up—"

"Yes, yes, yes! Quite so!" said the colonel soothingly. "I can see now that you have tied up your leg—"

"You old idiot, I have not tied up my leg! Why should I tie up my leg?"

raved Lucas. "I have been tied up like this by a set of rascally schoolboys, in your park, sir, and I demand to be released."

"Good gad!"

"Oh!" gasped Wells. A grin dawned on his portly face. "Perhaps—perhaps he isn't mad, sir—"

"Mad?" howled Lucas.

"He must be mad, Wells! How can he be anything else, when he hops about on one leg, with his hat on sideways? Don't be absurd, Wells!"

"But—but p'raps he can't help hopping, sir, with his leg tied up!" gasped Wells. "If it's a practical joke of the young gentlemen, sir—"

"Oh!" ejaculated the colonel.

"Will you release me from this cord?" roared Lucas Bull. "I will prosecute you, sir, if I am not immediately released!"

Colonel Wharton gave him a grim look.

"If you are not mad, I certainly cannot excuse the expressions you have used!" he rapped. "And I require to know who you are, and what you are doing on my property, before I order you to be released."

"I am Lucas Bull—"

"Bull? Good gad! Not a connection of my nephew's friend, I suppose?" exclaimed the colonel.

"I am his cousin, sir, and his temporary guardian, and I am here to take him home. With the assistance of two other young scoundrels, he has tied me up like this!" roared Lucas. "And if the boy is not immediately handed over to me, I will fetch a constable to see that he is handed over, sir!"

"I decline, absolutely, to believe any such statement," said Colonel Wharton. "Wells, do you think this man is sane?"

"I—I—I think so, sir."

"If he is sane, he has no right to trespass on my property, and if he has made himself obnoxious to my nephew and his friends, they may have done this to keep him out of mischief—and I find it hard to blame them!" said Colonel Wharton. "Obviously, he is a man of the worst temper and the worst manners, whoever he may be. If he is not mad—"

"You old fool!"

"Silence, sir!" rapped the colonel. "You may release him, Wells. See him safe off the premises! Close the gate after him. If he makes any attempt to re-enter, I authorise you to throw him out. By Jove, I have seldom had to deal with such an insolent scoundrel! Turn him out at once!"

"I tell you—" shrieked Lucas.

"Here, you come along!" said Robert.

"Take him away!" said Colonel Wharton. "Turn him out at once! Throw him out, if necessary! Do not stand on ceremony with the insolent knave!"

Lucas was released from the cord. He could walk now. But he had to walk down to the gate. He had to walk out. The gate was slammed after him. He was almost foaming, as he departed.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Arm of the Law!

HARRY WHARTON and his two chums spent a very cheery morning with the old boat on the lake.

After Lucas Bull had hopped out of sight, they gave him no further thought; and the trees shut off the view of what was happening by the house

They had no doubt that, sooner or later, Lucas would find somebody to untie him, and they cheerfully left it at that.

When, later, they walked back to the house, they saw nothing of Lucas Bull.

At lunch, Colonel Wharton gave Johnny a rather curious glance, and seemed about to ask a question—but checked himself.

Having reflected on the strange episode of the morning, the old colonel was rather puzzled and perplexed. That extremely unpleasant young man had given his name as Bull. Colonel Wharton could not help realising that it was possible that he was a relative of Johnny's—a disagreeable relative, evidently. Still, the colonel said nothing on the subject. He did not want to raise awkward matters with his nephew's guest.

After lunch, however, the juniors inquired of Wells whether there had been a caller of the name of Bull, and learned from him what had happened. Which caused them to smile considerably.

"We're finished with that worm!" said Harry. "He's not likely to come back and ask for more, Johnny, old bean."

"The morefulness would be unpleasantly terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Um!" said Johnny. "He's Yorkshire!"

By which, apparently, Johnny implied that Lucas was not likely to give in. Johnny, being Yorkshire, too, he was not going to give in, either!

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Wharton suddenly. The three juniors were walking on the terrace after lunch when a taxi-cab from Wimford came up the drive.

Two men were seated in it. One was Lucas Bull. The other was a police-constable in uniform.

Lucas' face was grim; his jaw shut like a rat-trap. The ruddy-faced county constable had a faint grin on his ruddy face. The three Greyfriars fellows guessed at once why Lucas had brought him there.

"An esteemed and ridiculous bobby!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton whistled.

Johnny's jaw squared, rather like that of his cousin.

"That tears it!" he said.

Wharton and the nabob exchanged glances. For the first time it came into their minds that the law had a say in the matter, and that the law, in all probability, was on the side of Lucas Bull.

"I—I—I say, old chap," stammered Harry, "you—you don't think that bobby can barge in, do you, and—and—and—"

Johnny gave a shrug of the shoulders.

"I fancy so. My father left Lucas in charge—he's practically a guardian till the pater comes back. That goes on till I get back to Greyfriars for the new term—he can't barge in there. But till then, he can enforce his authority—the law upholds a guardian's authority, you know! Quite right that it should, too, if you come to that. Silly, obstinate kids can't be allowed to do as they jolly well like, if they kick over the traces. In this case, of course—um!—it's different."

"In one's own esteemed case, the difference is always terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I'm not standing for it!" said Johnny. "But I can see now that I can't stay here! Can't land a fearful row on your uncle, Harry."

"You're not going!"

"Must!" said Johnny briefly. "Your uncle would be bound to hand me over, if Lucas asked for me in the presence of an officer of the law. I never thought he would go so far as that—but I might have guessed it! If your uncle kept me here now, Lucas could get an order from the court to have me handed over—and Colonel Wharton wouldn't like that."

"Oh crikey!"

"If he would stand for it, I'm certainly not going to land him in anything of the kind!" said Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton was silent. If the law was set in motion, and if it upheld Lucas Bull, obviously Colonel Wharton could not allow a runaway to remain under his roof. He could not, if he would.

It looked as if Lucas had played a trump card. That smiling, ruddy-faced country constable in the taxi represented overwhelming and irresistible forces.

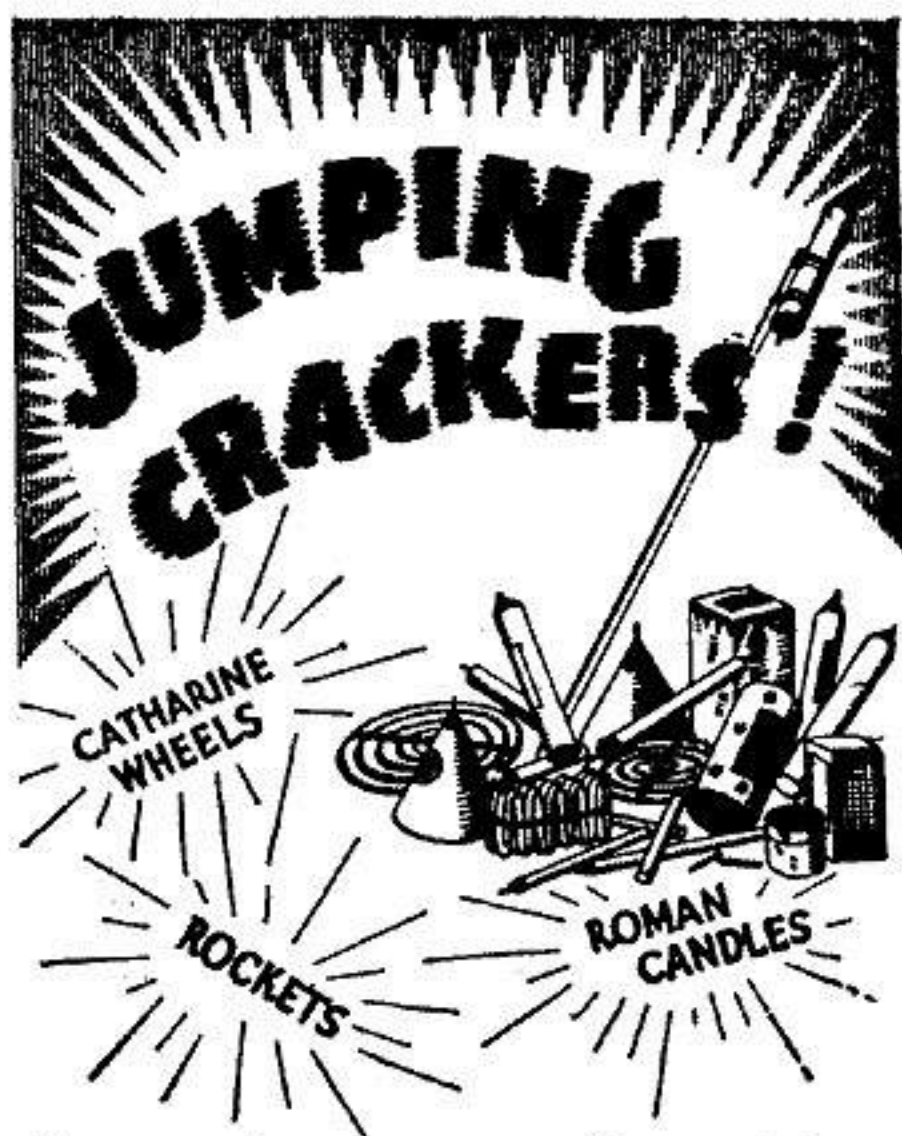
"You're going back with that cad?" asked Harry.

"Hardly! I'm going to cut before your uncle is forced to hand me over to him!" answered Johnny Bull. "Old Bob will put me up for a few days if I blow in at Cherry Place—and Lucas can walk all over Surrey with his bobby, looking for me, while I'm in Dorsetshire."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Right!" he said. "Sorry to lose you, old chap—but I suppose that's the best thing to be done!"

(Continued on next page.)



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"It's the only thing," said Johnny, in his quiet, practical way. "You cut up and get my bag for me, Inky, and bring it to me in the garden. You keep Lucas as long as you can, Harry, while I have time to cut. We'll dish that meddling ass—and we'll have a laugh over this later, in the study at Greyfriars."

Clearly, it was the only thing to be done; unless Johnny was to give in—which, apparently, was impossible for genuine Yorkshire! The three juniors went quickly into the house as the taxi drove up.

Johnny Bull left again by the french windows at the back. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh ran up to his room to pack his bag for him, and convey it to him in the gardens, where he waited at a distance. Harry Wharton stayed in the hall, to see Lucas when he came in.

There was a loud and imperative knock at the door.

"Hold on, Wells!" said Harry, as the butler appeared. Wells looked at him in surprised inquiry. "Don't be in a hurry! Keep that blighter waiting a few minutes."

"But, Master Harry—"

"Hurry up, Inky!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh came trotting down the stairs with a suitcase. He grinned and nodded and vanished.

Wells stared after him.

There was the sound of a knocking on the door.

Colonel Wharton came into the hall.

"What is this? Open the door, Wells! What—"

Wells opened the door.

Colonel Wharton knitted his brows at the sight of the man who had hopped on the drive that morning. He stared at the constable who stood behind him.

"What does this mean?" he demanded.

Lucas Bull strode in.

"It means, sir, that I am here to take away my cousin John, left in my charge by his father, and that this constable is present to see the boy handed over," he rapped. "And if you refuse, sir, to submit to the authority of the law, you will very soon discover that the law is too strong for you."

Colonel Wharton stared at him blankly. Then he glanced at Harry. Wells stood expressionless.

"Harry!" gasped the old colonel. "Who is this man? Do you know him?"

"A relation of Johnny's uncle," murmured Harry. "His—his cousin, I—I think."

"Has he, as he says, any authority over your school friend?"

"I have said so, sir!" hooted Lucas.

"I decline to hear a word from you, sir!" rapped the colonel. "You trespassed on my premises this morning. You acted in a way that led me to entertain doubts—strong doubts—of your sanity. I do not like your looks, sir, I do not like your manners. You will oblige me by remaining silent, sir, while I am speaking to my nephew. Harry, answer my question."

"I—I think so, uncle," said Harry. "Johnny's father seems to have left him in that man's charge without understanding that he was a meddling fool and a bully."

"Good gad!"

"John will not deny it, sir!" snapped Lucas. "He is, at least, truthful! Send for the boy at once. I say, send for him."

"And I say, sir, that it is not for you to give orders here!" rapped Colonel Wharton. "Be silent, sir! Harry, call your friend here; this matter must be cleared up immediately."

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"I'll go to his room at once, uncle," said Harry.

And he went—leaving Colonel Wharton and Lucas Bull waiting, frowning at one another, and the constable standing discreetly in the background.

They were waiting for Harry to return with Johnny Bull. Which really was not very hopeful, as Harry had gone up to Johnny's room for him—and Johnny, in those same moments, was receiving his suitcase from Hurree Singh, and walking out of a back gate to head for the railway station.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

No Catch!

COLONEL WHARTON gnawed his lip. Lucas Bull grunted, and grunted again, with angry impatience. The Wimford constable, in the background, closed one eye slightly at Wells, who stood by the service door. But Wells, portly and impassive, was far above winks—he affected not to see that twitching eyelid of the arm of the law. Minute followed minute.

But there were footsteps on the stairs at last. Harry Wharton came down again. He came alone.

Lucas' eyes gleamed at him.

"Where is John?" he snapped.

Harry, taking no notice of him, looked at his uncle.

"Johnny isn't in his room, uncle," he said.

"Good gad! Where is he?" exclaimed the colonel testily. "He was with you after lunch. Has he gone out with Hurree Singh? Where is Hurree Singh—he may know where the boy is. Where—"

"Here, esteemed sahib!" The Nabob of Bhanipur glided into the hall.

"Is Bull with you, Hurree Singh? Do you know where Bull is?" exclaimed Colonel Wharton.

"He is not in my esteemed presence, sahib!" answered the Nabob of Bhanipur. "I believe he has gone for a walk."

"A walk!" exclaimed the colonel.

"He has gone for a walk?"

"I think so, esteemed sir!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh did not add that Johnny was walking in the direction of the railway station, and that he was carrying his suitcase. He was not bound to give details.

"I do not believe a word of it!" exclaimed Lucas Bull, in a grinding voice. "The boy is here, and is keeping out of sight. I warn you, sir, that if you harbour a runaway schoolboy in defiance of the law, you are laying yourself open to very severe penalties."

"I do not require you, sir, to instruct me in respect for the laws of my country!" roared Colonel Wharton. "Your remark is insolent, sir—of a piece with the whole of your conduct. I shall question the boy in your presence, and if I am satisfied that you have authority over him, I shall not dispute that authority. Until then, you will be wise to measure your words—I may remind you, sir, that you are in my house, and liable to be thrown out of it, sir, if you are insolent."

"Send for the boy!" said Lucas, between his teeth.

"I shall do that, sir, without instructions from you. Harry—Hurree Singh—please find Bull immediately, if you can. Wells, request the servants to look for Master Bull, and send him here if he is in the house."

"Very good, sir."

There was another long wait. Harry

Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh went out, with smiling faces. They were not likely to find Johnny. He was about half a mile on his way to the station by that time.

But the longer he was looked for, the better chance he had of getting clear. Every passing minute was a gain, from the point of view of Johnny's loyal chums.

Wells and his myrmidons looked through the house. They were only able to report that Master Bull was not to be found.

Colonel Wharton was fuming. The Wimford constable was concealing yawns behind a large red hand. Lucas Bull was growing blacker and blacker, more and more bitter. His sharp, hard jaw, which had been closed like a rat-trap, was now shut like a steel vice.

His expression indicated only too plainly what the runaway had to expect when he fell into the hands of authority.

Whether Mr. Bull, on his departure, had even thought of authorising Lucas to administer corporal punishment to his son was very doubtful—very doubtful indeed. But there was not the slightest doubt that that was what Lucas was going to do as soon as Johnny was in his hands.

He was realising that he was being made a fool of. It dawned on him that Johnny knew that he could not resist, after the arm of the law was brought into the matter, and that instead of the reckless defiance he had expected, and which he could have overcome, there had been a strategic retreat.

It was growing clear to his mind that Johnny had cleared off—and that every minute he waited gave Johnny an added chance of escaping unpursued into parts unknown. That was an intensely irritating reflection to Lucas Bull.

"I have had enough of this!" he broke out at last. "It is clear to me, sir, that you do not intend to hand the boy over. You are endeavouring, sir, to make a fool of me."

"That, sir, is already done!" snapped Colonel Wharton. "Nature, sir, has done that already, and I may add, has also made an impertinent jackanapes of you."

"I demand that the boy be given up to me."

"Search my house, sir, if you choose," said Colonel Wharton. "I give you full permission to do so. You may have the assistance of the constable. If the boy is here, and if he admits your authority you shall take him. Wells; keep an eye on the umbrellas, while that man is in the house."

"Certainly, sir."

Lucas gasped with rage.

"You insolent old fool!" he panted.

"Enough, sir! Get out!" Colonel Wharton advanced on him. "Leave my house, sir! Take any measures you please—but leave my house. I will tolerate the presence of an insolent knave no longer."

Lucas backed to the door.

"Hands off!" he said between his teeth.

"Get out!" roared the angry colonel.

Lucas glanced at the constable. That ruddy-faced arm of the law shrugged broad shoulders. He had a proper respect for Colonel Wharton, who was a great man in the locality. He had none for the brick-faced man, who was a stranger to him, and whose manners he certainly did not like.

"Better go, sir," he advised. "You can't talk to a gentleman like that in his own house, sir."

Lucas realised that he had better go. Colonel Wharton marched straight at

him, and the brick-complexioned man had either to step out on his feet, or depart less ceremoniously on his neck. He decided to go on his feet—and he stepped quickly out at the door.

"Go!" rapped the colonel.

"I will go!" panted Lucas, almost choking. "I am well aware that you have tricked me, wasted my time while the boy escaped! I have no doubt you know where he has gone."

"I have not the slightest knowledge of the boy's present whereabouts, and if I had, I should certainly not inform you!" rapped the colonel. "If his father has indeed placed him in your charge, he has acted thoughtlessly, or, more likely, you have deceived him as to your true nature. You are a brute, sir, and a bully, and a meddling fool, and I have seen more than enough of you!"

"I—I will go, but—but—"

"Constable, please see that man off my premises! If I see the boy again, I will bring him to the station and discuss the matter with your inspector."

"Yes, sir! Certainly, sir!"

The constable, having bestowed another unregarded wink on Wells, followed Lucas Bull from the house. They entered the waiting taxi, which glided away down the drive, Colonel Wharton watching it from the doorway, with a grim, frowning brow.

As it reached the gates Lucas glared out of the window at two smiling faces. Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh capped him with sarcastic politeness. Lucas snarled to the driver, and the taxi stopped. He leaned out, and called to the juniors.

"Here! Come here, both of you!"

"Rats!" answered Harry cheerfully.

"The rattlefulness is terrific, my esteemed idiotic fathead!"

"You know where John has gone!" hissed Lucas. "You warned him to go! I am very well aware of that now! Where has he gone?"

"Echo answers where!" said Harry Wharton, with a laugh.

"Esteemed echo replies that the wherefulness is terrific!" grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Lucas gritted his teeth, and signed to the driver to go on. The taxi turned into the road.

There was a patter of feet, and Lucas glanced back as Harry Wharton came running after the cab. Again he signed to the driver to stop, and turned a hopeful eye on Wharton.

"Hold on a minute!" shouted Harry.

Lucas waited for him to come up. This, so far as he could see, could only mean that Johnny's chum had decided, after all, to tell him where Johnny was.

Wharton came up, rather breathlessly.

"Well, what is it?" rapped Lucas.

"I've something to tell you!" gasped the captain of the Remove.

"Quick, then! What is it? You know where John is?"

"Yes!" gasped Harry.

"Tell me, then—at once!"

"I'm going to tell you. Wait till a fellow gets his breath!"

Lucas waited impatiently. But he could afford to wait if this schoolboy was going to tell him where Johnny was. Hurree Singh came running up.

"My esteemed chum," he exclaimed, "you are not going to give the absurd Johnny away to that ridiculous and pernicious person?"

"Be silent, you!" snarled Lucas.

"My esteemed Wharton—"

"Silence, you!" hooted Lucas. "Wharton, I am waiting! Tell me where I can look for John!"

"I'm going to," said Harry. "It's all right, Inky. I don't see any harm in telling him, and I'm sure Johnny



"Let go!" rapped Lucas. "I will catch you as you drop, you young fool! Let go—you are wasting time!" With his teeth set, Bob Cherry let go of the branch, and took his chance. Down he shot, and the sagging branch shot up as he went. His arms outstretched, Lucas waited below, ready to catch Bob.

wouldn't mind. He's in Surrey, Mr. Bull."

"What?" roared Lucas.

"Surrey!"

"You young fool! What do you mean? Do you suppose I think he has already got out of this county?" shrieked Lucas.

"Not at all," answered Harry.

"Then what do you mean?"

"I should have thought you could guess that one, Mr. Bull. What I mean

is, to waste as much of your time as possible!" explained Wharton.

There was a sudden gurgle from the constable in the taxi. Lucas Bull, crimson with rage, reached out of the window and made a grab at the smiling junior. Harry Wharton backed out of reach; then, stepping forward again as

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quickly, tipped Lucas' hat off into the road.

Something like a roar came from Lucas Bull as he grabbed open the door of the taxi to go after his hat.

The two juniors, chuckling, scudded back into the gateway.

They had had quite a good deal of success in their laudable object of delaying Lucas as much as possible, and giving Johnny Bull time to get clear. They departed, laughing; and Lucas Bull, with feelings too deep for words, fielded his hat, stamped back into the taxi, and drove on.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Backs Up!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Bob stared.

He was on his bike in the glow of the bright September sunset. He was going at a good speed. He was, as a matter of fact, in no hurry; but it was Bob Cherry's way to put plenty of beef into everything he did.

Bob had gone from Cherry Place to Dorchester, which was about ten miles from his home, to make some purchases for his father, Major Cherry. He had them in a bundle on a carrier on his bike, and now he was sailing merrily home. He was thinking as he rode of that jolly cycling trip he had had, with the other members of the Co., and rather wishing that his pals were still with him, when he sighted a stocky figure ahead of him on the road.

That stocky figure was going at a trot. There seemed something familiar to Bob's eyes in that figure, and, as he drew nearer on the bike, he recognised it—hence his surprised ejaculation.

He had supposed, till that moment, that Johnny Bull was at home in Yorkshire. So it was quite a surprise to see him trotting along the road in Dorsetshire. But it was an agreeable surprise, and Bob put on a little extra speed, and soon overtook the fellow ahead.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he roared, almost in Johnny's ear.

Johnny Bull gave a start, and stared round at the cyclist. His face was red, and he was a little breathless. Evidently he had been hurrying, and there was a rather heavy suitcase in his hand, as well as a coat over his arm.

"Oh!" he gasped. "You, Bob! Good! Lend me your bike!"

"Eh?"

Bob jumped down.

"Shove my bag on the carrier," said Johnny, "and the coat on it, too! Thank goodness I've met you!"

Bob stared at him blankly.

"I suppose you're coming to my

place, as you're heading in that direction?" he remarked.

"Yes. Like to put me up for a day or two?"

"Of course, fathead! Have you walked from Dorchester?"

"No. I took a cab from the station."

Bob blinked. As he had found Johnny hurrying on foot, carrying bag and coat, and there was no vehicle to be seen on the road, that statement naturally astonished him.

"What have you done with the cab, then?" he asked. "Swallowed it?"

Johnny grinned breathlessly.

"No. A blighter was after me, and, by sheer ill-luck, got on the same train, and got out of the station when I did. He nearly had me there, but I dodged, and got off in a cab. A few miles out of the town, though, I spotted him after me in a car."

Bob could only stare. As he had heard nothing of the family troubles of the Bulls so far, he could only be amazed.

"I turned a corner jolly quick," went on Johnny, "and got out, with my bag and coat, paid the driver, and told him to drive on as fast as he could. I got behind a tree and watched the blighter come round the corner and whiz after the cab. Then I started walking up this road—see?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I don't know how far he will be led off the track; he seems to have picked up a pretty fast car, judging by the speed he was going at," said Johnny. "But when he tumbles to it that I'm not in the cab, he will return this way. So lend me your bike, old bean, and I'll beat him yet!"

"But who the dickens is after you?" hooted Bob. "Can't you ask a bobby, or can't we stop for him ourselves and boot him?"

"Hardly. You see, he's my Cousin Lucas, and my father left him my guardian while he's away abroad."

"Oh crikey!"

"He's rooted me out of Wharton's place; but he doesn't know about you, old bean, so I shall be all right at Cherry Place if I get there without the rotter picking up my trail!" explained Johnny. "I'll tell you all about it afterwards. No time for jaw now!"

"Right as rain!" said Bob. "Jump on the jigger and get going!"

He stared back along the road.

There was a turning a considerable distance back, where Johnny had dispatched the station cab, to lead Lucas Bull on a false scent.

Round that corner—a speck in the distance—a car came spinning. Bob caught his chum's arm.

"Was it a dark-blue car he was in?"

"Yes."

"Is that it?"

Johnny stared back at the car that had come round the corner, and was coming on towards them fast.

"Looks like it!" he said.

"Then he's found out already, and turned back for you!" said Bob. "Shove your bag on—quick! Give me your coat!"

Johnny fastened his suitcase on the carrier, along with the bundle already there. Bob, to his surprise, slipped on the overcoat. It was a light grey coat, very easily seen at a distance.

"What the thump—" began Johnny.

"Get on, as fast as you can!" said Bob. "I'll pull his jolly old leg, in your coat, and give you time to get clear. See?"

Johnny Bull put a leg over the machine. He whizzed away up the road, going all out.

Bob stood and watched the coming car.

He shaded his eyes with his hand, not so much because of the sun, as to conceal his face from the man in the car, if it was Johnny Bull's pursuer. He had no doubt that Johnny Bull's cousin would know Johnny Bull's coat, as Johnny had been under his eyes that day.

Of the rights and wrongs of that family row among the Bulls, Bob knew nothing, except what Johnny had just told him. But he knew that he was going to stand by Johnny, for that was the way of the Famous Five.

The blue car came whizzing on. It came swiftly; clearly, Lucas Bull had picked up a fast car to run down his runaway cousin. The driver had no interest for Bob; he tried to pick out the man inside—and as the car drew nearer, he had a glimpse of a brick-red face, with a square jaw, and a resemblance to Johnny's.

He had little doubt that it was Johnny's pursuer. Anyhow, he would soon know, for he knew that the man in the car could see him standing there.

Having made sure of that, Bob ran to the roadside, where a big beech-tree stood back from the road.

He clambered into the tree.

He did not hurry. He wanted the man in the car to see that light-grey overcoat going up the beech.

Evidently the man did, for the car slowed down. It stopped by the roadside; and Bob, in the foliage above, grinned, as he heard the door open and the brick-faced man step out.

"John!" came a calling voice below.

Lucas Bull stood under the wide-spreading branches, staring up. He had a glimpse of a light-grey overcoat—as Bob intended that he should. But he saw nothing of the schoolboy's face.

Bob made no answer. Johnny Bull's cousin would, of course, be well acquainted with Johnny Bull's voice; and an answer would have apprised him that the grey coat had changed owners. Bob grinned and was silent.

"John! Come down out of that tree at once! I saw you climb up, you young fool! I know you are there!"

No answer.

"Do you hear me, John? You are making matters all the worse for yourself. In any case, I shall thrash you when I get you home. You are aware of that. The more trouble you give me, the more severe will your punishment be. Cannot you understand that, you young rascal?"

Bob did not speak. He began to whistle. The tune he whistled was "Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf?"

Lucas gritted his teeth. He was feeling, just then, a good deal like a big, bad wolf, hungry for the prey. That cheery whistle in the tree above indicated that the schoolboy hidden there was not afraid.

"Will you come down, John?" he roared. "Do you think you can get away with a silly trick like this? I have followed you from Yorkshire to take you home, and I am going to take you home to-night."

The whistle above changed to another tune. Bob began to whistle "We Won't Go Home Till Morning."

The Dorchester chauffeur, sitting at his wheel, grinned. It really was quite an entertaining dialogue; angry words shouted on one side, answered by a tuneful, cheery whistle on the other.

Bob Cherry was quite enjoying this.

The longer Lucas stood shouting under the tree, the better chance Johnny had of getting clear on the bike. And if Lucas climbed after him, Bob was ready to give him as long a chase as possible among the thick branches.

"You young rascal!" roared Lucas. "For the last time, John, I order you to come down from the tree, and come home with your legally appointed guardian."

By way of answer, Bob changed his tune again. Now he was whistling "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?"

The chauffeur gave a chuckle. But he looked serious again as Lucas glared round at him.

The brick-faced man clenched his hands and stared up into the beech. That Johnny Bull was in the tree, he had not the slightest doubt.

Lucas Bull was, undoubtedly, a stickler. He had lost Johnny at Wharton Lodge; but he had guessed that the runaway would make for the railway station. Owing to the efforts of his chums, Johnny had a long start, and he had reached Wimford Station first. But Lucas, in the taxi, got in before his train left.

He had spotted Johnny on the westward-bound express, and jumped into the same train. He had watched from his window, to jump out when Johnny jumped out—which had happened at Dorchester. There he had nearly had him, but not quite! Now he was sure that he had him!

What else could he think? He had overtaken the empty cab, and turned back at once, and followed the road Johnny had been following before he turned the corner. He saw a schoolboy, about Johnny's size, in a light-grey coat such as he had seen Johnny wearing in the train, clamber up the tree and hide himself there—a schoolboy who refused to answer him, but whistled defiance!

If the boy had been anybody but Johnny, he would have said so—at least, so far as Lucas could see! He had no means of guessing that Johnny, by a lucky chance, had fallen in with a chum on the road, who had taken his coat, and his place, to draw the pursuit!

Johnny was in the tree. He was assured of that. It was his last refuge, and Lucas was going to hook him out of it. Still, he was not keen on tree-climbing, if it could be helped!

He stood for some minutes, glaring up, with clenched hands and gleaming eyes. In the thick branches over his head the whistle sounded cheerily. Bob changed his tune again. It was now "Look Up and Laugh!"

Lucas looked up. But he did not laugh—he scowled.

"Will you come down, John?" roared Lucas. "If you do not, I shall come up for you, and I warn you that I will thrash you till you howl for mercy! Do you hear me, you young scoundrel?"

He paused for a reply. The reply came in another whistled tune: "Whisper, And I Shall Hear!"

That was enough for Lucas. He threw his coat and hat into the car, and started climbing the beech.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Two in a Tree!

BOB CHERRY chuckled. It was rather entertaining to think of Lucas' face when he made his catch, and discovered that the fellow in the tree was not the

fellow he wanted. But Bob was going to delay that discovery as long as he could.

Lucas clambered up actively. He was a strong and active young man, and though he certainly was not keen on tree-climbing, it came easy enough to him. His head appeared among the lower branches.

Bob, sitting astride a higher branch, peeled off Johnny Bull's coat. He dropped it neatly over Lucas' head, as that head appeared through the foliage.

"Oh!" gasped Lucas.

His head was enveloped in the folds of the coat. He held on blindly, spluttering with rage. The branches rustled and swayed.

It was two or three minutes before Lucas could get rid of the coat and drop it to the ground. Then, crimson with rage, he clambered on.

Bob clambered higher.

After him climbed Lucas. Holding on to a branch with one hand, he grabbed at an ankle above him. His grip closed on that ankle like a vice.

"Now, you young rascal!" hissed Lucas. "Come down! You are taking the risk of a fall! I shall certainly not let go! Will you come down? Will you—Whoop!"

Bob was holding on with his hands. Lucas had one of his feet—but the other was free! That one tapped on Lucas' nose.

It tapped hard.

"Yoo-hoo-hoo!" roared Lucas Bull. "Oh gad! You young ruffian! You—you rascal! Ooooooh!"

He let go the ankle and clasped the hand to his nose. Thus released, Bob clambered out on a long branch.

He had no doubt that Johnny, by that time, had got to Cherry Place on the bike. At all events, the fugitive was now safe from pursuit. So Bob was ready to cease his playful game with the pursuer.

Sitting out on a long, thick branch, Bob grinned back at the man who started clambering after him from the trunk.

"I've got you now!" panted Lucas. "Sure you want me?" grinned Bob.

Lucas Bull suddenly stopped. He stared at Bob Cherry with almost starting eyes. This was his first view of the face of the fellow in the tree.

He could scarcely believe his eyes as he saw that it was not the face of Johnny Bull.

In utter amazement, he stared and glared at the cheery Bob. Bob smiled back at him along the branch. His position was none too secure, as the long branch sagged and swayed. But as he sat astride of it, facing Lucas, he had his leg jammed in a little forking bough, which kept him steady. And Bob had mountains of nerve.

That branch, certainly, would not have borne the weight of two, had Lucas followed him along it, as he had seemed, in his rage, about to do. Fortunately, he stopped two or three feet from the trunk, as he saw Bob's face.

"You—you—you—" he stuttered.

Bob nodded cheerily.

"Me-me-me!" he assented.

"Who are you?" shouted Lucas savagely.

"I'm me!" said Bob, in surprise. "Who do you think I am?"

"You are not John!" roared Lucas.

"Eh! Who's

John?" asked Bob innocently. "Looking for a chap named John?"

Lucas panted. He could hardly believe the evidence of his eyes when he saw that it was not Johnny in the tree. Still, he had to believe it. He was utterly surprised, and still more enraged and exasperated.

"You young rascal! You heard me calling the name of John! You know that—Why did you not answer me?" he hooted. "Are you mad?"

"No; are you?" asked Bob affably.

"You have done this on purpose!" roared Lucas, light breaking on his mind. "You have done this to delay me, like those young rascals back in Surrey! You are a friend of John's. You have met him, on this road! I am certain of it. Answer me—do you know John?"

"That depends on which John you mean," answered Bob. "There's a lot of Johns. If you mean King John—"

"What?" gasped Lucas.

"He was before my time!" explained Bob. "But if you mean John Peel—"

"You young idiot!"

"D'ye ken John Peel?" asked Bob cheerily.

Lucas did not answer that question. He seemed on the verge of foaming at the mouth.

Lucas Bull, as his cousin Johnny freely admitted, was not by any means a bad man, though he certainly had a bad temper. But he had not been gifted by Nature with anything approaching a sense of humour. His view of life and all its circumstances was serious, not to say solemn, and rather gloomy.

Probably he had never seen a joke in his life. If he had, he would have regarded it as a frivolous waste of time.

So he had no use for Bob Cherry's cheery playfulness. He looked as if he could have bitten him.

"But perhaps," went on Bob, "you mean John o' Groats? You won't find that John in Dorset. You have to go north for that John."

"You young fool!" hissed Lucas.

"Have you seen John on this road?"

"I'm trying to find out what John you mean, old thing. Do you mean somebody's son John, who went to bed with his trousers on, one shoe off and one shoe on—"

"I—I—I—" gasped Lucas.

"Or John, John, the piper's son, who stole a pig and away he ran? Such a lot of Johns—"

"I know you now," said Lucas, scanning his face. "I have seen you in the same photograph of a football eleven as Wharton! You are one of John's idle, loafing friends at Greyfriars."

"Are you always as complimentary as that to strangers?" asked Bob.

"You young rascal! You are deliberately wasting my time, as Wharton did—"

"Good old Wharton!" chuckled Bob.

"You know where John Bull is at the present moment. Probably he has come to this district to visit you, as he was

(Continued on next page.)



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compelled to leave Wharton Lodge. You have wasted my time while he got clear!"

"Guessed that one?" asked Bob admiringly. "What a brain!"

Lucas gritted his teeth.

"You will not escape unpunished," he said. "I am a busy man—every hour of my time is valuable! You have wasted it, like the other young rascals! But you, at least, are in my hands. I shall thrash you!"

"Go ahead!" grinned Bob. "But let me point out that this jolly old branch won't carry two, and it's a bit risky."

Lucas, with gritted teeth, came further out on the branch. It sagged and sank as it took his weight, and Bob, at the end, dipped, almost as if sitting on a see-saw.

The man from Yorkshire backed to the trunk again. He was extremely keen to get within whopping distance of that cheery schoolboy. But most certainly he did not want to endanger his life or limbs.

For a long minute he glared at Bob. Bob cheerfully winked at him—a cheery wink that drove Lucas almost to frenzy.

But there was, clearly, nothing doing, and he turned to clamber down the beech again. Bob Cherry chuckled.

His chuckle ceased suddenly. As Lucas' weight was taken from the long, flexible branch, it jumped. Bob's leg slipped from the fork into which it was jammed, and he slid over. He grasped the branch with both hands, as he went, and caught hold.

A gasp came from him as he swung over empty space by his hands, at the end of the branch. He made a frantic effort to pull himself up, and failed. Hardly more than his finger-tips held—and barely held. Helpless, he hung at the end of the sagging branch, swinging over the hard earth far below.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Helping-Hand!

LUCAS BULL dropped from the beech to the ground.

With his back to Bob, he had not seen what had happened.

But, as he stamped savagely back to the car, the horrified stare of the chauffeur caught his eyes, and he followed it, and gave a jump at the sight of the Greyfriars junior swinging in the air.

"You young fool!" he exclaimed.

Bob did not answer. He could not. His teeth were set as he hung on to the high branch.

He made another desperate effort to pull himself up. In doing so, he almost lost his grip. He swung, powerless to save himself, knowing that he must fall and crash. Comedy had suddenly turned to something like tragedy. A crash from such a height meant, at least, a fractured limb.

"You young fool!" roared Lucas. "Cannot you climb up? Do you want to break your neck, you young lunatic?"

From what he had seen so far of Lucas, Bob would not have expected the man from Yorkshire to care much whether he did or not.

But hitherto he, like Wharton and the nabob, had seen the worst side of Johnny's cousin. There was a better side, not generally revealed. Now, however, it came to light.

Lucas had not time to lose. Already there was little doubt his quarry had got away, owing to the delay caused

by Bob Cherry. If there was a chance left of running him down, it was by getting going at full speed of the car. And Bob had exasperated Lucas to an intense pitch of wrath.

But if Lucas Bull had no sense of humour, and no relish for the lighter side of life, he had qualities which, in such an emergency as the present, were rather more valuable.

He did not step into the car and tell the driver to go all out, as he was undoubtedly disposed to do.

He stepped back swiftly towards the beech trunk, to clamber up and get to Bob's assistance.

But he stopped at once. The branch would not have borne his weight if he had climbed. Clambering along to Bob only meant two falling instead of one.

"Oh! You young idiot!" snarled Lucas.

He stared savagely up at Bob. He could not get to the boy to help him. A ladder was the only thing—and there was no hope of getting a ladder from anywhere in time.

"Hold on!" he shouted.

Bob could not speak. But he was holding on—he did not need telling that. He held on with all the strength in his aching, failing fingers.

Lucas ran to the car.

"Quick!" he snapped. "Back under the tree!"

"Er—what—" began the surprised chauffeur.

"Fool!" roared Lucas. "Quick!"

The driver said no more. He backed the car under the beech, bumping on the rough grass by the roadside.

He stopped at a snap from Lucas. The roof of the car was now directly under Bob's swinging feet—far above. But if he fell, it shortened the fall.

But Lucas was not finished yet.

Swiftly he clambered on the roof of the car. In a few moments he was standing there, under Bob.

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

He was hardly able to hold on now. His fingers were slipping from their insecure grasp.

"Let go!" rapped Lucas. "I will catch you as you drop, you young fool! Let go—you are wasting time!"

It was by no means an easy proposition. Lucas was ready to take Bob's weight, as he dropped, and hold him. But it was only too probable that that sudden weight would pitch him headlong from his footing, none too secure on the roof of the car. In which case, both of them would have gone crashing off the car together to the earth.

But there was nothing else for it. Bob could not have held on more than another minute.

With his teeth set, he let go and took his chance.

Down he shot, and the sagging branch shot up as he went. He slid down through Lucas' arms, which closed round him and held.

The Yorkshireman stood like a rock. But he swayed as Bob's weight jarred on him. He swayed, but he stood, and he held Bob; and the Greyfriars junior, to his own astonishment, found himself standing on the roof of the car, Lucas' grasp keeping him from pitching off.

"Ooooh!" gasped Bob.

"You young idiot!"

"Thanks!" stuttered Bob.

"Fool!" answered Lucas.

With a far from gentle hand he grasped Bob by the collar, knelt, and dropped him to the ground. Then he jumped down after him.

Bob leaned on the beech, gasping for breath and rubbing his aching, numbed fingers. Lucas glared at him.

"You might have broken a leg!" he snarled. "You might have broken your neck! Is that the sort of foolery you learn at Greyfriars?"

Bob grinned breathlessly.

"Thank you for lending me a hand!" he gasped. "You're not such a blighter as you make yourself out to be, Mr. Bull!"

He had expended time—his valuable time—in getting Bob out of his scrape. He had run the risk of a very unpleasant fall himself. Certainly he had saved Bob from almost certain injury.

Now, however, his looks plainly indicated that he was strongly inclined to go ahead with the thrashing.

"You're in my hands now!" he said grimly. "Now you're going to tell me where John is."

"Guess again!" said Bob.

Lucas put on his coat and hat. Then he picked up a walking-stick out of the car.

"Are you going to tell me where to find my Cousin John?" he asked.

Bob, leaning on the tree, eyed him steadily. The Dorchester chauffeur shifted the car off the grass, back into the road. He sat at the wheel, and waited.

"Where is John?" rapped Lucas.

"Find out!" retorted Bob.

Up went the stick.

"Will you answer me?"

"No!" said Bob Cherry. "Keep that stick to yourself, Mr. Bull! I don't want to punch you, after what you've done for me; but if you touch me with that stick, I shall punch just as hard as I jolly well can!"

Lucas laughed contemptuously. He paused; but it was not, clearly, anything that Bob could do in the punching line that made him pause.

In a slow, careful way, which was extremely like his Cousin Johnny, he was thinking out the rights and wrongs of the matter.

"John has run away from home," he said at last. "Perhaps you do not know that. I have followed him to take him back. I am his legally appointed guardian during his father's absence in America. Now answer me!"

Bob shook his head.

"Sorry!" he said. "I don't want to barge into your family troubles, Mr. Bull. But Johnny's a pal of mine, and at Greyfriars a man doesn't give a pal away. That's not the way of a Greyfriars man!"

Lucas Bull stared at him.

"Oh!" he said. "I am glad to hear that something useful, at any rate, is learned at Greyfriars! It is news to me!"

He put the stick under his arm, walked to the car, and stepped in. Another moment, and the car was whizzing away up the road.

Bob Cherry blinked after it.

"Well, my hat!" he ejaculated.

The car vanished in a cloud of dust in the direction Johnny Bull had taken on the bike. But Lucas had no chance now. Bob knew that. Before this, Johnny had reached Cherry Place on the bicycle, and was safe in. Lucas, it was clear, did not know Bob's address, even if he knew his name, and the car, doubtless, would rush on past the gates of Cherry Place.

That was all right!

But Bob, as he started walking homeward, was not feeling wholly easy in his mind.

He was backing up Johnny Bull—the Famous Five of Greyfriars always backed one another up, through thick and thin! But Lucas, with all his bad temper and ungracious ways, had saved Bob from a very probable broken limb.

and in doing so had lost his last chance of running down the runaway he was so eager to recapture.

Evidently he was not, as Bob had expressed it, such a blighter as he made himself out to be. And Bob could not help feeling rather worried as he plodded on his homeward way.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rooted Out!

MAJOR CHERRY glanced at the card.

"'Bull,'" he read aloud—"Lucas Bull." Any relative of yours, my boy?"

It was three days later.

Those three days Johnny Bull had spent at Cherry Place, in the cheery companionship of his Greyfriars chum.

Bob was glad to have him there, and Major and Mrs. Cherry made him cordially welcome. It was settled that he was going to stay till the term opened at Greyfriars School.

Naturally, it did not occur to either the major or Mrs. Cherry that Bob's school friend had taken French leave from home.

Johnny had visited Cherry Place often enough, and the major knew his father. That there was a new dispensation at Moor Fell, up in Yorkshire, he did not know.

Both the juniors hoped that Lucas had gone back to Yorkshire. Bob thought it pretty certain. Johnny was not so certain.

As he said, Lucas was Yorkshire—which meant that he was not the man to give in. Johnny, it seemed, rather admired that quality in him. It strongly resembled Johnny's own character.

Bob, loyal as he was to his chum, did not feel quite easy about it. Lucas seemed to be an unpleasant sort of tick, and a good deal of a bully. But Johnny's father had left him in Lucas' charge.

Certainly, Mr. Bull had not foreseen that, when he had gone, Lucas would take the opportunity of dealing with Johnny as he had always wanted to deal with him, and perhaps conscientiously believed that he ought to be dealt with.

Still, that did not alter the fact that Mr. Bull had left him under Lucas' authority. Lucas did not matter a hoot; but there was a hint in this of disregard to parental authority, which worried Bob.

Johnny did not see it. He assured Bob that, if his pater knew how Lucas was carrying on, he would send a cable from New York washing out his authority on the spot. Bob admitted the force of that argument. Still, he could not feel quite at ease.

Bob was rather thoughtless, and perhaps a little careless, at times; but the slightest wish of his father was law to him. If Major Cherry had left him in charge of any man, howsoever disagreeable, Bob would have toed the line till his father gave new instructions.

Still, it was not for him to give his chum sermons, so he backed up Johnny Bull, and hoped that Lucas was done with for the rest of the hols. He would be done with, anyhow, when the new term started.

It was morning, and the major was going to take the two boys out for a run in the car, when the card was brought in; and as Major Cherry read the name on it aloud, Bob and Johnny exchanged an eloquent glance.

Lucas, evidently, had not gone back to Yorkshire. He had turned a deaf ear to the attractive whir and clank of machinery at the "works."

He had not been idle, but it had taken him two or three days to discover Bob Cherry's residence, and now he had discovered it. And he was standing in the hall, and had sent his card in.

Major Cherry glanced at Johnny. "A relative of yours?" he asked. "The name is Lucas Bull."

"My cousin, sir!" said Johnny grimly.

"I shall be glad to see him! Perhaps he will join us in our run this morning!" said the major cheerfully. "Show Mr. Bull in, Thomas!"

Mr. Bull was shown in. Johnny rose to his feet. But there was no escape for him. Grimly he eyed the brick-faced man as he was shown in.

"Good-morning, Mr. Bull!" said the cheery old major, shaking hands with his visitor. "I have not had the pleasure of meeting you before; but Johnny tells me that you are his cousin."

"Quite so," said Lucas. "Has he also told you that I am his legally appointed guardian during his father's absence abroad?"

"Eh? No. Is Mr. Bull abroad?" said the major, looking puzzled.

His own cheery cordiality faded at the grim, stiff, uncompromising aspect of his visitor.

"He is abroad," said Lucas. "During his absence, John is in my charge, sir."

"I am sure he could not be in better hands," said Major Cherry politely.

"That is my opinion, at least," said Lucas Bull calmly. "I fear that John does not think so; but that is immaterial. I gather that you are unaware that John has left his home without leave—"

"Surely not?"

"That is the case, sir; and for several days I have had to neglect the affairs left in my hands by my uncle to search for him, and take him home," said Lucas. "Now, fortunately, I have found him."

Major Cherry looked at him—looked at Johnny's grim visage, and at Bob's red and uncomfortable face.

He realised that this was not a friendly call from Johnny's relative. He frowned a little.

"Perhaps you will be seated, Mr."

(Continued on next page.)

(1)
Wiggins is the master of the Third.
A fairly decent sort he seems to be,
He doesn't care for footer much, I've heard.
But specialises in photography.
No doubt, like us, the masters often are
Fed up with class and eager to get out,
And Wiggy's hobbies are his camera,
And (like the others) dodging Mr. Prout!

(2)
"Oh, yes," he told me, "I am very fond
Of taking little snapshots and the like.
I once snapped Coker falling in the pond
When out one morning on his motor-bike.
I have some plates," said he, and looked about.
"There seems to be a nice amount of sun,
So if you follow me, we'll just stroll out
And I will show you how it should be done!"

(3)
Well, this was kind of Wiggins, but, of course,
A walk with any master isn't fun;
You're bound to have a feeling of remorse,
Yes, even with a nice amount of sun!
We took the gateway first, and Gosling's lodge,
And Gosling, too, just where he chanced to stand,
For poor old Gossy had no time to dodge,
And, oh, there was a bottle in his hand!

(5)
And thus we snapped our way down Friardale Lane
Until the inn, "Three Fishers," hove in view.
With Wiggins lecturing me (though quite in vain)
Upon degrees of distances and view.
"This inn," he said, "is quite a shady spot!"
It was, indeed, all that, and rather more!
He took a photo, though I wished he'd not,
For Price and Carne were standing at the door!



(7)
We then retraced our steps, and as we walked
He lectured, lectured, lectured all the way.
But I was thinking, as old Wiggins talked,
That there would shortly be the denouement to pay.
Then suddenly he halted by my side,
He looked quite foolish I regret to state.
Dear me! he gasped. "I never used the slide!
I've taken six exposures on one plate!"



GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

A camera never lies . . . and neither does our rhymester's pen. This week's brilliant verses by our long-haired poet are written around

HERBERT WIGGINS, M.A.,
the master of the Third, whose hobby is photography.



(4)
"That's number one," said Wiggins. "Very good!
You saw it was adjusted to the view?
Well, now, I think, this little patch of wood,
With that old stile will do for number two!"
He gazed into the snapbox with a smile,
Then took the photo, to my great regret,
For William Stott was sitting on the stile,
And in his mouth there was a cigarette!

(6)
"Now mark," said Wiggins, "while you have the chance,
How you should take a stretch of meadow-land!
The scope is different for a broad expanse,
We'll take this piece of pasture near at hand!"
'Twas Farmer Dumbrell's field; I watched him pull
The lever thing, and heavily I sighed,
For Quelch was being chased by Dumbrell's bull,
And Quelch was looking most undignified!

Bull," he said. "Perhaps we can discuss this matter in a friendly way."

"I will stand, sir," said Lucas. "I have little time to spare, John. You had better go and pack your bag at once. I have a car waiting at the gate. I will accompany you. I cannot trust you out of my sight, after the trick you played on me at Wharton Lodge."

"I'm not going back," said Johnny stolidly.

"Look here, Mr. Bull—" began Bob.

"I have no desire," said Lucas, ruthlessly disregarding the two juniors, and speaking to Major Cherry, "to cause any unpleasantness here. But I am here to take John away, and no amount of unpleasantness will deter me from what I consider my duty."

"Very right and proper," grunted the major. "But this lad has often stayed with my son, with his father's full knowledge and approval. And I see no reason why he should not spend the remainder of the school holidays here."

"It is sufficient, sir, for me to see the reason, as the authority in the matter happens to be in my hands," said Lucas coldly.

Major Cherry's eyes glinted.

He was a good-tempered and placable old gentleman. But he had a temper, and Lucas was rousing it.

"Bull, is it a fact that you were left in this young man's charge?" he rapped.

"Oh, yes!" answered Johnny.

"By your father's orders?"

"The pater never knew that he was going to break out like this," explained Johnny. "He keeps it under when the pater's at home. If I'd asked my father before he went whether I could come here, he would have said 'yes' at once."

"I am sure of that," said the major, "and that surely should satisfy you, Mr. Lucas Bull."

"Not in the least!"

Major Cherry reddened.

"Am I to understand, sir," he began to boom, "that you do not regard my home as a suitable place for a Greyfriars boy, or my son as a suitable associate for him?"

"Since you ask me, sir," said Lucas, unmoved, "I do not."

"Good gad!" gasped the major. "Young man, if you were not under my roof at this moment, I would take my Malacca to you! Yes, sir, by Jove!"

"You asked me a question, and I answered it," said Lucas calmly. "I come from a place where we give direct answers to plain questions, and I have no use for idle chatter. I am waiting to take that boy away."

"One moment, sir!" said the major, repressing his wrath. "May I inquire what is your objection to Johnny spending a few days here, as he has often done before?"

"I am quite prepared to explain, if you desire to know. John is the heir to a large works in Yorkshire. Some day he will have to manage it. My opinion is that he should be preparing for future responsibilities. I regard his terms at Greyfriars as a sheer waste of time. I hope yet to persuade my uncle to take him away from that idle, frivolous Public school, where he learns nothing that is of use to him, and place him at a commercial college, where he will learn what a business man requires to know."

"Oh, gad!" said the major. "I am an old Greyfriars man myself, sir."

You are speaking of my old school."

"No doubt. In that case, you are doubtless well acquainted with the frivolous and useless nature of such an institution."

"Good gad!"

"During my uncle's absence," went on Lucas, unmoved, "I have an opportunity to give John the benefit of my knowledge and experience. I am determined not to lose that opportunity. It is no pleasure to me, sir—it is a matter of duty. John has wasted weeks in an idle bicycle excursion with his school friends. I am resolved that he shall waste no further time. Enough will be wasted when he returns to idleness at Greyfriars—"

"Good gad!" repeated the major.

"While the boy is in my charge," said Lucas icily, "he is going to give up idle loafing and slacking, and give close attention to business matters in the works of Bull & Co. I shall see that he does not waste a minute. Some day, I have no doubt, he will thank me for it. Whether he does or not is immaterial. I shall have done my duty, all the same."

Johnny Bull snorted.

"If ever I'm head at the works," he said grimly, "the first thing I shall do will be to sack the manager."

Lucas smiled faintly.

"If at that time you are not satisfied with the manager, John, I hope you will sack him on the spot," he said. "That is exactly what I should like to see. The fact that I am the manager makes no difference whatever."

"Oh, you're a silly ass!" growled Johnny. "And a meddling fathead, too! Why the thump can't you mind your own business?"

Lucas glanced at his watch.

"My time, Major Cherry, is not my own," he said. "Is this boy to be handed over to me, or am I to invoke the law, as I had to do at Wharton Lodge?"

Major Cherry gazed at him.

He was quite at a loss.

A man who meddled and bullied, from a wrong-headed sense of duty, was rather a difficult proposition to tackle.

Johnny Bull drew a deep breath.

"I'll leave this house," he said.

"I'm not going to land my friends in a row. But I'm not going back to Moor Fell, Lucas."

"I shall see that you do, John. If you give me your word to enter the car with me, I will trust you out of my sight."

"I will go as far as the car," grunted Johnny.

"Very well; lose no time!"

"Good gad!" repeated the major. "Good gad!"

"I wish you good-morning, sir!" said Lucas; and he walked out of the room, out of the house, and back to the car at the gate.

Major Cherry was left breathing hard. His complexion was almost purple. His desire to take that young man by the collar and lay a stick round him was almost irresistible.

Lucas neither knew nor cared what impression he had made on the old major. He walked back to his car, and waited there.

Bob went up with Johnny to pack.

"Hard cheese, old bean!" he said.

"What's the matter with that chap is that he never went to a Public school and got kicked. But, look here! It's not long to the new term now. You can stick it for a week or two—"

Johnny looked at him, with an ex-

pression remarkably like that of his cousin, Lucas.

"Not for a minute," he said.

"But I say—"

"Rot!"

Bob said no more. Ten minutes later Johnny and his bag were in the car, driving away with Lucas. Major Cherry was left more than half-regretting that he had not laid a stick round that obnoxious young man while there was yet time. Bob was left wondering whether Lucas would succeed in getting Johnny as far as Moor Fell, Yorks. He hardly knew whether to hope that he would, or that he wouldn't. The chances, at all events, were that he wouldn't.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Nugent Next!

FRANK NUGENT grinned.

He was standing at a garden gate in a leafy lane from Amesbury. In the road there was a large car which, large as it was, was getting well packed.

Nugent's two sisters were in it and Mrs. Nugent. Dicky Nugent was in it with his pals, Gatty and Myers, of the Second Form at Greyfriars. It only waited for Mr. Nugent to come out and get into the driving seat, when Frank was going to sit beside him, and they would be off. They were going to drive to Stonehenge, which was not at a great distance from Frank's home in Wiltshire. Frank, looking along the lane, grinned as he saw a rather dusty figure, walking quickly, and recognised his chum, Johnny Bull, of the Remove.

That morning Frank had had two telephone calls, one from Harry Wharton, the other from Bob Cherry, inquiring whether he had seen anything of Johnny Bull. He hadn't. Now, however, he saw him. And, as Harry and Bob had both given him some news on the subject of Johnny's late remarkable adventures, he was not surprised to see him, or to note that he was in a hurry.

He could not but grin. Johnny's flight from Yorkshire to Surrey, from Surrey to Dorset, and from Dorset to Wilts, had its comic side. Having been rooted out of Wharton Lodge and Cherry Place, Johnny, evidently, was turning to the last member of the famous Co. for aid, and Frank Nugent was going to have his turn. He grinned—but he was quite ready to play up.

Leaving the gate, he ran up the road to meet Johnny.

"Oh! Here you are!" said Johnny Bull. "Glad to find you at home, Franky."

"Just in time," said Frank. "The whole jolly family's just starting on a trip! Come?"

Johnny shook his head.

"I think Lucas is after me! I'll explain later, but—"

"I've had the news from Wharton and Bob!" said Frank, laughing. "That's all right! How did you get away from Lucas? Bob told me he had hooked you off in a car from his place."

"I wasn't likely to stay in the car!" grunted Johnny. "It wasn't easy to get away—my cousin Lucas is no fool. But we had to stop for petrol, and I had a chance—and jumped for it. Luckily, a motor-bus was passing, and I jumped on it, and gave Lucas a miss."

"Oh, my hat!"

"He was after me pretty quick," went on Johnny. "But you see, I'd got off the bus and cut across country."



As Lucas Bull jumped at Nugent, Johnny Bull put a foot in the way. Lucas stumbled over it, and fell headlong against the table. Crash! Clatter! Over went the tea-table, with a smashing of crockery. "Oooooogh!" gasped Lucas.

and he never picked me up again, and now—here I am! See?"

"I see!" assented Frank. "Jolly glad to see you, old man! Bob and Harry both warned me to keep an eye open for you if you blew this way! Welcome as the flowers in May, old bean. You'll be all right here."

"I'm not sure! Lucas has heard of you, of course, and I've got a suspicion that he's rooted out where all my friends live," said Johnny. "If he has, he will guess I've struck in this direction, and he will come after me."

Frank whistled.

Personally, he was prepared to stand by his chum through thick and thin. But he could not help wondering what would be the effect on his parents if Lucas Bull barged in demanding the runaway.

"I'm not landing you in a row," went on Johnny Bull quietly. "If Lucas doesn't get after me, you'd like to have me around—"

"I'd like to have you around anyhow!" said Frank loyally.

"If he gets after me, I shall clear—your people don't want a row," said Johnny, "and I shouldn't be surprised any minute to see him coming up the road. I spotted a red face at the station at Amesbury—I'm not sure that it was his, but he's some sticker! I say, if your people want you—" Johnny looked along the road towards the packed car.

Mr. Nugent had just come out, to take his place.

"That's all right!" said Frank. "If you'd like to come along and have a squint at Stonehenge, we can pack you in somehow—"

"I'd rather make sure that I'm clear of Lucas—I don't want a shindy before your mater and sisters—Lucas wouldn't care a brass button, but I do," said Johnny. "But you, old chap—"

"That's all right, I'll cut it out, and stay behind," said Frank. "They're just off—I'll be back in a jiffy."

Leaving Johnny Bull leaning on the

fence, under the shade of an overhanging apple-tree, Frank ran back to the car.

"Come, come, I am waiting, Frank!" said his father. "Get in, my boy!"

"Look here, Frank, you can cram inside!" squeaked Dicky. "I'd rather go in that seat beside dad, see?"

"You can have it, kid!" said Frank. "I say, dad, a friend from Greyfriars has just turned up—you don't mind if I stay—"

"Just as you like!" said Mr. Nugent. Frank stood back, and the car started.

Having seen it start, Frank walked back up the road, to the spot where he had left Johnny Bull.

To his surprise, Johnny had vanished from sight.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Frank, staring round him.

A man of stocky build, with a brick-red face and glinting sharp eyes, and a very square jaw, was coming down the road from Amesbury, at a rapid stride. Frank looked at him.

He had never seen Lucas Bull before. But he guessed at once who he was, and why Johnny had so suddenly disappeared.

Evidently, Johnny had spotted the enemy in the offing, and now was on the other side of the garden fence.

Frank suppressed a grin.

Lucas Bull gave him a sharp look as he came up. But he did not know Frank by sight. The other members of the Co. he had been able to identify by their faces in the photograph of the Remove football eleven, in Johnny's room at Moor Fell. But Frank Nugent was not in that photograph. He was, therefore, a stranger to Lucas' sharp eyes.

But he came to a stop.

"Can you tell me if that is Mr. Nugent's house?" he asked, with a gesture towards the roofs showing over the orchard by the lane.

"Nugent?" repeated Frank, thoughtfully. "I've heard that name! I know

Mr. Nugent lives about here somewhere."

Lucas grunted, and walked on towards the gate. There he paused, to stare after the car, which was making rather slow progress. Frank watched him with a cheery grin. Lucas seemed undecided whether to hurry after the car, which he could have overtaken, or whether to go up to the house. He seemed to decide on the latter, for he pushed the gate and went in.

Frank clambered over the fence and dropped inside. Sitting under the apple-tree, eating a large ripe apple, was Johnny Bull. He grinned at Frank over the apple.

"That was Lucas!" he said. "I jolly well knew he was close on the track."

"He guesses you've come here!" said Frank.

"Not much doubt about that!" grunted Johnny. "I can't stay here, though goodness knows where I can go next. I'm not going back to Moor Fell! That's settled. But—"

He finished the apple thoughtfully. Frank watched him, equally thoughtful. There was a sound of rapid footsteps on the garden path. The gate opened, and slammed. Then there were rapid footsteps on the road.

"What the dickens—" exclaimed Nugent.

He pulled himself up the fence, and looked over. A stocky figure was going at a rapid run, in the direction taken by the car, now nearly out of sight.

Frank stared after it.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated.

He dropped back into the garden, chuckling.

"He's gone after the car!" he said. "I dare say they told him at the house, that the whole family had gone out, and he fancies you may have gone with the jolly old family, what!"

Johnny grinned, and looked over the fence in his turn. Lucas Bull, going strong, was vanishing up the road in a cloud of dust. Evidently he had

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learned at the house that the whole Nugent family had gone out in the car, on the excursion to Stonehenge, and suspected that Johnny Bull was in the party. It was not a fast car, but Lucas was not likely to catch it easily unless he picked up a lift from somebody.

Johnny chuckled as his cousin disappeared in the dusty distance.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tea for Two—And Jam for One!

"JOLLY!" said Johnny Bull.

It really was jolly.

Sitting at a little table under the apple-trees in the orchard, the two juniors were having tea. Frank had given up that excursion to Stonehenge, on his chum's account, but he did not mind in the least. Lucas Bull's pursuit of the car gave Johnny a respite which both the juniors considered could not be better used than by having tea. Johnny was both tired and hungry, and he enjoyed his tea with a healthy appetite almost worthy of Billy Bunter. A trim maid had set the table, loaded it with good things, and left the two schoolboys to themselves. Johnny, getting a much-needed rest after so much travelling, pronounced that it was jolly.

"Only it can't last!" he said. "Lucas is a sticker! If he goes as far as Stonehenge after your people, he will find out that I'm not with them—but he will jolly well come back here to look for me."

He wrinkled his brows thoughtfully over plum cake.

"Chance it!" said Frank.

"Well, you see, your pater couldn't keep me here, even if he was willing," explained Johnny. "Lucas has the law on his side."

"Why not go home and stick it till the end of the hols, old chap?" asked Frank gently. "The man seems to be a silly ass, and a meddling duffer, but you admit yourself that he means well in his own fat-headed, overbearing way. And your father left you to him. Why not—?"

"Give in to Lucas?" asked Johnny. "No fear! Catch me being bullied in my own father's house by a meddling ass! You see, the man's an obstinate fool! He will never give in an inch! What are you grinning at, Franky?"

"Oh! Nothing!" said Nugent hastily. "Anyhow, you're all right here while he's tripping to Stonehenge. What about giving old Mauly a look-in when you leave here? Or Smithy? They'd take you in like a shot."

"Can't land it on them!" said Johnny. "If I'd known this was going to happen, I'd rather have stuck at the school, like Fishy, for the hols. By gum! That's an idea—I can barge in at Greyfriars if I like, and keep Fishy company there! What?"

He helped himself to jam. "I suppose you could!" assented Frank dubiously. "But the school's pretty dismal with everybody away for the holidays, and Fishy isn't exhilarating company, old chap!"

"Better than giving in to that meddling tick!" said Johnny. "You see, I can't possibly give in—that's where it is."

"Well, there's plenty of time to think it over," said Frank, with a smile. "Jolly old Lucas won't be back here yet, if he comes at all—"

He broke off suddenly. A stocky figure appeared among the apple-trees, and a red face glowed in the September sunshine.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Frank.

The two juniors jumped to their feet. It was less than an hour since Lucas had disappeared in pursuit of the family car. Probably he had picked up a lift on the road, and ascertained that Johnny was not with the party for Stonehenge. Anyhow, here he was.

There was a grim expression on his face as he came striding up to the tea-table under the trees.

Johnny Bull eyed him across the table, a good deal like a bulldog. Frank looked from one to the other.

"Want anything?" he asked.

Lucas gave him a look.

"I can guess who you are—now," he said, "and I have not the slightest

doubt that you know who I am, why I am here, and what I want. John, are you coming with me quietly, or am I to take you by the collar?"

"Look here," said Frank, with a flash in his eyes. "It doesn't seem to occur to you, Mr. Bull, that you're trespassing here."

"I am ready to leave on the instant, with that boy, whom his father has placed in my charge!" answered Lucas stolidly. "I shall certainly not leave without him, and I am prepared for a constable to be sent for."

"Johnny's stayed with me before, in the hols—" said Nugent.

"That does not concern me. While he is in my charge he will not waste his time in idle loafing," said Lucas. "Neither should I dream for one moment of allowing an obstinate and self-willed boy to disregard authority."

"Do you know what Shakespeare has said on that subject?" asked Frank, with a grin.

"I have never had time to read Shakespeare, and have no desire whatever to become better acquainted with idle scribblings!" answered Lucas. "It may do for Greyfriars, but—"

"I'll tell you what he said, all the same!" retorted Frank. "He said that 'man, vain man, dressed in a little brief authority, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep!'"

Johnny Bull chuckled.

"That's worth chewing on, Lucas!" he remarked.

"Are you coming, John?" was Lucas' reply. Clearly, he had no use for Shakespeare, or that great man's wisdom.

"No!" said Johnny between his teeth. "I'm not!"

Lucas came round the table at him. His grip was on Johnny's collar the next moment.

Frank Nugent's eyes blazed. He did not stop to think. He grabbed up a jug of milk from the table and jerked.

Swisssssh!

"Urrgh!" gasped Lucas Bull as the milk landed in his red face. "Wurrgh!"

He released Johnny's collar and spun round fiercely at Nugent. A pat of butter met him fairly in the eye.

"Oooooogh!" gasped Lucas.

One eye was bugged up with butter. But the other blazed as he jumped at Nugent. Johnny Bull put a foot in the way, Lucas stumbled over it, and fell headlong against the table.

Crash! Smash! Clatter!

Over went the tea-table with a terrific scattering and smashing of crockery.

Lucas Bull, roaring, sprawled in the ruins.

"Give him some more!" yelled Johnny.

He grabbed the jam! The next moment it was streaming over Lucas' face. Frank Nugent followed it up swiftly with the honey.

Lucas Bull sat up, spluttering wildly. His face was a study in mixed jam and honey and butter. As he sat and spluttered blindly, Johnny Bull gave his bowler hat a terrific bang, and it was crammed down on Lucas' red ears.

"Good-bye, Franky, old bean!" gasped Johnny. "I'd better cut!"

He sprinted for the fence.

Lucas Bull staggered to his feet. He wrenched away the crammed hat, and dabbed stickiness from his face.

Johnny Bull was over the fence in a twinkling. The sound of running feet died away rapidly up the lane.

"Urrrrgh!" spluttered Lucas. "Gurrgh! I will—uurrrgh! You young scoundrels, I will—gurrghgh!"

He dabbed wildly at honey and jam

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and butter. With buttery, jammy eyes, he glared round for the runaway. Then he started for the gate.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Nugent. "Wouldn't you like a wash before you go, Mr. Bull? You're a bit sticky."

Lucas, with a jammy glare, made a rush at him. Frank promptly dodged among the apple-trees. His game was to delay pursuit if he could—as Johnny Bull's other chums had done on previous occasions. Lucas, jammy and infuriated, fell into the trap. He pursued the Greyfriars junior furiously among the apple-trees.

"You young—grooogh!—rascal—I will—grooogh!—I—I—I will—urrrggh!" he spluttered.

Frank clambered into a wide-spreading tree. Lucas' fierce grasp barely missed him as he whipped into the tree with the activity of a monkey. From the fruit-laden branches he grinned down at the enraged Lucas.

"Coming up?" he chuckled.

But Lucas, enraged as he was, remembered that Johnny Bull was on the run. He shook an infuriated fist at Nugent, and turned away.

Bang!

"Whooooop!" roared Lucas, as a ripe, red apple landed on the back of his bull-neck.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lucas stopped—but only for a moment. Then he ran for the gate. Another and another apple whizzed after him as he went. But he did not stop again—he rushed out at the gate and disappeared.

Frank Nugent chuckled, breathlessly, as he dropped from the apple-tree. He had done his best for his chum, and Johnny had, at least, a good start. When he got to the gate, and looked along the Amesbury road, neither of them was in sight—and Frank could only wonder how the hot chase would end.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Knows How!

BEAST!" Billy Bunter made that remark. But he made it under his breath as Fisher T. Fish came along, jerking across the quad with his usual jerky stride.

Having confided to himself, under his breath, what he thought of Fishy, the fat Owl of the Remove approached that bony Transatlantic youth with a fat ingratiating grin.

"I say, Fishy, old chap—" he began.

"Aw, can it!" rapped Fisher T. Fish.

"But I say, old fellow—"

"Pack it up!" snapped Fishy. "And sit on the lid!" he added.

It appeared that Fisher Tarleton Fish had no use for William George Bunter.

In the solitude of school without schoolboys, Fishy had been prepared to give even the fat Owl a welcome, and the glad hand, and the joyful eye—but he had not been prepared to give him anything that cost money. The loss of his cake, on the day of Bunter's arrival, had embittered Fishy.

Bunter had been annoyed, too. Several swipes with the study poker naturally annoyed him. There had been strained relations ever since.

Whenever Fisher T. Fish forgot Bunter's dire offence, in the desire to unburden himself of long bottled-up conversation, Bunter always turned the conversation to matters that interested himself. There was only one subject in which Billy Bunter took a real and abiding interest. That was food. He was as interested in food as Fishy was in

money. Fishy could not mention his favourite topic, money, without Bunter trying to borrow some—for expenditure on tuck! Altogether, Fishy found solitude rather more agreeable than Bunter!

So, having told Bunter to can it, to pack it up and sit on it, Fisher T. Fish jerked onward. But Bunter rolled after him.

"I say, Fishy, hold on!" gasped Bunter. "Don't walk away while a chap's talking! I say, it's rather important."

"Shucks!" grunted Fishy.

"Well, if you don't want that half-crown—"

Fisher T. Fish came to a sudden halt. He did want that half-crown. The cake Bunter had scoffed had cost Fisher T. Fish two-and-six! He wanted that sum from Bunter—if he could get it. It did not look hopeful, but hope springs eternal in the human breast. Bunter had succeeded in interesting Fishy, at any rate.

"You pie-faced clam!" said Fishy. "You owe me half-a-crown! Pony up! I guess I want that half-crown—just a few! Yep! I'll tell a man!"

"Well, you can have it," said Bunter. "I'll tell you how the matter stands, Fishy! My people are away—that's why I'm finishing the hols here, as I told you. But when they come back, it will be all right! I'm expecting a postal order—"

"Eh?"

"On the first day of term," said Bunter, blinking at the American junior through his big spectacles—"the very first day of term—I'm expecting a postal order—in fact, several postal orders—"

"You pie-faced piecan!" hooted Fisher T. Fish.

He did not want to hear about Billy Bunter's celebrated postal order.

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Aw, can it, you gink!"

"But, I say, old chap, do listen!" urged Bunter. "That postal order will be for five bob! Well, I'm letting you have your half-crown out of it. But my idea is this—you lend me another half-crown now—"

"What?"

"And take the whole postal order when it comes!" said Bunter. "What about that, Fishy?"

Fisher T. Fish gazed at him.

He had, for one hopeful moment, hoped that Bunter was going to produce a half-crown! Instead of which, Bunter was trying to stick him for another half-crown!

Words failed Fisher T. Fish!

But words were not needed! Actions would show, more plainly than words, what Fisher T. Fish thought of Bunter's happy suggestion!

He proceeded to actions!

A bony hand suddenly gripped Bunter's collar. The next moment Bunter's bullet head was rapping on one of the old Greyfriars elms.

Bang!

"Yoooooop!" roared Bunter.

Bang!

"Owl! Beast! Wow! Leggo!" shrieked the fat Owl. "Wow! I'll jolly well whop you, you bony beast! Wow! Leggo!"

"Now sit down, you pesky piecan!" snapped Fisher T. Fish.

And he tipped the fat Owl over, and Bunter sat down with a bump that almost shook the old quadrangle of Greyfriars.

"Woo-hooo-hooo!"

Fisher T. Fish jerked on and left Bunter sitting and roaring. The fat

junior scrambled to his feet, and shook a podgy fist after the departing, bony form of Fishy.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Beast! I've a jolly good mind to go after him and mop up the quad with him—Wow! Ow! Wow!"

But instead of going after Fisher T. Fish, Bunter rolled into the House. He did not want to risk being punctured by Fishy's bony fist. And there were more ways than one of killing a cat!

Breathing wrath, Billy Bunter went up to the Remove passage.

There was nobody in that deserted passage; the studies were silent and empty. As eagerly as Fisher T. Fish, Bunter longed for the first day of term to see the Greyfriars crowd coming back. At the moment, however, it suited Bunter for no eyes to observe his movements.

He rolled along to Study No. 14, the last study in the passage.

That study, in term time, was shared by Fisher T. Fish, Johnny Bull, and Squiff. Only Fishy inhabited it at present.

Bunter rolled in and closed the door after him, leaving it a couple of inches ajar.

Then he placed a chair inside the door, picking up a Latin dictionary from the table, and mounted on the chair.

The Latin "dic" was carefully placed, resting on the top of the door and the lintel of the doorway.

So long as the door was not moved, it was as safe as houses. But as soon as the door was pushed open, obviously, that dictionary would come down, with a crash, on the person that pushed it open.

Billy Bunter was not a brainy man. But he had brains enough to fix up a booby-trap!

And he was not finished yet. On top of the dictionary he piled several other books. On top of the books he placed an inkpot.

Having proceeded thus far, the fat Owl surveyed his handiwork with a fat chuckle. He had done enough already to give Fisher T. Fish a surprise when he came back to the study.

But like Alexander of old, who sighed for fresh worlds to conquer, the Owl of the Remove was not satisfied. He blinked round the study, through his big spectacles, for something more.

"Oh, good!" ejaculated Bunter, as he spotted an empty cardboard box.

That box had once contained the cake that had been scoffed by Bunter.

Bunter had found a use for the cake! Now he had found a use for the box!

He took the shovel from the grate and raked down soot from the study chimney. In a few minutes the cardboard box was almost full.

Bunter mounted on the chair again and carefully arranged the box of soot, along with the inkpot, on the pile of books.

He was satisfied now! There was no doubt that the fellow who pushed that door open would get a startling surprise.

The fat junior stepped down and removed the chair. Having arranged that booby-trap over the door, he was unable to get out of the study. But he did not want to get out. He sat down in the armchair to wait. When Billy Bunter had nothing to eat, and it was not time to go to sleep, he could fill in time with contented satisfaction by sitting down. He sat!

He grinned as he sat.

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Sooner or later, Fisher T. Fish would come back to his study! He would bag that booby-trap! Bunter, sitting comfortably in the armchair, would see the show, like sitting at a stall in a theatre!

It was quite a happy prospect! Thoughtfully he placed the study poker handy. He might need it when Fisher T. Fish received a shower of books, ink, and soot on his bony Transatlantic head.

Grinning, Bunter waited.

As it happened, he had not long to wait. Hardly half an hour had elapsed when footsteps came up the Remove passage. Quick, heavy footsteps—heavier than Fishy's tread generally sounded. But there was no possibility of a mistake—nobody but Fishy came to that study.

Bunter, grinning breathlessly, waited. The footsteps stopped at the door. The door was pushed open.

Crash! Clatter! Bang! Splash!

"Yurrooooooop!"

"He, he, he!" gasped Bunter. "Oh crikey! Oh crumbs! He, he, he!"

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Lucas!

"JOHN! Stop!" Lucas Bull shouted along the platform of Courtfield Station. Johnny Bull stared round at him.

"Oh, you rotter!" gasped Johnny.

Johnny Bull had stepped out of the train at Courtfield. From another carriage, farther up the train, stepped a man with a thick-set, stocky figure and a brick-red face.

Johnny glared at him.

He had told his friends that Lucas was a sticker! There was no doubt that it was so! Lucas was sticking like glue.

Having given all the other members of the famous Co. a turn, and having been rooted out of refuge after refuge, Johnny Bull had turned to his last resource—Greyfriars! He had hoped that Lucas was dropped off the track somewhere in Wiltshire, and that he would never suspect the final refuge for which the runaway was heading.

It was a far cry from Wiltshire to Kent. He had seen nothing of Lucas in transit. He had put up for the night at a railway hotel—half-expecting to see his pursuer when he came down in the morning. But he had seen nothing of him.

Still, Johnny was very cautious. He had taken a roundabout route, as if his destination was anything but Greyfriars. In the sunny September afternoon he stepped out of the train at

Courtfield, feeling safe! But it was, alas! only to see the indomitable Lucas step from the same train, and to hear his hard, unpleasant voice calling on him to stop.

Lucas, evidently, had picked up the track somewhere. Or perhaps he had guessed what Johnny's refuge was going to be. Anyhow, there he was—not a dozen yards away, and coming down the platform with long strides.

Johnny gave him an infuriated glare, and cut along the platform to the exit.

"Stop!" roared Lucas.

Johnny threw his ticket to the collector and bolted out. After him rushed Lucas. Johnny was a few lengths ahead, when he whipped out of the station into Courtfield High Street.

"Stop!" hooted Lucas.

Johnny went down Courtfield High Street at full speed. After him followed Lucas Bull, going strong.

Johnny shot round the first corner—and there was a crash. He did not see anybody round that corner, and had no time to look. A youth, with bright black eyes and a handsomely curved nose, was about to emerge into the High Street, when Johnny met him in full career.

"Oh!" gasped Johnny, staggering from the shock.

"Wooh!" spluttered Solly Lazarus.

"Oh, you thilly ath! Wooh!"

"Solly, old man!" Johnny recognised the youthful Lazarus, a member of the Courtfield football eleven, with whom the Remove played matches. "I say, Solly, old chap—"

"Oh, thissors!" gasped Solly. "Oh, you thilly ath! Thending a fellow thpinning—"

Johnny grabbed him by the arm.

"There's a rotter after me, Solly! Stand by me, old chap! I say, trip him as he comes round the corner, will you, there's a sport?"

Johnny tore on.

Solly Lazarus, gasping, blinked after him. Then he grinned. Solly was a good-natured fellow. He was quite ready to do a Greyfriars man a good turn, regardless of the fact that that Greyfriars man had just barged into him and sent him spinning.

Johnny did not wait for an answer. He knew that he could rely on old Solly. He raced on.

"Oh, thissors!" gasped Solly.

He stood ready.

Less than a minute, and Lucas Bull came charging round the corner.

Lucas was rather more careful in the matter than Johnny had been. He would not have run into Solly Lazarus.

But it booted not—for Solly Lazarus ran into him!

The moment he saw Lucas, Solly knew that this was the pursuer, and barged right into him.

Crash! Bump!

Lucas, with an angry roar, sat down on the pavement.

"Oh! Thorry!" gasped Solly, grinning breathlessly.

But he did not stay to say more. The look on the brick-red face indicated that something was going to happen to Solly when Lucas got on his feet. Obviously, it was going to be something painful. Solly did not wait for it to happen. He whipped round the corner, and disappeared into the High Street.

Lucas Bull staggered to his feet breathlessly.

He gasped as he took up the chase again.

But for Solly's happy intervention, there was little doubt that he would have had Johnny Bull. But Johnny had turned another corner now. By the

time Lucas reached that corner, Johnny had evidently turned another, for he was not to be seen.

Lucas halted.

Johnny had disappeared. It was useless to hunt him up one street and down another. But there was not the slightest doubt of his destination. Lucas has suspected it, and now he was sure. The Greyfriars junior could have headed for the neighbourhood of Greyfriars School for only one reason—he was going to the school.

Assured on that point, Lucas was annoyed, but by no means downhearted, at Johnny's escape. He would have preferred to grab him on the spot and march him off. But he was prepared, if necessary, to walk into Greyfriars School and demand him of whomsoever might be in charge there in vacation-time.

With that intention fixed in his mind, Lucas Bull walked back to the High Street, inquired the way to Greyfriars School, and started to walk across Courtfield Common.

It was a very pleasant walk across the common in the September sunshine. The wide, green common; the downs in the distance; a glimpse here and there of the rippling Sark; shady old trees putting on their autumn brown; the sweeping woods of Popper Court—all made a very pleasant view. But the hard-headed and practical Lucas did not give it a glance or a thought. He had no use for scenery. Singing birds and humming bees passed unnoticed by that extremely practical young man, to whose ears the whir and clank of busy machinery was far preferable to the music of the spheres.

He arrived at the school and rang at the gate.

Gosling came down to the gate.

Old Gosling blinked with his ancient eyes at the brick-red face of the visitor. Lucas gave him a glance. A doddering old wreck who ought to have been sacked years ago was his opinion of the ancient Greyfriars porter. Perhaps some hint of that opinion showed in his face. Gosling grunted.

"This is Greyfriars School?" rapped Lucas.

"It are!" grunted Gosling.

"I am here to see a Greyfriars boy—a junior—"

"They don't come back for more'n a week yet!" grunted Gosling. "The 'olidays ain't hover yet!"

"I know that! But one boy—a Remove boy—is here, as I am perfectly well aware!" snapped Lucas. "Is not that the case?"

"Oh, yes! That's so!" grunted Gosling.

"I am here to see him. I am his relative," said Lucas.

And, as Gosling still stood blinking at him, he pushed the old porter aside and walked in.

Gosling stared after him.

"My eye!" he grunted. "Wot I says is this 'ere—my eye!"

Lucas crossed the quadrangle.

He glanced about him, at the quiet old quad, the ancient elms, and still more ancient old stone walls, clad with immemorial ivy, and his lip curled contemptuously.

It was his first view of Johnny's school—an imposing pile, but, obviously, to Lucas' practical eye, requiring a lot of modernising.

Had Lucas been in charge there, his first order would have been to clear away all that mouldy old ivy; his next, to root out all that stained glass, and put in windows that would let in light; his third probably would have been to cut down the old elms, which had a value as timber, but were quite useless

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Lucas pushed open the door, and was about to stride into the study when there was a crash and a clatter, and a swishing and swooshing. Something hard hit him on the head—something black and powdery swamped over him—something liquid streamed down his neck. "Yurrrrrgh!" he spluttered. "He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

sticking about the place as they were doing now.

He knocked at the door, which was opened by Trotter, the House page.

"Yes, sir?" said Trotter inquiringly. "My name is Bull!" said Lucas curtly. "I am here to see a Greyfriars boy, a relative of mine. Where is he?"

"Master Fish or Master Bunter, sir?"

"Neither! His name is Bull—John Bull!"

Trotter blinked. Lucas had no doubt that Johnny had reached the school; he had had ample time to get in first. As a matter of fact, Johnny hadn't. Trotter was completely and blissfully unaware of any of Johnny Bull's proceedings since Greyfriars had broken up for the summer holidays.

"He ain't here, sir!" said Trotter. "Nobody's come back yet, sir, except Master Bunter and Master Fish."

"I am perfectly well aware that he is here, and I demand to see him!" said Lucas icily. "He has run away from home without leave, and I have followed him here! Take me to him at once!"

"Oh crikey!" said Trotter. "I ain't seen him, sir! If he's come in, sir, he may have come in by the boys' door, and—"

"He is certainly here," said Lucas. "whether you have seen him or not! Could he get to his study without being seen?"

"Oh, yes, sir, easy!"

"I have heard him mention his study—No. 14 in the Remove! Take me to the Remove studies!"

"This way, sir!" said the astonished Trotter.

Lucas followed him. Trotter led the way up the staircase, to the Remove staircase above, and the Remove landing. He pointed.

"It's the last study in the passage, sir. I'll go and see if Master Bull is there, sir, if you'll wait—"

"You need not trouble!" Lucas did

not desire Johnny to be warned of his arrival. "That will do. I can find my way now."

"Very good, sir!"

Lucas Bull strode along the Remove passage with quick strides. He reached the last study, over which was a half-obliterated number—"14." The door stood an inch or two ajar. If Johnny was there, he was safely cornered. And he could hear someone in the study—a creak of a chair as someone stirred. Lucas pushed open the door and strode in.

He hardly knew what happened next. There was a crash and a clatter, and a swishing and swooshing. Something hard hit him on the head; something black and powdery swamped over him; something liquid streamed down his neck.

Lucas gave a roar of surprise and wrath.

Standing in the midst of a shower of school books, smothered with soot and drenched with ink, he roared.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not John!

BILLY BUNTER chortled.

"He, he, he!"

"Yurrrrrgh!" spluttered

Lucas, staggering in the doorway. "Urrgh! What—John, you young scoundrel—Yurroooooop!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He ceased to chuckle.

He blinked at the staggering man in the doorway, with his eyes almost bulging through his spectacles.

It was not Fisher T. Fish who had pushed open the door and walked into the booby-trap. It was not a boy at all; it was a man—a man Bunter had never seen before, and who certainly did not belong to Greyfriars in any way. How

could an absolute stranger have walked into Fishy's study? Bunter, who never foresaw anything, had never foreseen such a possibility.

Certainly that study was Bull's as well as Fishy's. But how could any fellow have guessed that a relative of Johnny Bull would be barging in to see him in holiday-time at the school?

It was one of those things that no fellow could have foreseen. Still, it was very unfortunate.

Bunter goggled at the man in horror.

Lucas dabbed soot and ink from his face, from his nose, from his eyes. He howled, he gasped, he spluttered! He had been taken quite by surprise—but he was more enraged than surprised. He had no doubt, of course, that this was Johnny's handiwork! Johnny had fixed this up for him. And he was going to thrash Johnny within an inch of his life!

Luckily, he had his walking-stick with him. He had dropped it; now he picked it up. He gave an inky, sooty glare round the room for Johnny.

He bounded at Bunter. Through a mist of ink and soot he did not see with his usual keen clearness. He saw a schoolboy—he grabbed him.

Bunter yelled.

"Ow! I say—yaroooh! It wasn't me—whooooop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

An iron grip on Bunter's collar twisted him over. The walking-stick landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

Bunter had placed the study poker in readiness, in case it was wanted for dealing with Fisher T. Fish. He forgot it now. Not that it would have been of any use. He was a helpless lump in Lucas' muscular grasp.

Whack, whack!

"Yaroooh! Yooop! Whooooop!" roared Bunter. "Help! Leggo! Oh crikey!"

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Leave off, you beast! I never did it, and I meant it for Fishy! Wow! Wow!"

"John! You young scoundrel—" panted Lucas.

"Ow! I ain't John!" shrieked Bunter. "Leggo! Help! Whoop!"

It dawned on Lucas that it was not John! He realised that John would not have howled and wriggled, but would rather have punched and thumped. He ceased to rain whacks with the walking-stick.

"Ow! Yow! Wow!" roared Bunter. "Beast! Ow! Wow! Yow!"

Lucas dabbed soot and ink away, and cleared his vision. He stared savagely at the fat Owl of the Remove. No one else was in the study. That fat fool was alone there—John was not to be seen.

"Who are you?" roared Lucas.

"Ow! I'm Bunter! Keep off! Ow!"

"Where is John?"

"Ow! Wow! I don't know! Beast!"

"You young rascal!" roared Lucas. "John has put you up to this! Do you think I don't know that! Tell me at once where John is, or—"

He whirled up the walking-stick, and Bunter howled with apprehension.

"Ow! Beast! I don't know anything about John!" yelled Bunter. "I fixed it up for Fishy—wow! What the thump did you come in for, blow you? You've got no business here! Ow! Wow!"

"This is John Bull's study, you young rascal, and I came here for him, and you—"

"You silly idiot!" yelled Bunter. "Bull's away for the holidays! He won't be back till the new term. Nobody's here but me and Fishy."

Whack, whack!

"Yaroooooh!"

"Where is John?" roared Lucas.

"Ow! Beast! Wow! Blow John—blow you! Ow! Keep off, you rotter!" shrieked the hapless Owl. "Keep that stick away, you beast! Wow!"

Whack!

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter dodged frantically round the study table and bounded out at the doorway. Lucas made another lick at him as he went, and a fiendish yell floated back from Bunter. Then he went down the Remove passage as if he were on the cinder-path.

"Say, what's got you?" gasped Fisher T. Fish, on the Remove landing, as Bunter raced by. But the fat Owl did not stay to explain what had "got" him. He went down the Remove staircase two at a time, and vanished.

"Wake snakes!" murmured the astonished Fishy.

The next moment he jumped nearly clear of the landing as a man with a black face came striding down the passage. Fishy gazed at him with distended eyes.

"Carry me home to die!" he gasped.

Lucas gave him an inky, sooty glare. "Where is John Bull?" he roared.

"Eh? What? Johnny Bull?" ejaculated Fishy. "I believe he lives in Yorkshire—yarooooop! Whoop! Great Abraham Lincoln! Yaroooh!"

As Lucas was convinced that Johnny was in that building, he took Fishy's reply for playful impertinence. He got in only one lick with the stick—Fishy did not stop for another. But it was a hefty lick, and Fisher T. Fish woke the echoes as he fled across the landing and dodged up the Fifth Form passage.

Lucas, breathing fury and soot,

stamped down the stairs. Trotter, in the lower hall, gazed at him. He had heard an uproar from above, and wondered what had happened. Now he knew.

"Oh jiminy!" gasped Trotter, gazing at Lucas' inky, sooty face with a fascinated gaze. "Oh j-j-jiminy!"

Lucas strode at him.

"Where is John Bull?" he roared.

"I dunno, air, I— Yoooooop!"

Again Lucas got in only one lick, but it was a hefty one. Trotter vanished into the regions below, yelling.

Lucas stood panting with fury.

He turned at a footstep—gripping the stick. But it was Mrs. Kebble, the house-dame, who sailed up to him with lofty and severe dignity. Even the enraged Lucas did not think of giving that stately dame a lick with his walking-stick!

"Sir!" said Mrs. Kebble. "Who are you? What—what—"

She broke off, gazing at Lucas' face. It was a striking and startling visage, at the moment. Where it was not black with soot and ink, it was scarlet with fury.

With a tremendous effort Lucas calmed himself, and spluttered out who he was, and what he wanted. Mrs. Kebble, with an aspect of severe disapproval, could only tell him that nothing had been seen of Master Bull at the school. Gosling must have seen him if he had come in; he could inquire of the porter. By that time, it dawned on Lucas that Johnny, having spotted him in pursuit, had not carried out his intention of getting into Greyfriars. He had walked into a booby-trap, set by one young rascal he did not know for another young rascal he did not know—that was the sum-total of all he had gained by his visit to Johnny's school!

However, the house-dame—still severe and disapproving—told him where he could wash. He really had to get a wash before he resumed the hunting of Johnny Bull. And as he cleaned off ink and soot he breathed, deadly wrath, resolved to scour the whole neighbourhood till he discovered John, and then— What was going to happen then was indicated by his frenzied grip on the walking-stick as he tramped down to the gates.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER!

On the Brink!

JOHNNY set his lips.

His eyes gleamed at the stocky figure and red face of his cousin—redder than ever, after so much rubbing and scrubbing.

Johnny was seated in a canoe, by the school raft. He had reached Greyfriars, but, with the certainty that Lucas would arrive there soon after him, he had not gone into the school.

Johnny was a resourceful youth, and as resolved as ever not to give in. But he was feeling rather at the end of his tether. Lucas had hunted him to his last refuge. Putting in the rest of the holidays at Greyfriars was now out of the question. Lucas would root him out of Wharton Lodge, Cherry Place, and Frank Nugent's home in Wiltshire. Instead of going into the school, therefore, Johnny had gone down to the boatkeeper's house. The boatkeeper, surprised as he was to see a Remove fellow before the term, let him have a canoe out, and Johnny sat in it while

he considered his next movements. He was, at all events, safe now; he could paddle across the river if Lucas appeared in the offing. But for what destination to head now was a problem that required thinking out.

He was thinking it out when Lucas Bull appeared on the bank. At sight of the junior in the canoe Lucas broke into a run, his eyes blazing, and his fist gripping the stick.

Johnny Bull coolly picked up the paddle and shoved off. The canoe rocked out of reach as Lucas arrived at the edge of the planking.

He had to stop there.

Johnny gave him a grin.

"Jump!" he suggested cheerfully.

Lucas brandished the walking-stick.

"You young rascal! Come back at once!" he bellowed. "I will thrash you within an inch of your life!"

"If I were as big as you are, Lucas, you wouldn't have to ask twice!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "I'd come there, and give you such a thrashing, you rotter, that you'd have to crawl back to Yorkshire. Your stick wouldn't stop me."

"I order you—"

"Rats!"

"You disobedient young scoundrel, I—"

"You meddling fathead!" retorted Johnny. "Can't you mind your own bizney? I'm not coming back to Moor Fell! I'd camp under a hedge, rather! Think you can give me orders? Yah!"

Lucas stood breathing hard and calculating the distance to the canoe. He was so evidently thinking of jumping it that Johnny gave a turn with the paddle and pushed farther out.

"Better not!" grinned Johnny. "You can't swim, you know. That's one of the things we learn at Greyfriars; but you've never had time for it, old bean! And it's pretty deep here!"

Lucas set his teeth.

"Will you come back?"

"Hardly!"

The next moment Lucas Bull sprang.

It was a wide jump—wider than Lucas would have attempted had he been cool. But he was not cool now. He was boiling with rage. For days and days he had been simmering. Billy Bunter's booby-trap had given the final touch—now he was boiling over!

Wide as the jump was, Lucas reached the canoe, his feet crashing on the prow.

The prow dipped, and the stern rose high in the air. Lucas was not a lightweight, and all his weight came crashing on the prow, driving it under.

There was a gasp from Johnny Bull. The water rushed into the canoe in a flood.

Backwards went Lucas Bull, falling on his back in the river. Johnny made a clutch at him as he went, and missed him. But his clutch at Lucas threw Johnny's weight on the sinking prow of the canoe.

It shot away from beneath him, leaving him struggling in the water.

He gurgled as he went under.

But he was up in a moment. Johnny was a good swimmer. Every Greyfriars man had to learn to swim before he was allowed on the river at all. Even Billy Bunter could swim, after a fashion. Swimming in deep water and a swift current with one's clothes on, was not easy—but Johnny could have got back to the raft easily enough.

But he thought of Lucas.

Lucas Bull knew all about machinery. Efficiently and conscientiously he managed the "works." He could

handle "labour." No man in the works ever got by Lucas, without putting in a fair day's work for a fair day's wages. His keen brain grasped the most complicated accounts at a glance. Plans and specifications that might have made any fellow's head ache to look at them, were pie to Lucas!

All these things could Lucas do, and do well. But he could not swim. And at the present moment all his many gifts and abilities were of less use to him than as much knowledge of swimming as was acquired by any fag in the Second or Third Form at Greyfriars!

Johnny stared round over shining water.

A dozen yards from him, down the current, a despairing hand was thrown up. It vanished.

Johnny set his teeth.

He spent a split second in tearing off his jacket. Then he was swimming for the drowning man.

A thousand thoughts flashed through Johnny's brain at that fearful moment. Lucas was a meddling ass, a good deal of a bully; but—from the bottom of his heart, Johnny wished that he had stuck it out, and stood Lucas somehow.

The man was an overhearing fool—but he meant well. Obstinate, wrong-headed, indulging a bullying temper in the fixed belief that he was following the path of duty; but— At that awful moment Johnny Bull would have given all the treasures of the wide world to be back at Moor Fell—putting up with Lucas' meddling and bullying. After all, his father had left him in Lucas' charge. If—if—if only—

While a crowd of half-formed thoughts thronged his brain, Johnny Bull was swimming as he had never swum before.

A face showed over the rushing water—a face brick-red, but as pallid as it could be. The eyes were half-closed. Lucas was struggling feebly, as the current swept him away—useless struggles. But Johnny Bull came shooting down the current, and grasped him as he was going under again.

Up came the brick-red face, and stayed up.

"Hold on!" spluttered Johnny.

Lucas held on. Johnny swam, supporting him. Lucas was as pale as his brick complexion permitted; he was half-drowned, and far gone. But he was

not confused. He was still the steady-headed Yorkshireman. He could not swim—but he held on to the fellow who could, giving him as little trouble as possible.

Johnny, swimming hard, stared round over the glistening surface of the Sark. He was already swept out of sight of the boathouse. The banks seemed an illimitable distance away. But he struck out for the nearer bank—only to be whirled away by an eddy of the current.

Twice, thrice, it seemed to Johnny that he would reach that elusive grass, glistening in the sunlight. Twice, thrice he was swept out again—once with a bunch of rushes torn away in his fingers.

And now his strength was going.

It came dizzily into Johnny's mind that he was not going to reach the bank.

Without his burden, perhaps, there was still a chance, though his wet clothes, and his boots full of water, dragged him down. But it did not occur to him to relinquish his burden.

(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

IN my chat to you last week I mentioned that I had received a letter from a disgruntled reader and that such a case was rare. Well, it never rains but it pours! I've been "called over the coals" again this week! Samuel Davey, of Shenfield, who is making the complaint, comes straight to the point. "I was unable to get a copy of the MAGNET from my newsagent last Monday," he writes, "and I feel very annoyed about it!" I can imagine your feelings, chum, but what can I do about it? Ever since I persuaded Frank Richards to write cover-to-cover stories of Harry Wharton & Co. for the MAGNET the Old Paper has been selling like hot cakes! I gather from Sam's letter that he has only recently joined the happy band of "Magnetites" and therefore has not seen my oft-repeated advice to "Order the MAGNET well in advance!" Hence his "getting left" as Fisher T. Fish would say.

Yes, the MAGNET is breaking all records as regards sales. Boys and girls know a good paper when they see it, what? My old chums are getting their pals to read the MAGNET. I wish I could thank them all personally and shake them by the hand, but this is impossible. Anyway, old-timers, carry on with the good work!

Our companion paper—the "Gem"—is going great guns, too! In addition to a topping long yarn of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, each week, it contains stories dealing with Harry Wharton's early schooldays. Ronald Stapleton, Cliff White, Herbert Wallace, and others who wrote to ask what Harry Wharton was like when he first came to Greyfriars should make a point of reading these yarns. True, Harry Wharton is popular among his schoolfellows to-day, but when he first entered the Greyfriars Remove it was an uphill fight all the way. Bob Cherry, at present one of his staunchest chums, was his rival. The bullying Bulstrode, too, was a force to be reckoned with. Harry battled through, however,

and— But get this week's issue of the "Gem" and read all about it yourself.

BUT what of next week's great MAGNET story? You'll laugh till the tears run down your cheeks when you read next Saturday's exciting yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled:

"SCHEMERS OF STUDY No. 7."
By Frank Richards.

Peter Todd, Billy Bunter, and Tom Dutton—deaf, but doughty—are about the queerest trio of juniors to be found anywhere. And they're all on the warpath! Peter Todd, who has been roughly handled, holds a secret meeting with his study-mates to discuss ways and means of getting his own back. Things don't work out according to plan, however, and the fat's in the fire with a vengeance! This story is one you'll remember for a long time, and I advise you to remind your newsagent that you want a copy of the MAGNET reserved for you!

The "Greyfriars Herald," with Harry Wharton once again at the head of affairs, will appear as usual in this issue, and I'm sure that you will agree with me that it comes up to its usual excellent standard.

I feel that I cannot let this chat go by without once again mentioning

"THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL."

A tremendous number of you, I know, have been anxiously looking forward to this annual treat. Well, hustle round to your newsagent right now and purchase this bargain price volume. In its 256 pages you will find stories of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, and Rookwood, adventure and sports stories, and other good things too numerous to mention here. This year's "Holiday Annual" will be eagerly sought after and I want all my regular readers to be the first to have it. Think what it will mean if you leave it too late and fail to get this bumper five shillingsworth!

Inside every copy of this week's "Modern Boy" is a

**SPLENDID PICTURE POSTCARD OF
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Guthrie has been wiping up European Records this year—and you won't easily forget his grand win in the Senior T.T. in the Isle of Man, when he streaked home eighteen seconds ahead of Stanley Woods, and set up a new record speed of 85.86 miles an hour. A grand effort—and the

FREE "Modern Boy" POSTCARD is a fine souvenir of Britain's Number One Rider!

HERE'S a curious question which Harry Parker, of Staines, has fired at me. He wants to know

DO EMERALDS BLIND SNAKES?

There is a very ancient superstition to the effect that if an emerald is shown to a snake, the reptile is immediately blinded. But I am afraid that, like many superstitions, there is no truth in it. Anyway, I wouldn't like to face a twenty-foot boa-constrictor or an Indian cobra with only an emerald to protect me! The same superstition said that an emerald would strengthen human eyes.

You may not know it, but emeralds of large size, so long as they are free from flaws, are more valuable and rare than rubies and diamonds. The largest emerald ever known was possessed by natives of Peru at the time the Spaniards first visited that country. It was as big as an ostrich egg, and was worshipped by the natives. In ancient days kings were said to possess emeralds of as much as two cubits in length—which would be about 42 inches! These, however, were not real emeralds. They were a kind of malachite which is known as "false emerald."

As you know, I am always looking around for curious bits of information to pass on to my readers. Here's an item I came across recently, which concerns

INSECTS WHICH LIGHT UP HOUSES!

Fireflies, which are found in the warmer regions of the earth, are of many different varieties, but the brightest of them all is found in the West Indies and especially in Hayti. This species gives out light from two little prominences on the middle of its body, and the light is so powerful that small print may be read by it.

In certain out-of-the-way parts of the negro republic of Hayti the conditions are extremely primitive, and ordinary house lighting is almost unknown. The natives, therefore, catch fireflies, and put eight to ten of them in a phial. The combined light of all the insects is quite sufficient for necessary domestic purposes!

That's all for this week. Look out for another cheery chin-wag next Saturday, chums.

YOUR EDITOR.

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Again he made a desperate effort. But he did not get within three yards of the towpath before he was whirled away again.

His teeth were set hard. He knew now that the game was up, unless something like a miracle happened. His clothes, his boots, were dragging him down—Lucas was dragging him down! The game was up! He set his teeth, and fought on! A Yorkshire tyke bites, alive or dead! Johnny was going to bite to the finish, at any rate.

"You young fool!" It was Lucas' first word. His voice, usually so hard and strident, was a gasping whisper. "You can't save me—save yourself, if you can!"

"Oh, shut up!" hissed Johnny.

"You can't—"

"Hold on!"

Lucas let go.

Johnny grabbed him by the hair as he went, and dragged. He tried to speak. He could only utter a husky gasp.

"Hold on, blow you! Hold on, you fool!"

"Let me go, you young idiot!"

"Shan't!"

There was a shout on the river. It was fortunate for two obstinate Yorkshiremen that old Joyce, the wood-cutter, was out in his punt that afternoon. Johnny's dizzy eyes spotted him. He tried to shout—his voice died in a gasp. But old Joyce was poling out to intercept him—and he grasped at Johnny as he was swept by.

Two drenched and dripping figures, in the last stage of exhaustion, lay in the punt, as old Joyce poled to the bank.

Johnny sat up. Lucas sat up. They looked at one another.

"You fool!" said Lucas.

"You idiot!" said Johnny.

They were too exhausted to exchange further compliments.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

All Right!

"**B**LOW!" granted Johnny Bull. He stood by old Joyce's cottage, staring gloomily and thoughtfully at the river. His clothes had been dried by the fire in the wood-cutter's cottage along with Lucas'. Johnny was feeling tired, but otherwise little the worse. Lucas, not yet recovered sufficiently to stir, still sat in a blanket. Johnny left him to it. But he did not go. Staring at the river with a glum brow, Johnny was thinking it out on rather new lines.

"Blow!" he said again.

Old Joyce came out. He was going to look for the capsized canoe, and get it in. Johnny's glance followed him.

"Blow!" he said, for the third time.

Then he stepped in at the doorway.

Lucas' face—brick-red again—was turned towards him. Johnny gave him a scowl.

"I'll wait till you're ready," he said gruffly.

Lucas stared.

"I thought you were gone," he said. Grunt from Johnny.

"Well, I'm not. I'll wait for you. I'm coming back to Moor Fell, if you like. I'll stick it to the end of the vac, somehow. Take your time."

Lucas smiled faintly.

"You're not the soft slacker I thought you, Johnny," he said.

Johnny stared. It was the first time Lucas Bull had called him anything but "John."

"Like your cheek to think me anything of the kind," retorted Johnny. "But it's no good talking sense to you, Lucas. You're an obstinate fathead, and that's that. But the pater did leave me with you, and I'm coming back. I dare say you'll admit now that we learn one or two useful things at Greyfriars," added Johnny sarcastically. "Swimming, frinstance!"

"Yes," said Lucas quietly. "You've saved my life, Johnny."

"Rot! Old Joyce lugged us both out."

"Don't be a young ass, Johnny!"

"Well, don't you be a goat," said Johnny. "Take my tip, and learn to

THE REMOVE CAPTAINCY ELECTION WHICH WAS PLAYED OUT ON THE CRICKET FIELD!

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"WHO SHALL BE CAPTAIN?"

by Frank Richards

the ripping Greyfriars yarn of the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., which appears in our companion paper—

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swim. It's as useful as book-keeping by double entry, sometimes."

"Quite!" said Lucas.

Johnny eyed him curiously.

"Feeling ill?" he asked.

"No."

"Then what's the matter with you? You're jolly good-tempered and civil all of a sudden."

"You cheeky young——" Lucas checked himself. "You're not the slacker I thought you, Johnny. You've got grit and pluck. You're right Yorkshire in your own way, though it's not my way. You're willing to come back to Moor Fell with me and too the line?"

Johnny drew a deep breath.

"Not willing," he said; "but I'll come. I've said so."

"You'll have to give orders some day, Johnny. A fellow must learn to obey before he can give orders to others."

"That's sense," said Johnny. "I've said I'll come back."

"That's good enough," said Lucas. "Please yourself."

"Eh?"

"You needn't wait for me. I'm getting to the station as soon as I can,

and taking the first train back to York. Probably you would prefer one for Surrey?"

"Well, my hat!" said Johnny.

He stared at Lucas Bull; Lucas stared back grimly. Then Johnny grinned, and held out his hand.

"Sorry we've had such rows, Lucas, old man. I expect we've both been a bit pig-headed. Good-bye, Lucas!"

"Good-bye, Johnny!"

They shook hands.

Harry Wharton stared.

"Johnny!" he ejaculated.

"The esteemed and ridiculous Johnny!" exclaimed Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

They were on the terrace at Wharton Lodge in the September sunset. They had been talking of Johnny Bull, and of seeing him again on the first day of the new term at Greyfriars, now near at hand. And suddenly they held him, walking cheerily up the drive. They rushed to meet him.

"Johnny, old man——" Wharton grasped one hand.

"My absurd Johnny——" the Nabob of Bhanipur grasped the other.

Johnny Bull chuckled.

"Glad to see me again?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"You've dodged that blighter and come back?" asked Harry.

"I've come back," said Johnny.

"But old Lucas isn't a blighter; he's not a bad sort."

"Eh?"

"A bit rough-and-ready, but right Yorkshire all right," said Johnny.

"Oh!"

"We've made friends. I dare say we shall keep friends, if we don't meet," said Johnny. "The less we see of one another, the more pally we shall be—see?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Then he's not coming after you?" he asked.

"Oh, no! That's all over. He's heading north now. He's an obstinate ass, but—but——" Johnny Bull paused. "I may have been a bit obstinate, too."

"The mayfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

And Harry Wharton chuckled.

"But it's all right now," said Johnny cheerfully. "Right as rain. Old Lucas will be enjoying the machinery at the works again to-morrow. He must have missed it fearfully the last few days."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So he's all right, and I'm all right, and——"

"And the allrightfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

And it was!

THE END.

(Next week's extra-long story of Harry Wharton & Co., "SCHEMERS OF STUDY No. 7," is better than ever. Make sure of reading it by ordering your MAGNET now!)

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YOUR PREFECTS ARE WONDERFUL!

Breathes BARBARA REDFERN

Girl visitors to London often say: "Your policemen are wonderful!"

Girl visitors to Greyfriars nearly always make the same remark about your prefects!

They really are the most impressive-looking creatures. I've seen London policemen and Life-guardsmen, and I've read about strong, silent heroes of the Wild West and Sheikhs of Araby. But Greyfriars' prefects have them all beaten hollow!

Whether they're wearing tailed coats and topers at church parade, or flannels at cricket or business-like-looking football kit, there's always something about them that's different from the rest.

Of course, they're a good-looking crowd. Wingate and North would take honours in any contest for budding film-stars, and Loder, though not very popular, is undeniably quite handsome.

But it's not good looks that make them what they are.

What really distinguishes them, I fancy, is their lordly, superior air. Their very walk, as they stride majestically across the quad, seems to proclaim them as monarchs of all they survey. Their expression is that of a benign, but very lofty authority.

No wonder they look like they do, when you consider the power they have. Why, Hurree Singh told me they actually use ashplants on junior boys. He even said that the whackfulness was sometimes terrific! Horrors!

Sometimes I've heard whispers that these supermen of yours are quite human when you get to know them.

I've heard that they get frightfully peeved when their fags burn their toast; that they're not all such brilliant scholars as they look; that some of them are quite small fry when they get home amongst their brothers and sisters!

Really, I can't believe it. I can't imagine any of them being other than what they look—serene, austere, omnipotent, omniscient—(Stop it, Babs, or you'll get the printers all mixed up!—M. H.)

Well, anyway, whatever they may be, there's one thing that's always going to be true as far as I'm concerned:

YOUR PREFECTS ARE WONDERFUL!

Complete BOYS' STORY By a Girl— SKOOLBOY AND HERO!

By BESSIE BUNTER

CHAPTER 1.

"Oh, bother prep! I'm not going to do another stroke till I've had a snack! So there!"

With these words, Harry Snorton, captain of the Fourth at Bluefriars, flung down his knitting-needles and rose from the table.

His chums, Bob Damson and Frank Oldgent, looked up from their knitting in alarm.

"Don't be a silly goose!" said Bob Damson. "You know that Mr. Belch said you were to finish knitting that jumper to-night. He'll be cross with you if you don't—truth and honour!"

"Stuff!" said Snorton, with a toss of his head. "I shall do as I please. So there!"

The defiant boy lifted his nose high in the air and frowned out of the study.

First he called on his friend, Johnny Bullock, who was busy with crochet work.

"Be an angel and offer me something to eat, Johnnikins!" he begged.

"Frightfully sorry, but the cupboard's bare!" replied Johnny Bullock, with a simpering smile.

Harry Snorton stamped on the floor with annoyance. He went next door to the study shared by Wun Tung, the Chinese junior, and Hurree Whistle, the boy from India.

"Do be pets and lend me some tuck!" he cried.

"No havvy!" said Wun Tung.

"You are in the passidge when you should be in your study, doing your knitting prep!"

"I—I—I—"

"It is useless for you to repeat the third person plural, Snorton! Follow me!"

Weeping bitterly, Snorton followed the Fourth Form master.

Mr. Belch led the way to the most dreaded apartment at Bluefriars—the Head's study!

"Sir!" cried Mr. Belch, dropping

"The no-havfulness is tremendous!" said Hurree Whistle.

"Botheration!" cried Harry Snorton, as he stepped out of the study.

The next moment his cry of anger changed to an x-clamation of alarm, as he bumped into a tall, stern figure outside.

"SNORTON!"

Trembling like an aspen leaf, Snorton held out his hand. And then—

Suddenly there was a shriek. Then another shriek. Then shriek after shriek. All over the Hall, boys and masters started climbing on to chairs and hugging each other in sheer terror!

The Head looked round with dilated eyes.

"What—what is it?" he cried, livid with fear.

"It's a mouse!" cried Mr. Belch. "It's running all over the floor!"

"Yarcooh!"

The Head leaped wildly on to his desk as he saw the little grey rodent skuttling along towards him.

"Help!" he roared. "Save me! Catch it, somebody! Take it away!"

For a moment there was no reply. Seniors and masters alike were running away like anything!

Then someone stepped forward and, with incredible daring, faced the oncoming creature.

It was Snorton!

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