

THE SCHOOL STORY "THE MAKING OF HARRY WHARTON!"—INSIDE.
OF THE YEAR!

The GEM

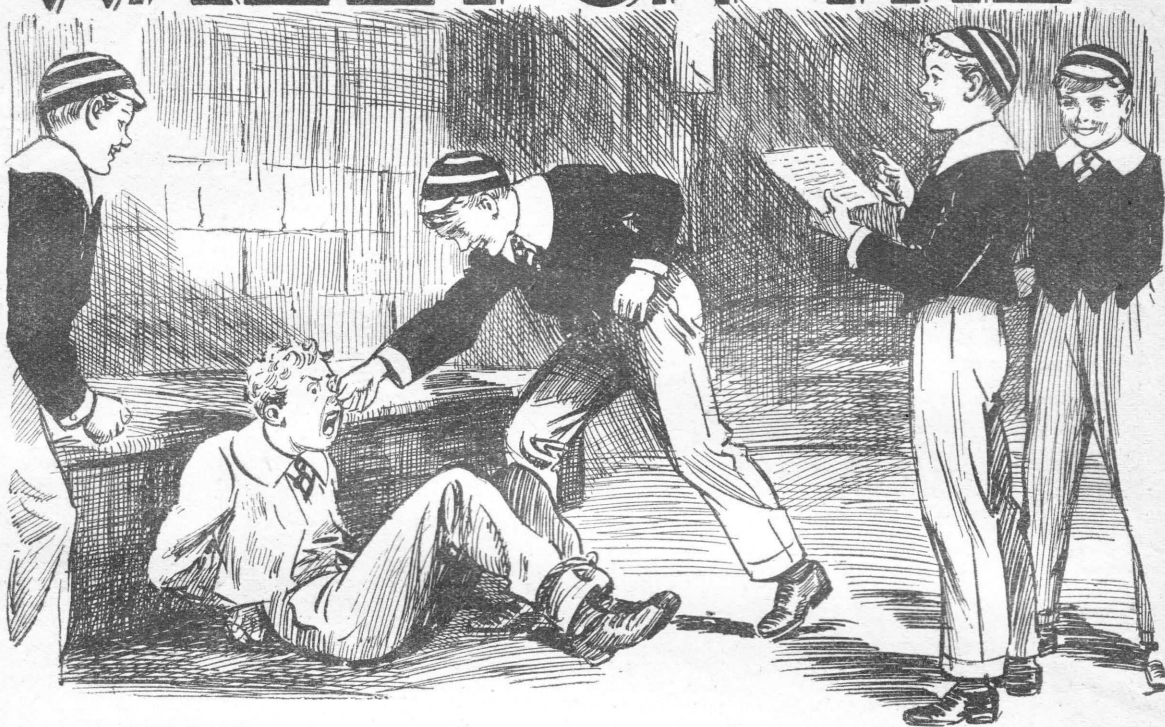
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**HOSE
THAT?**

PITY THE POOR CRICKET SKIPPER! TOM MERRY HAS A TOUGH TIME OF IT—

WALLY ON THE



"Are you going to do the decent thing?" asked Wally. "Three of us in the team?" "No!" yelled Tom Merry. "Give his nose another squeeze, Jimmy!" said the Third Former. Tom Merry roared as Jameson took his nose between finger and thumb and squeezed hard. "Yaroooh!"

CHAPTER 1. In or Out!

THUMP!

Tom Merry jumped as that startled summons came at the door of his study.

Manners and Lowther growled.

The Terrible Three of the Shell were busy. Tom Merry had a sheet of impot paper before him on the table and a pencil in his hand. He was scribbling names on the paper, in the intervals of chewing the end of the pencil. Manners and Lowther were looking over his shoulder, giving advice.

Thump!

"Oh, come in, you silly ass, whoever you are!" called out Tom Merry resignedly. "I shall never get this blessed list finished!"

The study door opened, and four juniors presented themselves—four members of the Third Form at St. Jim's. The Shell fellows glared at them. They were very busy, and they did not want to be interrupted, especially by mere fags. Tom Merry waved his pencil at them.

"Buzz off now, Wally!" he said. "I'm busy! I'm making up the list of the team for the House match. I'll see you presently."

"You'll see me now," said Wally, otherwise D'Arcy minor of the Third.

And his three companions—Jameson, Gibson, and Frayne of the Third—chimed in in determined tones:

"You'll see us now!"

Monty Lowther reached out in a careless sort of way for a cricket stump.

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Manners dropped his hand upon a bat that lay on the study table.

But Wally & Co. did not seem to be intimidated by those hostile movements. They drew a little closer together, and stood their ground defiantly.

"We've come to see you, Tom Merry," said D'Arcy minor.

Tom Merry nodded.

"I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you," he said amiably. "It's an honour to receive visits from the Third Form, I know. We duly appreciate it. But if you could put your visit off till another time—"

"We should appreciate it still more," said Manners.

"Exactly!" said Lowther. "In fact, we'll take the will for the deed, and you needn't trouble about making the visit at all."

"Rats!" said Wally.

And Jameson, Gibson, and Frayne chimed in together:

"Rats!"

"Well, be quiet, then!" said Tom Merry, with exemplary patience. "Don't talk, and I can get on with the list. The question is, you chaps, whom are we to put in in Kangaroo's place, as he is crooked?"

"That's what we've come to talk about," said Wally.

"Oh!"

"You've come to give us some fatherly advice about making up the House team?" asked Monty Lowther sarcastically. "Thank you for nothing! Good-bye!"

"Shut the door after you!" added Manners.

The fags of the Third exchanged glances, and stood their ground.

"May as well out with it!" said Wally.

"Out with it!" chimed in the other three fags.

"We've been talking it over in the Third Form Room," explained Wally. "We think it's high time the Third were represented in the junior House matches. Now that some of the eleven happen to be crooked, there's a good opportunity for starting. Three of your men are on the sick list. Well, we're ready to take their places."

"We're ready!" said Wally's followers.

"We'll give the New House all the cricket they want," said Wally. "You'll put me in, and Curly Gibson and Joe Frayne. That's what we want."

"That's what we want," said the Third Formers.

"Jameson, here, is playing in the New House team," pursued Wally. "Figgins has given him a place—shows his sense. And we three are going to play for the School House."

Tom Merry smiled patiently.

"My dear kid," he said, in a tone of gentle explanation, "this is a cricket match. It isn't marbles, or hop-scotch, or noughts-and-crosses. If it were, we'd play you with pleasure. But it happens to be cricket. So I'm afraid we shall have to leave the Third Form out. Good-bye!"

"That's where you make a mistake," said Wally. "It's time the Third had a show in the House matches. Can't we play cricket?"

Tom Merry shook his head.

—IN THIS SPARKLING LONG YARN OF SPORT, FUN, AND ADVENTURE AT ST. JIM'S

WAR-PATH!

By
**MARTIN
CLIFFORD.**

"Not up to House match style," he said. "Sorry, Wally, but it can't be did. You see, we're not playing marbles, or hop-scotch, or—"

"Oh, ring off!" roared Wally. "I don't want that all over again. We've come here because you're making up the list for the House match. Kangaroo, Herries, and Reilly are crooked. You're going to put in three of the Third Form. Fair play's a jewel. If we lose the match we'll admit you're right."

Tom Merry laughed. "But we're not going to risk losing the match," he said. "Figgins & Co. will be in great form next Saturday, too. Fatty Wynn's bowling is top-notch. We can't afford to take risks. If it were marbles—"

"Oh, shurrup!"

"Or hop-scotch," said Tom Merry imperterbably.

"Ring off you ass!"

"Or noughts-and-crosses!"

"Cheese it!" shouted Wally. "Look here, the Third have been talking this over. We want to have a show in the House team. Who are you, anyway, you Shell bouncers? My dog Pongo could play cricket as well as some of you!"

"Better!" said Curly Gibson.

"Much better!" said Joe Frayne.

"We're going in!" said Wally. "We claim our rights! We're going in!"

"You're mistaken," said Monty Lowther blandly. "You're going out. The only question is—will you go out on your feet or on your necks?"

"It can't be done, Wally," said Tom Merry.

"Then there's going to be trouble," said Wally.

"Spare our hairs!" said Lowther imploringly. "As you are strong, be merciful! Hit chaps your own size, and pass over small fry like us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And now run away, like good little kids!" said Tom Merry. "I've got to make up the list for the eleven on Saturday, you know."

"We're not going!" said Wally determinedly. "We're staying here till you see reason."

Monty Lowther opened the door wide.

"Travel!" he suggested.

"Go and eat coke!" said Wally. "We're fed-up with you Shellfish. I'm going to talk sense to you, and if you don't see it, there will be trouble. For two pins we'd wreck the study for you!"

"We could do it," said Curly Gibson. The Terrible Three grinned. It was not likely that the three famous fighting men of the Shell would allow their study to be wrecked by four fags of the Third Form.

Tom Merry laid down his pencil.

"Now, run away and play," he said. "You might just as well ask Kildare to put you in the first eleven. If you want something to do, go and find some clean collars and put them on; and you might wash the ink off your paws while you're about it. Good-bye!"

"Are you going to put us in?" yelled Wally.

"No! We're going to put you out, if you don't travel!"

"Then here goes for a start!" said Wally.

And he laid a grip upon the edge of the table, and tilted it towards Tom Merry.

The captain of the Shell gave a roar as books and papers and an inkpot slid down towards him, and shot over his knees. The stream of ink left many stains on his trousers. He jumped to his feet.

"You young ass!" he roared. "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wally. "Now, are you going— Yaroooooh! I say! Yah! Oh!"

Bump!

Wally descended in the passage with a loud concussion. Curly Gibson, Jameson, and Frayne struggled furiously in the grasp of the Terrible Three; but they struggled in vain.

Bump, bump, bump!

One after another the heroes of the Third were ejected from the study, and rolled, gasping, in the passage.

Then the study door slammed.

"Cheeky fags!" gasped Monty Lowther, setting his tie straight.

When Tom Merry flatly refused Wally D'Arcy a place in the School House cricket eleven, the Third Former resorted to other methods of persuasion! Tom soon discovered there was nothing gentle about Wally's methods when he was on the war-path!

"Look at my bags!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

Monty Lowther looked at them and roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! They're inky!"

"There's nothing to cackle at, you duffer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry snorted, and jerked away Lowther's handkerchief to mop the ink off his trousers. Then the laborious task of making up the junior House eleven was resumed, without interruption from ambitious cricketers of the Third Form.

CHAPTER 2.

An Important Meeting!

"BAI Jove, Wally, you wascal!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form—D'Arcy major—uttered the words in tones of horror at the sight of his minor in the passage. D'Arcy was coming up to Study No. 6 with Blake, when he met the heroes of the Third departing after their unsuccessful visit to Tom Merry's study.

Wally was certainly looking the worse

for wear. Wally was never very careful about his personal appearance—in that respect offering a striking contrast to his elegant major. But just now he was looking decidedly his worst. His hair was ruffled, his clothes were rumpled and dusty, and his collar was hanging by a single stud. It was not surprising that Arthur Augustus jammed his monocle into his eye, and surveyed his minor with a glance of the greatest severity.

"Wally, what are you going about in that state for? I twust you have not been fightin', you young wuffian?"

"Wrestling with a garden roller, per-haps," suggested Jack Blake.

Wally snorted.

"I've been to see Tom Merry," he said. "We're going to play in the junior House team—three of us. It's time the Third had a show. That's what we've agreed on. Tom Merry doesn't seem to think it. We're going to make him! Savvy?"

"They chucked you out?" asked Blake, with a grin.

"Yes!" growled Wally.

"Well, what did you expect? My dear kid, we can't have little fags in the House team," said Blake patronisingly. "We shouldn't let Tom Merry put you in if he wanted to."

"No feah!" said Arthur Augustus. "Quite impos, Wally."

"We're going in, all the same, or there'll be trouble!" said Wally. "We could raise a team in the Third that would beat you hands down."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And we'll jolly well do it, too!" howled Wally. "We'll wipe up the ground with your precious House team, and then perhaps you'll admit that we're up to playing Figgins & Co."

Blake roared with laughter.

"Oh, come on!" said Wally. "Don't waste time talking to these silly asses!"

"You're doing all the talking," remarked Jameson.

"Don't jaw! Come on!"

And the heroes of the Third marched disdainfully on their way in search of a much-needed wash and brush-up.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy wore a thoughtful expression upon his aristocratic brow as he went into Study No. 6 with Blake. Digby was there, but Herries was absent, being "down" with a cold in the school sanatorium. Digby was getting tea in the study, and there was a fragrant smell of fresh toast.

"I've been thinkin', deah boys," Arthur Augustus remarked, after a long pause.

"Go hon!" said Blake. "Pass the jam!"

"About young Wally—"

"Oh, blow Wally!"

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort. Upon the whole, deah boys, as Hewwies is laid up and won't be able to play in the House match, I weward it as reasonable that my minah should be put in. Wally is a vewy good ewicketer, you know."

"Can't play fags," said Digby.

"But my minah—"

"Oh, blow your minor!" said Blake. "Your minor's major is trouble enough."

"Weally, you ass—"

"Pass the toast. We're going to beat Figgins & Co., though old Herries, Kangy and Reilly are laid up," said Blake.

"I think I shall speak to Tom Mewwy about it."

"Keep off the grass!" said Blake. "The Third are never played in House matches. They can get up fag matches if they like. Let it drop."

"I decline to let it drop! I shall speak to Tom Mewwy—"

"Hallo! Who's taking my name in vain?" demanded the captain of the Shell, putting his head in at the door.

"Come in, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "I have just seen Wally, Bai Jove! What have you been doin' to your twousahs?"

"Your minor has been spilling ink over them," growled Tom Merry. "I'm going to change them. You said you wanted to speak to me."

"Yaas. I have been thinkin' that as Hewwies is out of the team, it would be a good ideah to give the place to my minah—"

"Rats!" said Tom Merry promptly.

"If you say wats to me, Tom Mewwy—"

"Well, I do, and many of 'em!" said Tom Merry cheerfully. "We're not going to let the New House lick us, because we've got three men down with colds. If you want to strengthen the team, Gussy, there's one way you could do it."

"I should be vewy pleased to do anythin'—"

"Good! You can stand out of the match!"

"You uttah ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" And Tom Merry went on his way, chuckling.

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon his two companions in the study. Blake and Digby were grinning.

"I wegard Tom Mewwy as an ass," he said. "I see nothin' whatevah to gwin at, deah boys. I am backin' up my minah's claim to play in the eleven."

"Back away!" said Blake.

"It won't make any difference," grinned Digby.

"Oh, wats!"

Arthur Augustus finished his tea with his aristocratic nose in the air. Although Arthur Augustus seldom saw his minor without reading him a lecture of some kind or other, he really had a great regard for Wally, and he frequently took up the cause of his minor—perhaps not helping Wally very much thereby.

The Third Formers had made claim before this to be admitted to the junior team; but the Shell and the Fourth had no doubt whatever that they would do well to keep those matches in their hands. There were enough good cricketers in the Shell and the Fourth to make up a good team, without drawing upon the Third. Wally had often expressed strong opinions on the subject, and the matter seemed to be coming to a head now.

When the chums of Study No. 6 went downstairs after tea, they found quite a little crowd round the notice-board in the hall. The juniors were chuckling over some fresh notice that had been pinned up there.

"Bai Jove! What's goin' on, deah boys?" asked Arthur Augustus.

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"Your blessed minor again!" grinned Bernard Glyn.

The juniors pushed their way through the crowd, and read the notice on the board. It was written in Wally's sprawling handwriting on a sheet of paper that showed thumb-marks, and it was written in Third Form orthography:

"A meating of the Third Form will be held in the Form-room at half-past six p.m. The subject of discushun will be the admision of the Third Form players to the House team.

(Sined) W. A. D'Arcy."

"Well, if W. A. D'Arcy's cricket is as good as his spelling, he must be a regular Don Bradman," grinned Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I think I shall attend that meetin'," remarked D'Arcy. "I do not approve of youngstahs backin' up against their eldahs, as a wule. But I weally considah that my minah ought to play in the House team."

"Rats!"

"Bosh!"

"Piffle!"

"Weally, you silly asses—"

"Rubbish!"

"I wufuse to listen to such oppwobwious wemarks." Arthur Augustus consulted his gold watch. "Bai Jove! It's half-past six! I'm goin'!"

And the swell of St. Jim's made his way to the Third Form Room. Until evening preparation began at half-past seven, the fags had the Form-room to themselves.

Fags of the Third Form, properly impressed by the notice from their leader, were making their way towards the Form-room from all quarters.

Fourth Formers and Shell fellows contented themselves with reading the notice and grinning. As Monty Lowther remarked, the Third Form might hold "meatings" till they were black in the face, but they were not likely to get chosen for the junior House team.

CHAPTER 3.

The Challenge!

"FELLOWS, chaps, and gentlemen—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Go it, Wally!"

Wally stood upon a form, and glanced an eye of satisfaction over the crowd in the Third Form Room.

Nearly all the Third were there.

D'Arcy minor was undisputed leader of the Form, and hardly a fag had failed to obey his mandate of the "meating."

There were, of course, School House and New House fellows in the Third, as in all the other Forms at St. Jim's; but New House fags backed Wally up as keenly as School House members of the Third. Jameson had been admitted to the New House team, it was true—Figgins being short of a player for the team. But he was the only one; and in the School House junior team there were no fags at all. It was a matter in which all the Third stood together, irrespective of their Houses.

"This important meeting has been called," resumed Wally, "to consider ways and means for making Tom Merry & Co. come to their senses."

"Hear, hear!"

"It may seem impossible to make the

Shell chaps see sense, or understand it when they see it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we're going to try. What is the junior eleven?" demanded Wally, getting animated. "It's supposed to represent the junior Forms. The senior eleven is made up of all seniors—Fifth and Sixth. Now, the Sixth is more senior than the Fifth, and they have more fellows in the team than the Fifth have. Now, my point is this: the Third Form is more junior than the Shell—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Therefore we ought to be in the junior team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But the First and Second Forms are more junior than we are!" grinned Frayne.

"If Frayne is going to talk rot—" began Wally warmly.

There was a yell:

"Shut up, Frayne!"

"Oh, all right!" said Frayne. "I was only saying—"

"Well, don't," said Wally. "Gentlemen and fellows, are we going to stand it? Figgins has set us an example by putting Jameson into the New House team—"

"Good old Figgins!"

"Tom Merry ought to follow that example by putting some of us into the School House junior eleven. They say our form isn't up to a House match—that we can't play cricket as well as they can—"

Groans!

"They make out that we can't play cricket. Why, we can play their heads off! I can't help suspecting that they're afraid we should show them up, and put them in a back seat. Who are the Shell, anyway?"

Deep groans!

"Gentlemen, I see that you agree with me," said Wally. "I've got a way of proving to the Shell and the Fourth that we can play cricket as well as they can."

"Bravo!"

"We're going to challenge the School House eleven to a match, and make them play the Third!"

"Hurrah!"

"If they refuse our challenge, we'll worry and chip them into it. See?"

"Hear, hear!"

"But Tom Merry is a sportsman, and I don't think he'll refuse. The silly asses will take us on and expect to beat us. We'll take all the beating they can give us," said Wally disdainfully.

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen, if you are all agreed, we'll draw up a letter to send to Tom Merry, in the name of the whole Form, challenging the School House team to a cricket match."

The fags roared with applause.

Wally, greatly pleased with the reception of his idea, descended from the form. The fags gathered round him as he took pen and paper to draw up that challenge to Tom Merry & Co.

Wally chewed the end of his pen thoughtfully. He was a youth of many gifts, with a ready wit to talk, but he was not a great letter-writer. He was conscious, too, that his orthography left something to be desired. Mr. Selby, his Form-master, had often told him so, with more emphasis than politeness. That letter to Tom Merry would require careful wording.

"Ahem! How shall we begin?" asked Wally thoughtfully.

"Address it to 'The Silly Asses of the Shell and the Fatheads of the Fourth!'" was Jameson's brilliant suggestion.

"Must be polite," said Wally. "I'll begin: 'Dear Merry!—show him we're

on an equal footing with him, and blow his old Shell!"

"Good!"

Wally wrote "Dear Merry," and paused for further inspiration.

The Form-room door opened, and the eyeglass of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gleamed in upon the meeting.

"Bai Jove! Here you are!" remarked Arthur Augustus genially. "I've come——"

"Get out!"

"Weally, you young boundahs——"

"This is a Third Form meeting," said Wally severely. "Get out, Gussy! No time to bother with Fourth Form kids now."

"But I've come to——"

"Travel!"

"You cheeky young wascal, Wally!"

"Shove him out!" said Wally.

"Weally, you young wottah, I've come—— Oh! Pway listen to me—— Ah! Yah!"

The door slammed, and Arthur Augustus leaned against the opposite side of the wall to recover his breath. But he opened the door again after a minute or so.

"Pway allow me to explain——" he began.

A horde of fags rushed at the swell of St. Jim's again, and once more he was hurled forth and the door slammed upon him. Then Wally resumed his letter.

"Dear Merry,—inasmuch as the Third Form consider themselves entitled to play in the junior eleven, they consider——"

"That's 'consider' twice," said Curly Gibson, looking over his shoulder.

"They consider," roared Wally, "that they are—entitled to play in the eleven. Therefore, they hereby declare—— How many 'is' in 'declare'?"

"One, of course!"

"Well, I've put one," said Wally; "that's all right. 'They hereby declare that they are going to play in the eleven, or there will be trouble.' It's a double 'b' in 'trouble,' isn't it?"

"Only one 'b,'" said Jameson. "I'm certain of that."

"All right. I'm going to make another copy, of course," said Wally. "The Third Form also declare that if the Shell want to see how they play cricket, the Third Form hereby challenge them to meet them in a match, when they will show them that they can play cricket as well as them if they care to play them."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Jameson. "Is that clear?"

"Of course it is, fathead!"

"Who's 'they' and who's 'them,' then?"

"We're 'they,' and they're 'them,' of course! Can't you read English? Now—The Third Form are ready to meet them on Wensday afternoon——"

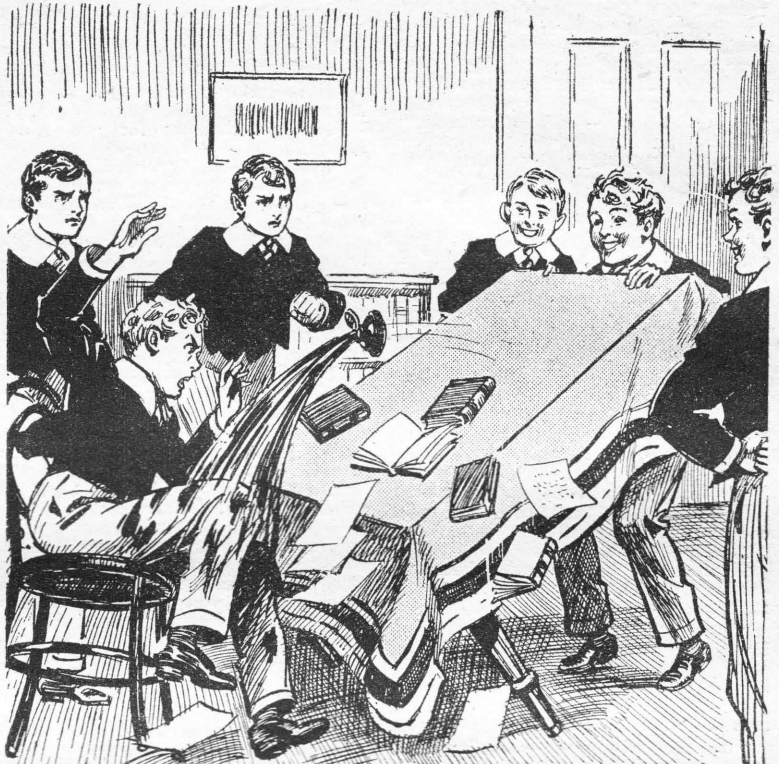
"There are two 'd's' in 'Wednes-day,'" said Curly.

Wally grunted and put in another "d," making it "Wenssday."

"That doesn't look right to me," he said.

"Well, I know there are two 'd's,'" said Curly. "Selby told me so."

"Well, Selby ought to know," admitted Wally. "That's what he's paid for. Now, 'If the junior eleven refuse this challenge it will be taken to



"Are you going to put us in the team?" asked Wally. "No!" replied Tom Merry. "Then here goes for a start!" exclaimed Wally. And he gripped the edge of the table and tilted it towards Tom Merry. The captain of the Shell gave a roar as books, papers, ink, and inkpot shot over his knees!

CHAPTER 4.
The Answer!

LEIVISON of the Fourth was waiting in the School House doorway for Tom Merry when the chums of the Shell came in from cricket practice.

The Terrible Three were looking very ruddy and very cheerful after an hour at the nets. Tom Merry had high hopes of beating the New House juniors in the coming House match, though three of his men were "crooked." He had not yet decided how to fill the places, and there were a dozen ambitious youths at least who were fully convinced that their names ought to go down.

The chums of the Shell would have passed Levison without speaking, but he called to them, and they stopped. Their manner was not cordial, however. They were on the worst of terms with the cad of the Fourth.

"Can I speak to you a minute, Merry?" Levison asked, with unusual civility.

"No law against it," said Tom Merry cheerfully. "What do you want?"

"You haven't filled the places in the House team yet?"

"Not yet."

"Will you put me in?"

Tom Merry stared at him. Levison, the slacker of the Fourth, was not much given to cricket—or, indeed, to any healthy or manly game.

"Do you want to play?" asked Tom.

"Yes; I don't see why I shouldn't have a chance," said Levison. "I'm a pretty good batsman, if you come to that. I don't see why you should pass me over because we're not on good terms personally."

mean that they know they can't play cricket and are afraid of the Third Form."

"Hear, hear! That's all right!" chuckled Frayne. "That'll make 'em sit up."

Wally made a careful copy of the letter, and the finished article had only three blots and a couple of smudges to mar its beauty. The letter was enclosed in a somewhat soiled envelope, which was still more soiled when Wally had carefully closed it with a grimy thumb.

"I'll give this to Toby to take to Tom Merry," said Wally. "My only Aunt Jane! There is Gussy again!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was looking in again.

"You young wascals!" shouted the swell of St. Jim's. "I was comin' here to——"

A rush of fags overwhelmed the swell of St. Jim's, and he was left sprawling in the passage as Wally & Co. proceeded in search of Toby, the page, to bear the letter to Tom Merry. Arthur Augustus picked himself up, gasping, to find that the meeting was at an end and the fags gone. He took his way wrathfully to Study No. 6, where he found Blake and Digby at work on their preparation. They greeted their dusty chum with a chuckle.

"Meeting go off all right?" asked Blake.

"The young wottahs!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "They would not give me time to explain that I was comin' there to back them up, and they thwew me out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for wibald laughtah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Arthur Augustus sniffed scornfully and proceeded to brush himself down.

"I shouldn't pass you over for that reason," said Tom Merry quietly. "I'd put in anybody who could do the side credit. But you have neglected your practice for a long time, and you'd hardly be in form for Saturday. Yes, I know you can play if you choose, but you don't choose—that's the trouble."

"Smoking cigarettes in the box-room is more in your line," said Monty Lowther. "Stick to your cheap fags and don't trouble about cricket, Levison."

Levison smiled unpleasantly.

"I'll stick to practice till Saturday if you'll give me a chance, Merry," he said. "I want to play, and I don't see why I shouldn't have a chance. The team isn't up to full strength, and you've got to find three players from somewhere."

"I'm going to decide about that tomorrow," said Tom Merry. "Still, if you want to do the decent thing I wouldn't like to stand in your way. If you'd like to stick to practice, and I think you're good enough, I'll put you in."

"Thanks! I'll show you I'm good enough."

"Right-ho!"

The Terrible Three sauntered into the Junior Common-room. Tom Merry was looking a little puzzled.

"Blessed if I know what's come over Levison," he remarked. "He never cared for cricket. He can play, but—he doesn't like the game. What on earth makes him so keen about getting into the team for Saturday?"

"Wonders will never cease," yawned Lowther. "If he's going to turn over a giddy new leaf I don't mind lending him a hand. It's quite true about his being a good bat, if he chooses to take the trouble."

"Some rotten trick in his mind, more likely," said Manners. "I don't trust that chap more than half an inch."

Tom Merry nodded. He knew Levison too well to think of trusting him, but it was difficult to surmise what bad motive the cad of the Fourth could have for wanting to get into the House eleven. If he wanted to turn to better

ways, however, Tom Merry was quite willing to stretch a point in his favour.

"I was looking for you, Master Merry," said Toby, the page, entering the Common-room.

"Here I am; look away!" said Tom Merry.

"I've got a letter for you, Master Merry."

"A letter for me?" Tom Merry looked in surprise at the grimy envelope Toby laid on the table. "Where did that come from, Toby?"

"Master Wally give it to me to give to you, sir."

"Oh, thanks!"

Tom Merry picked up the letter.

"Something more about the fags playing in the House team," yawned Lowther. "Official communication from the Third Form, I suppose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry opened the letter, and the chums of the Shell chuckled as they read it. Other fellows gathered round to read it, too, and the chuckles were loud and long. Wally's effusion was certainly funny. It ran:

"Dear Merry,—Inasmuch as the Third Form consider themselves entitled to play in the junior eleven, they consider that they are entitled to play in the eleven. Therefore they hereby declare that they are going to play in the eleven, or there will be trouble. The Third Form also declare that if the Shell want to see how they play cricket, the Third Form hereby challenge them to meet them in a match, when they will show them that they can play cricket as well as them if they care to play them. The Third Form are ready to meet them on Wensday afternoon. If the junior eleven refuse this challenge it will be taken to mean that they know they can't play cricket and are afraid of the Third Form.

"(Sined) W. A. D'ARCY,

"Third Form."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Original composition, by Walter Adolphus D'Arcy," grinned Monty Lowther. "They are ready to meet them

if they and them arrange that them and they—"

"Cheeky beggars!" said Tom Merry. "Fancy the Third Form meeting the Junior House eleven! Catch me!"

"Might play 'em and give 'em a lesson for their cheek," said Blake.

"Can't waste time on fags," said Tom Merry. "We shall have to send an answer to this! Rats will do!"

"Better send 'em an official communication like their own," said Monty Lowther, taking up a pen. "Better put it into Third Form spelling, too, so that they will understand it." And he began to write.

Monty Lowther grinned as he wrote the reply to Wally & Co. When his composition was finished, the juniors read it over with yells of laughter.

"Dear Wally,—The junior eleven are in reseat of yores of even dait. They consider that they are not equal to them, and that them are not therefore to meet they, they being afrade of them, and them, therefore, refewse the challenge givven by they. But if they want them to meet them, and they inasmuch consider that them should meet them or they, they are a set of silly fags, and they hereby declare to them that they refewse. They hoap that they will stopp being cheeky fags, and if they want something to do, they advise them to wash their nex.

"(Sined) TOMMY MERRY."

"How's that?" asked Lowther.

"Out!" grinned Tom Merry. "It will do rippingly. Seal it up and give it to Toby!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the School House page was dispatched with the reply to Wally, D'Arcy minor and his comrades opened that anxiously expected letter in the Third Form Room, amid much excitement.

Wally looked a little puzzled over it at first, and then he realised that the letter was written and spelt in a humorous strain.

"They won't play!" said Wally.

"Then we'll make 'em!" growled Jameson.

The entrance of Mr. Selby to take the Third Form in preparation stopped the warlike discussion for a time; but Mr. Selby found his Form unusually inattentive that evening. Lines fell thick and fast upon Wally & Co., but they did not care for lines. Wally was on the war-path, and all other matters just then were as trifles light as air.

CHAPTER 5.

Wally Means Business!

"WHAT'S the little game, Levison, old man?"

Percy Mellish of the Fourth asked the question with much curiosity. Levison had just come off the cricket field with a bat under his arm. It was the day after the Third Form challenge to Tom Merry & Co. which the juniors had "refewsed," and Levison had gone down to the nets immediately after morning lessons were over.

Levison was such a black sheep and slacker that his pal and study-mate could not help being astonished at this new development. Levison was one of those clever fellows who chose to follow a wrong path. He could have done many things if he had chosen, but he did not choose. The quick wit and resource that might have distinguished him in classes or in sports generally turned to playing ill-natured japes and tricks, and

HORACE COKER'S DARK DEED!



By FRANK RICHARDS

Brainy as an ass, comical as a clown, and brave as a lion! Such is Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars. What ever the great Horace undertakes, he can be trusted to put his foot in it! If you want a feast of fun and thrills, read: "Horace Coker's Dark Deed!" this week's extra-special story of Harry Wharton & Co., the world-famous Chums of Greyfriars. You'll find it in

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he wasted his leisure hours in idle loafing. He could have been a great cricketer, and sometimes he had shown a great proficiency for a short time; but he always fell away again, and returned to his old loafing ways.

Hence Mellish's surprise. Levison had been batting well, having asked Digby of the Fourth to pitch him a few. Dig had obliged; and had been surprised to see that Levison knocked his bowling about freely.

"What are you fagging at cricket for?" asked Mellish, as he joined Levison and walked away with him. "You're not taking up the game as a cricket maniac like Tom Merry, I suppose?"

Levison grinned.

"Oh, no! But now there are three men out of the team, I've got a chance of playing for the House. Kangaroo, Herries, and Reilly won't be out of the sanatorium before Saturday, and if they are, they won't be fit."

"I know that. But what do you want to play for? We've agreed that House matches are all rot."

"Quite so. But I've a reason this time."

"You want to show the fellows you can play for the House if you choose? Blessed if I should think that worth the trouble!"

"I shouldn't, either," said Levison, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I don't like fagging after a silly ball any more than you do. But I've got an uncle coming down to the school to see me on Saturday, and if I play in the House team while he's here, it will mean something good for me. He's keen on cricket and all kinds of rot, and if he knew I cut it, he would keep his money in his pocket. See?"

Mellish chuckled. He understood his friend's motive now. It was a motive he could understand and sympathise with.

"Maybe a quid or two, or might possibly be a fiver, if I get a look in in the House match," yawned Levison.

"What-ho!" said Mellish. "Better not let Tom Merry know that, though. He wouldn't put you in for that reason, even if you offered to stand him a whack of a fiver."

"I expect he'd punch my head if I offered him that," grinned Levison. "No; I'm going to pile it on about sport and manly exercise and honour of the House, and that sort."

"He, he, he!"

"Hallo! Wherefore the cackle?" asked Monty Lowther, as the two precious young rascals came upon the Terrible Three in the quadrangle. "Been playing somebody an extra-special rotten trick, Mellish?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Mellish, turning away.

Levison paused to speak to Tom Merry.

"I've just put in half an hour at the wicket," he said. "Digby couldn't bowl me. He tried."

"Yes, I was watching you," said Tom.

"You bat jolly well considering the little bit of practice you get. But you're short-winded. If you want to play in the House team, Levison, you'll have to do some sprinting, and I may as well tell you plainly that you'll have to stop smoking."

"I've stopped that," said Levison, with unusual meekness.

"Honour bright?" asked Tom Merry suspiciously.

"Honour bright," said Levison unflinchingly. "No good keeping that up when a chap's trying to get into form. I'm not a fool!"

"Well, that's all right," said Tom Merry, more cordially. "If you mean



First Burglar: "Come on, let's reckon up the 'aul to see what we've got!"

Second Burglar: "Aw, I'm tired! Let's wait and look in the mornin' papers!"

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this seriously, Levison, I'm more than willing to back you up. And I like your batting. If you're a bit more fit by Saturday I think I shall put you in."

"Good!" said Levison. "I'll take care to be fit enough. I'm going out for a sprint this afternoon."

"Good for you!"

As the chums of the Shell came in to dinner, Wally & Co. met them in the Hall. The fags of the Third were looking grim and determined.

"Halt!" said D'Arcy minor. "Are you going to play us this afternoon, Tom Merry?"

Tom shook his head with a smile.

"I'm afraid not, Wally."

"We consider that they are not good enough for them, and them, therefore, refuse to meet them, inasmuch as they decline to meet them or they," explained Monty Lowther blandly.

The Third Formers frowned. They recognised the parody of Wally's somewhat involved letter of challenge.

"Oh, cheese it!" said Wally crossly.

"Keep all that for the 'Weekly.' Look here, Tom Merry, the junior eleven have got to play us, or we'll make it clear to all St. Jim's that they are afraid to meet the Third."

"Go ahead!" said Tom, laughing.

And the Terrible Three went in to dinner. Wally frowned darkly. His comrades were looking at him expectantly, and Wally realised how much prestige he would lose in the Third Form if he did not succeed in his undertaking to bring Tom Merry & Co. to reason.

"They jolly well won't play us," said Curly Gibson, with a shake of the head. Wally grunted.

"We can't make 'em, either," said Frayne.

"Another grunt."

"Well, what are you going to do, Wally?" demanded Jameson.

"You leave it to me," said Wally.

"Whether they play the Third or not, we're going to have our whack in the House match, and that's what we want. If they don't play us we'll jolly well stop 'em playing at all."

"My hat, I don't see how you're going to do that!" said Jameson, with a whistle.

"Lots of things you don't see," remarked Wally. "I've got a wheeze in my head. In the first place, they've got up a rotten practice match for this afternoon. Shell and Fourth, all School House chaps, instead of playing us. We're going to stop it!"

"Wh-what!" gasped Wally's three companions at once.

"Mum's the word," said Wally. "I suppose you know that the hose Taggles uses in the Head's garden can be run out as far as Little Side. A fellow standing with a hose at the end gate in the garden wall can play it over the practice pitch."

"But—but—"

"Nuff said!" replied Wally. "Mum's the word. Let's go in to dinner, or we shall have old Selby down on us, and we don't want to get detained this afternoon."

And the Third Formers went into the dining-room.

After dinner the junior House eleven prepared for the practice match. Twenty-two players were made up from the Fourth and the Shell, and Tom Merry made Wally a kind offer. He tapped the hero of the Third on the shoulder in the quadrangle.

"We're making up twenty-two for practice," he said. "If you like you can stand in, Wally."

Wally sniffed.

"Can't be done!"

"We'll shove you and Jameson into the side for practice, if you like, then," said Tom Merry.

"Rats!" said Wally. "The Third will play you and lick you, if you like, but I'm not fagging at practice for you!"

"Go and eat coke, then!"

And Tom Merry made up his twenty-one, and they went down to the cricket ground. Levison was put into the scratch side for practice. The juniors were soon busy at the wickets, and they forgot all about Wally & Co.

But Wally had not forgotten.

The chums of the Third watched the beginning of the practice match, and then strolled away towards the Head's garden. As if to favour their enterprise, they saw the hose lying where Taggles had last used it, in full view of the garden. The Head's garden was sacred to the Head and the masters and the Head's family, and juniors—especially fags—were severely barred. But little things like that did not trouble the scamps of the Third.

"Nobody in sight," said Jameson, peering over the gate.

"Can't see us from the Head's house through the trees," said Wally. "The only trouble is that Taggles might come and interrupt. One of you chaps keep an eye open for him, and if he comes this way bring him a message from somewhere and head him off."

"Ha, ha, ha! All right, I'll go," said Joe Frayne. And he hurried off to keep watch for Taggles.

"You chaps keep back," said Wally to Jameson and Curly Gibson. "One fellow in the garden will be enough, in case one has to bolt."

And Wally vaulted lightly over the gate.

"Now look out for fireworks!" murmured Jameson.

CHAPTER 6.

Very Wet!

TOM MERRY & Co. were at the wicket, and the scratch eleven were in the field. Levison was bowling, and he was bowling very well indeed. The practice match, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,473.

though naturally not played with the keenness of a regular fixture, was going strong. Tom Merry and Lowther had just run four, and Tom was standing up to the bowling again.

Just as the ball came down, Tom Merry gave a jump.

A sudden spray of water had fallen upon him, and he was so surprised at the unexpected rain that he allowed the ball to pass his bat.

Crash!

The wicket was down.

"How's that?" shouted Levison triumphantly.

Tom Merry was staring round him. He had a momentary impression that a sudden downpour of rain had set in, which was surprising enough, as the sky was clear and blue and sunny. Water had fallen thickly upon him, and his flannels were very wet.

"What on earth—" he began.

"Hallo!" yelled Blake. "Where's that water coming from?"

Swish, swish, swish! Swoosh!

The cricketers stared round them in amazement.

The wicket-keeper was drenched, and several of the fielders had caught the spray of the water.

The juniors looked up at the sky, but there was no sign of rain.

A sudden yell from Jones minor enlightened them.

"There he is; look you! It's young D'Arcy—he's got the hose!"

"Great Scott!"

"My hat!"

"The young villain!"

The juniors swung round, and stared in the direction of Jones minor's pointing finger. At the end of the Head's garden was a gate that gave on the playing fields. Standing behind the gate was D'Arcy minor of the Third, with a hose resting on top of the gate. He waved his disengaged hand cheerily to the juniors.

"Wet?" he called out.

Tom Merry shook his fist at the scamp of the Third.

"You've soaked me, you young idiot!" he roared.

"Go hon!"

"Put that hose down!" yelled Blake.

"Rats!"

"Wally, you young wascal, you've made me quite wet! I ordah you to put that hose away at once, as your majah! You heah!"

"Oh, don't you begin, Gussy!"

"If you send any more of that water this way, we'll come and slaughter you!" shouted Manners.

Wally grinned. His reply was a fresh jet of water from the hose, which caught Manners fairly under the chin. Manners roared, and sat down on the turf.

"Stop it!" shrieked Tom Merry.

"I'm stopping you!" called back Wally. "You can play the Third, if you like, but you're not going to play the giddy goat! Savvy?"

"You—you—you— Yaroooh!"

A jet of water swamped over Tom Merry. He staggered against his stumps, and knocked them out of the ground. The crease was shimmering with water in the sunlight now. The cricketers were simply infuriated.

"No good talking to him!" gasped Blake. "Come on! We'll slaughter him! We'll turn the hose on him, and bump him, and squash him!"

Blake led a rush towards the garden. The other fellows followed him fast. They were all anxious to get to close quarters with Wally.

Wally waited for the rushing juniors

to get close, and then let fly with the full force of the powerful jet of water.

Swish, swish, swish! Swoosh!

"Oh! Ow! Yah!"

"Yawoooh!"

"Groogh!"

As the charging juniors came up to the gate, the full force of the streaming water smote them, and fairly bowled them over. Tom Merry caught it under the chin, and was swept backwards, and he went down. Water swamped upon the juniors, choking and blinding them with its flood, and they were bowled over like skittles. And as they staggered about, the water continued to swamp upon them, drenching them to the very skin.

Digby, Lowther, and Clifton Dane succeeded in reaching the gate, and clutched at it to clamber over. But the hose was turned upon them quickly, and the water, smiting them at close range, simply drove them from their hold, and they reeled over.

Wally, on the safe side of the gate, played the hose upon the struggling, gasping mass of juniors mercilessly.

It was too much for them.

They scrambled out of the way of the water, running as if for their lives.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally.

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"There's plenty more! Come and have some! No extra charge for a shower-bath! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! Ow!"

"The awful young villain!"

"Ow! Groogh!"

The drenched and dripping cricketers sheltered themselves in the pavilion. Wally grinned at them over the gate.

"Are you going to play the Third?" he bawled.

"I'll Third you when I get hold of you!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove! My clobber is simply ruined, you know!"

"The—the young imp!"

"We'll scalp him!"

The enraged cricketers glared towards the triumphant scamp of the Third. Some of them scuttled away to towel themselves down and change their clothes. The practice match had reached a sudden termination. It was hardly possible to play cricket under the fire from the garden hose.

"Some of us could get into the garden along the wall, and take the young rotter from behind," suggested Levison. Levison had dodged into the pavilion, and had succeeded in keeping dry, except for a few splashes.

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry.

Two or three of the juniors ran for the garden wall, at a distance from the gate. They clambered up, but as their heads appeared above the top of the wall, there came a swish of water from

the garden, and they rolled back again. Wally was evidently on the watch for them.

"Come on!" yelled Wally. "The more the merrier!"

Kerruish and Vavasour, who were still dry, ran farther along the wall, and began to climb. But just as they were clambering over, a sharp voice from the quadrangle hailed them.

"Stop! Get down at once!"

"Oh crumbs! Spotted!" groaned Kerruish.

The two juniors dropped back. Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, was taking a stroll in the quadrangle with Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, and the two masters had come upon the juniors just as they climbed the wall. Mr. Railton looked at Vavasour and Kerruish very sternly.

"You are not allowed in the Head's garden," he said severely. "You know that!"

"N-no, sir!" stammered Vavasour.

"You will take fifty lines for— Goodness gracious!"

Mr. Railton broke off as a head rose on the inner side of the wall, and the grinning face of Wally of the Third appeared in sight.

"Come on, you duffers!" chuckled Wally. "Why, you silly chumps—"

Oh! Oh, my only Aunt Jane!"

Wally broke off suddenly as he caught sight of the two masters.

"Oh!" he gasped.

Mr. Railton looked at him grimly.

"D'Arcy minor!"

"Ye-yes, sir?" stammered Wally.

"What are you doing there?"

"Ahem! I—I—I'm admiring the view, sir!" murmured Wally.

"Come over at once!"

Wally cast a rather uneasy glance at Vavasour and Kerruish, and then clambered over the wall, and dropped at the feet of the Housemaster.

From the distant cricket pitch the drenched juniors eyed him vengefully. But it was impossible to visit vengeance upon the scamp of the Third in the presence of a Housemaster and a Form-master.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Lathom. "You are very wet, D'Arcy minor. You have been playing with the garden hose, I suppose?"

"Ye-es, sir," said Wally.

"You will take a hundred lines!" said Mr. Railton. "Go and dry yourself at once!"

"Yes, sir," said Wally meekly.

It was worth a hundred lines, Wally considered, especially as the presence of the masters preserved him from the vengeance of the drenched juniors.

He scuttled off to the School House, where his chums rejoined him, and the Third-Formers roared over the discomfiture of Tom Merry & Co. Mr. Railton and Mr. Lathom continued their stroll—fortunately not going in the direction of the cricket field.

On the junior ground Tom Merry & Co. were furious. The cricketers were dripping, and soaked to the skin, and the pitch was almost swimming in water. The practice match had come to a sudden and inglorious end.

"Bai Jove! I shall have to go and change my clobber!" Arthur Augustus remarked. "I advise you fellows to do the same."

And they did, and then they looked for Wally. But Wally, who had a sufficient allowance of the wisdom of the serpent, though he was somewhat lacking in the innocence of the dove, had

gone out with Jameson and Curly, and was not to be found within the walls of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 7.

A Licking for Levison!

GRRRRRRRRR!
Levison of the Fourth stooped for a stone. Levison was in a bad temper. He was under the necessity of taking exercise to fit himself for the match on Saturday, if he hoped to play—but he did not like exercise. Also, he had had to start on his sprint alone, as Mellish cared for exercise still less than Levison did, and could not be induced to run with him. Crooke of the Shell had refused, too, in the plainest possible language, to exert himself that warm afternoon. So Levison went alone, and just now he was feeling tired, hot, and cross.

As he came tramping over the foot-path through Farmer Oates' field, the growl of the dog sounded close to him, and he caught sight of Pongo, and his eyes gleamed as he stooped to find a stone.

Pongo belonged to D'Arcy minor, and he did not like Levison. Levison was cruel to animals, and Pongo had had more than one cruel kick from him when his master was not by. And so Pongo growled at the sight of the cad of the Fourth.

Levison cast a quick glance round as he rose from seizing a stone. Wally was not in sight; in fact, nobody was.

Whiz!
Levison was glad to see Pongo just then; he wanted a victim for his ill-humour. And he flung the stone with a spiteful aim.

There was a yell from Pongo as the missile struck him on the flank, and he scuttled away, yelping furiously.

"There, you rotten beast!" muttered Levison. "That's one for you! My hat! I'll give you another, hang you!" And Levison looked round for another stone. Before he could find one a hand was laid on his shoulder, and he was jerked round.

"You young brute!" said a stern voice. "What are you pelting the dog for?"

Levison swung round. A young man held him by the shoulder in a grip of iron, and Levison recognised Farmer Oates' son. The young man had a whip in his hand, and he looked very much inclined to lay it about Levison's shoulder.

The cad of the Fourth wriggled in his grasp.

"He—he growled at me!" he muttered. "I haven't hurt him. Anyway, he's not your dog!"

"He's my dog, though!" yelled Wally, running up from the farmhouse where he had been having tea with his chums. "You cad, Levison! What are you doing to Pongo?"

"Oh, blow Pongo!" said Levison, jerking himself away from the young farmer. "The beast growled at me. Keep him on a chain if you don't want him pelted."

Wally's eyes gleamed. "So you've been pelting him, have you?" he said, between his teeth. "You cad! I'll jolly well teach you not to pelt my dog!"

Smack!
Wally's hand came across Levison's face with a report like a pistol-shot. The cad of the Fourth staggered back with a yell, and then leaped at Wally.

The young farmer's grasp closed upon him again.

"No, you don't!" he said. "Let me go!" yelled Levison. "I'm going to lick the young cad!" "Yes, let him go, Mr. Oates," said Wally, clenching his fists. "He's bigger than I am, but I'm ready for him!"

The young farmer hesitated. "He's too big for you, kid," he said. "Oh, I can handle him!" said Wally. "Jameson, hold my jacket."

Jameson and Curly Gibson had followed Wally.

"Well, all right," said the farmer. "But wait a tick. If you're going to fight here, you'll have to have the gloves on. I can lend you some."

"I don't want any gloves!" growled Levison.

"But you're going to have them whether you want them or not," said George Oates coolly. "Wait till I get them, and I'll keep time for you."

"Right-ho!" said Wally. George Oates strode away towards the farmhouse. The young farmer was

out for a sprint, to get into form for the House match on Saturday.

"You play in a House match!" said Wally, with a sniff. "Don't be funny!" "Yes, that's altogether too rich," said Jameson, with a chuckle. "Don't pile it on, Levison. Give us an easier one!"

"I tell you it's true. Tom Merry's promised me a place in the team if I'm in form."

"Rats!" "Don't you believe me?" howled Levison.

"No fear!" "I tell you—"

"What's the good of telling us that a rotten slacker like you is taking up cricket, and playing in House matches?" said Wally contemptuously. "Don't talk rot! Anyway, you should have thought of that before you chucked stones at poor old Pongo. Look at him. Trying to lick where your stone cut him, you cad!"

"Here comes Mr. George," said Jameson. "Now, then, Levison—"

"Look here—"

"Shut up!" said Wally. "Thank you, Mr. George. There are your gloves, Levison, and if you don't put them on, you'll get my knuckles." Levison gritted his teeth as he put the gloves on. He did not want to fight, though he was pretty certain that he could lick a Third Former. But Levison always preferred to serve his turn by "ways that are dark and tricks that are vain," instead of open combat. But he had no choice in the matter this time.

"I'll knock you into the middle of next week, you young cad!" he said, between his teeth.

"Come on and begin the knocking," said D'Arcy minor cheerfully.

And they started. Wally was full of grit, which more than balanced his lack of inches. When the Fourth Former's savage drives landed on his face Wally took the punishment gamely. And he returned the blows with interest. Levison soon felt the weight of his gloves.

Bump!
Levison was down on his back in the grass.

"Hurrah!" roared Jameson. "Down with the Fourth!"

"Gerrup!" growled Curly Gibson. "You're not finished yet."

Levison staggered to his feet, his face pale with rage and his eyes burning. He tore off the gloves with savage haste.

"Look out, Wally!" "But Wally was looking out. He tossed aside his gloves also, as the cad of the Fourth rushed at him, hitting out furiously. Levison was stopped by a terrific uppercut, that sent him staggering back, and then Wally's bare knuckles came on his face, left and right, right and left!

Levison gave a yell and dropped on the ground again. Wally stood panting. "Time!" said Mr. George, with a grin.

Levison groaned. His eyes were closing up, and his nose seemed to have doubled its size, and was streaming crimson. He had reason to regret that he had taken off the gloves to finish that fight.

"Want any more?" asked Wally genially.

"Ow! No! Hang you!" "Oh, buck up, for the honour of the Fourth!" grinned Jameson. "What



"Aha!" exclaimed the villain in the play. "Is this a dagger that I see before me?" "No," whispered the stage-hand, "off." "It's a putty knife, but it's the best I could do!" Half-a-crown has been awarded to L. Sutton, 45, Hill Street, Peckham, London, S.E.15.

an amateur boxer, and was known for his skill in and around Wayland, and, as a matter of fact, he was not averse to seeing a "mill" between the two schoolboys. Wally was evidently keen for the combat, though the advantage of age and size was with Levison. But Levison did not seem quite so keen.

"Hallo! Where are you going, Levison?" asked Wally, as the cad of the Fourth made a movement.

"I'm going on!" said Levison, with a sneer. "I'm not going to fight a fag!"

"You're jolly well not going on," said Wally. "You've pelted my dog and hurt him. You're going to take a licking for it. Look after him, you fellows."

Wally and Jameson and Curly surrounded the cad of the Fourth. Levison gritted his teeth savagely. He was no match for the three of them, and he knew it.

"Look here," he said, "I don't want to fight you, D'Arcy minor. I came

will the Fourth say to you if you're licked?"

Levison did not reply. He scrambled to his feet, and giving Wally a glare of hatred, staggered away.

Wally rubbed his nose with his handkerchief. He had had a hard knock there, and the handkerchief came away red.

"Bravo, the Third!" roared Jameson. Wally chuckled.

"The Fourth will get their rag out about that, though they don't like Levison," he remarked. "They won't like a Fourth Form chap being licked by a fag. The rotter will let Pongo alone after this, anyway."

And Wally & Co. returned contentedly to the farmhouse to finish their tea, Wally carrying Pongo, snuggling under his arm.

Levison limped away towards St. Jim's, with black rage in his heart, and an ache in almost every bone. His sprint was over for that afternoon, and he knew that when Tom Merry saw the condition he was in he would not have much chance of playing in the House team. On Saturday he was likely to be adorned with two gorgeous black eyes, as well as a swollen nose. And he gritted his teeth as he dragged his heavy footsteps back to St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 8.

Levison's Accusation!

"GWEAT Scott! What have you been doin' to your chivvy, Levison?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy put up his eyeglass with extra care, to survey Levison as he came into the quad.

Levison scowled.

"I twust you have not been fightin' with the Gwammawians, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "It was very weckless of you to get into that state when you are twyin' to get a place in the House team for Saturday."

"It's your precious minor!" said Levison, between his teeth. "He's done this to me to keep me out of the team on Saturday."

"Bai Jove! What?"

"Tom Merry's as good as promised me a place in the team, and Wally wants it himself, so he piled on me and did this," said Levison.

"Wats! Wally would not do anythin' of the sort," said Arthur Augustus indignantly. "And you ought to be ashamed of yourself for bein' licked by a Third Form kid, if he did!"

"There were three of them," said Levison sullenly.

"I don't believe a word of it. It would be impos for a D'Arcy to act in such a wotten mannah."

"Well, he did. The three of them piled on me and didn't give me a chance," said Levison. "I'll make 'em pay for it, too."

"Wats!"

"It's in keeping with what he did this afternoon—turning the hose on the cricket ground," said Levison. "He spoiled the match this afternoon, and now he's put me off my form for Saturday."

"Weally, Levison—"

Levison tramped on towards the School House. The state of his face drew many glances upon him as he went in. He bathed his eyes in the Fourth Form dormitory, but that did not do them much good. They were already black, and growing much blacker, and

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Levison looked at his reflection in the glass, and became furious.

His uncle, in whose good graces he wanted to keep, was coming on Saturday. Instead of finding him in the House team playing cricket, his esteemed relative would find him hanging about with a pair of black eyes and a thick nose. Levison grew more furious as he reflected on it, and saw all prospects of the hoped-for fiver vanishing. There was nothing for him to do but to write to his uncle and plead illness, and put the old gentleman off.

That was all he could do now, and the trouble he had already taken in cricket practice was sheer waste. His feelings towards Wally were savage and bitter. If any means came Levison's way for revenging himself, he was not likely to hesitate. And the accusations he had already made to D'Arcy major seemed a ready means. A fellow who knocked out another fellow just before a cricket match was likely to "catch" it from the others. If he could sustain his accusation against Wally, the scamp of the Third would be booked for an exceedingly unpleasant time.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was left with a frown on his noble brow. He did not believe what Levison had said, and yet—there was the disfigurement of the Fourth Former's face to prove it. It did not seem really likely that Levison had been so damaged in a fair fight with a lad younger and smaller than himself.

And Wally's reckless conduct of late lent colour to the accusation. Wally had turned the garden hose on the junior cricket ground, and stopped the practice match, and the members of the House team and the scratch eleven were waiting to see him about it. If he had done this to Levison in addition, there was trouble in store for the reckless fag.

"Wherefore that worried brow, oh, my infant?" asked Jack Blake, waking D'Arcy out of his reverie with a sounding slap on the shoulder.

"Ow, you ass!" said D'Arcy. "You have thrown me into quite a fluttah. I wish you would not be such a wuff beast!"

"What are you tying your eyebrows up into knots for?" demanded Blake.

"I was not doing anything of the sort, you ass! I was thinking. Did you see Levison just now, deah boy?"

Blake grinned.

"Yes; he looks as if he's been butting his face against a brick wall, or a specially hard set of knuckles."

"He says that Wally did it, Blake."

Blake snorted.

"If he's let a Third Form fag give him two black eyes, I've a jolly good mind to give him another one for disgracing the Form!" he exclaimed.

"Bai Jove! I weally don't see how you can do that, deah boy; he hasn't thwee eyes," said Arthur Augustus in astonishment.

"Oh, rats!" said Blake crossly.

"Why, he ought to be able to eat Wally. He's a head taller, and quite two years older, if not more. It's a disgrace to the Fourth!"

"Yaas, wathah! He says that there were thwee of them, and they all piled on him at once."

"Oh, I see! Then I won't give him that other black eye," said Blake considerably. "I don't know that I can handle more than three at once, myself."

"But Wally wouldn't have acted in such a wotten way, deah boy!" said

Arthur Augustus, in distress. "Levison says they deliberately knocked him out, so that he couldn't play in the House match."

Blake looked grave.

"If Levison can prove that, Wally will get into trouble," he said. "I must say it looks like it. Wally has been playing the giddy ox lately about that blessed House match, and I suppose he knew Levison was let into the team for Saturday."

"Pwobably he didn't know that, deah boy."

"I hope not; we'll ask him when he comes in. Anyway, I don't see how a fag by himself, without help, could have handled Levison like that."

"Levison isn't a fightah."

"No; but he'd rather fight than have black eyes," said Blake. "It looks pretty bad for Wally. Only Levison is such an awful fibber that we shall want proof."

"Yaas, wathah, that's quite twue!"

The juniors went into the School House. Tom Merry came downstairs with a very serious expression on his handsome face. A number of juniors had seen Levison by this time, and heard what he had to say. Some of them were looking very grim. Wally's claim to be played in the House team had been taken in a very humorous spirit at first. But his action on the cricket field that afternoon had made the juniors take it more seriously, and all of them had agreed that the scamp of the Third would have to be taught a lesson.

Now it looked as if he was going from bad to worse. If Levison's account was true, the Third Form fag had been guilty of a ruffianly attack upon a prospective member of the House team. And even if the hose affair could be forgiven as a reckless jape, the latter happening could not possibly be overlooked.

"You've seen Levison?" asked Blake, catching Tom Merry's expression.

"Yes," said Merry seriously. "He's simply knocked out—both eyes black, and his nose swollen, his lip cut. He says Wally and Curly Gibson and Jameson piled on him in the fields, although he told them he was playing in the House match on Saturday. That was practically settled."

"It is incweddible, deah boy!"

"Well, we'll hear what Wally has to say about it," said Tom Merry. "The young rascal has been going altogether too far lately."

"Yaas, but he would not do anything mean or cowardly. I am sure that he did not know that Levison was to play on Saturday."

"Levison says he told him."

"Yaas; but he is an awful fibbah."

"Of course, you don't believe me," broke in Levison's sneering voice. "You can please yourself about that. All I care for is playing in the House team on Saturday."

Tom Merry looked at him.

"You can't do that," he said. "Even if you were fit, I couldn't put a fellow in the team with two black eyes like yours. They'll be as black as ink on Saturday. Some of the fellows' relations are coming—there will be uncles and aunts and sisters and cousins. What the dickens would everybody think if a player went in with a chivvy like that? Very likely the Head would interfere."

Levison scowled—his scowl looking more black than usual in the disfigurement of his face.

"You mean that you're going to

leave me out," he demanded, "after practically promising me a place?"

"That was if you were fit," said Tom Merry quietly. "You can't say you're fit in that state. No good telling me you can see straight with your eyes bruised in that way—you can't! You'll be crocked for a week."

"If young D'Arcy can get his way by crocking members of the team, some of you others had better look out," said Levison bitterly. "It's as easy for three young hooligans to pile on you as on me."

"Weally, Levison—"

"If what you say about Wally is true, Wally is going to have a lesson he won't forget in a hurry," said Tom Merry quietly. "You're ready to repeat it before him?"

but if his cunning did not fail to serve his turn, the scamp of the Third was destined to suffer more severely still.

CHAPTER 9.

Put on Trial!

"MY only Aunt Jane!"

D'Arcy minor paused in the road as he uttered the exclamation. It was growing dusk, and the heroes of the Third were late—in. Pongo had taken it into his head to follow on the track of an elusive rabbit, and Wally had followed on Pongo's track in vain. Pongo had proved even more elusive than the rabbit. Jameson and Curly had succeeded at last in getting Wally to

ducking, and you've had your lesson, and it's all over. Pax!"

"It isn't about your jape on us that we want to see you, Wally," said Tom Merry quietly.

"What is it, then? Have you decided to play us in the House team?" asked Wally.

"It's about Levison."

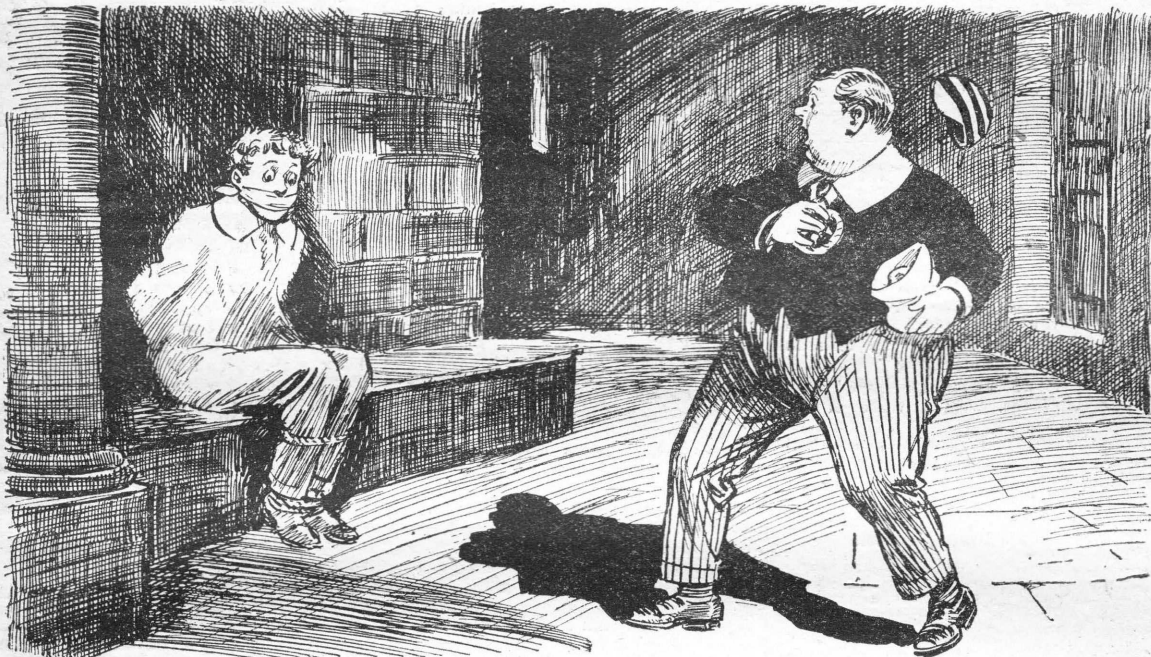
"Levison!" chuckled Wally. "Have you seen him? Pretty good for a Third Form chap, eh? I think he will remember it for some time."

"So will you, you young rascal!" said Tom Merry. "Come in! We want you!"

Wally kept at a safe distance.

"Not till you make it pax!" he said.

"Here comes Taggles to lock the gates," said Monty Lowther. "You



Fatty Wynn started as he caught sight of a white form seated on one of the old stone benches. Then he saw that it was a junior, smothered with flour and tied up hand and foot. "Great Scott!" exclaimed Fatty. "It's Tom Merry!"

"Of course I am; and if he isn't jolly well ragged, I shall go to Mr. Railton and complain about it," said Levison.

"No need to do that; if you can prove it against him, he'll get it in the neck from us," said Tom Merry. "As soon as they come in, we'll march them into my study, and you can say it out before them—and we'll see. It's only fair to hear what they say before we rag them."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You know what the young cad's capable of by what he did this afternoon," growled Levison. "We had to chuck up the practice match."

"I know. But that's different. Anyway, we'll see. Let's get down to the gates, you fellows, and collar Wally, Jameson, and Gibson as they come in. We'll give them a fair trial, and treat them accordingly."

"Hear, hear!"

And Tom Merry & Co. waited at the school gates for Wally and his comrades, to capture them as soon as they returned to the school. Levison waited in the School House, with a spiteful satisfaction in his breast. He had suffered severely at Wally's hands,

come home, leaving Pongo to wander in his own sweet way; and they had just time to get in before calling-over.

As they came up to the school gates, they caught sight of the Terrible Three standing there.

"Those bounders are waiting for us!" growled Wally. "They haven't got over their washing this afternoon yet."

The scamp of the Third eyed the Shell fellows uneasily. Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther occupied the gateway, and they would not easily be passed. The fags came on cautiously, and halted out of reach.

"Waiting for us to come in?" asked Wally affably.

"Yes," said Tom Merry.

"Kind of you, I'm sure. But don't trouble—run away, or you'll be late for calling-over."

"We're waiting for you," said Manners.

"Now, don't play the giddy ox!" said Wally, in a tone of patient remonstrance. "I told you I should make you sit up if you didn't come round, and I made you sit up. I'm willing to make it pax now."

"So are we," said Jameson and Gibson generously. "You've had your

can take your choice of coming in or staying out."

Taggles, the porter, came down to the gates with his bunch of keys. The three fags looked at one another. They did not want to be locked out.

"Ere, you come in!" said Taggles, blinking out in the dusk at the heroes of the Third. "I'm a-goin' to lock up."

"Rush for it!" whispered Wally.

There was nothing else to be done. The three fags made a sudden rush, and Wally dexterously pushed Taggles into the arms of Tom Merry. The fags dodged the Shell fellows, and fled across the quadrangle.

"Ere, what's the game?" ejaculated Taggles. "The young raskil! I'll report him! Master Merry, leggo my 'air!"

"I was holding you up, Taggles!" grinned Tom Merry.

Taggles righted himself.

"You could 'old me up without 'oldin' me up by the 'air," he said severely. And he grunted ungratefully as he proceeded to lock up the gates.

The Terrible Three followed the fags to the House. They had to appear at

calling-over as well as Wally & Co. When they came into Big Hall, Wally, Jameson, and Curly Gibson were there with the Third, and they grinned at the Shell fellows. In the midst of their own Form, they were not afraid of the Shell.

"Better collar them as they come out," said Manners. "Must get Jameson before he scuttles off to his own House."

Tom Merry nodded, and the word was passed to Blake and the rest.

When calling-over was finished, and the boys marched out of Big Hall, quite a crowd of fellows gathered round Wally of the Third. But Wally was on the watch, and he escaped into the Third Form Room.

The juniors met in council in the passage. With all the Third round him in the Form-room, the capture of Wally would not be an easy task. And it would be still less easy to carry him off to Tom Merry's study. The Third were certain to rally to the rescue of their leader.

"Pewwaps you had better leave it to me, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "I will go in and speak to Wally, and tell him he's wanted!"

"Ass!" said Blake. "He won't come!"

"Wats! I am sure that Wally did not act as Levison declares, and therefore he will be willin' to come and say so. If we pwomise to say no more about his jape with the hose this afternoon, he will come all right."

"Well, you can try," said Tom Merry. "I hope he will be able to prove that Levison is lying."

"Leave it to me, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, with a wave of the hand.

And the swell of St. Jim's marched into the Third Form Room. A hostile crowd of fags met him with a howl.

"No Fourth Form kids wanted here," said Wally. "You can buzz off!"

"Clear out!" roared Jameson.

"Travel!"

"Yah!"

"Wally, deah boy, this is a sewious mattah. In the first place we are pwepared to ovahlook your wescally conduct with the garden hose, although you wuined my clothes. Levison has accused you—"

Wally sniffed.

"Levison can go and eat coke!" he said. "I licked him once, and I can do it again, if he wants any more!"

"Levison declares that three of you piled on him—"

"That's a whopper!"

"Yaas, deah boy. I know it is, and I want you to come and say so before Levison, and shut up his wotten mouth!"

"Oh, I'll do that all right!" said Wally. "Come on, Jimmy, and you, Curly! We'll soon stop Levison's lies!"

"Hold on!" said the cautious Jameson. "We want it understood that we're to come back safe and sound. No larks!"

"That's it!" said Curly Gibson. "Trust a Scotsman to think of that! We want a safe conduct, Gussy."

D'Arcy hesitated a moment. If Wally were found guilty, he was to be punished; but, after all, the chief question was to put him on his trial and ascertain the truth.

"Vewy well," said the Fourth Form ambassador. "I give you my word that aftah the iniquity, you three chaps shall be allowed to come back

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here before we take any furthah steps."

"That's good enough," said Wally. "Come on!"

And the three fags willingly followed the swell of St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus led the way up to Tom Merry's study in the Shell passage.

All the Co. were there. Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, Blake and Digby. Levison was there, too, looking very black and blue.

"Here he is!" growled Blake.

"Pway allow me to speak, deah boys—"

"Oh, you've spoken enough!" said Monty Lowther. "Give your jaws a rest, old chap. You'll get a crick in the neck if you keep on!"

"I insist upon speakin'! I have pwomised Wally a safe conduct, and aftah the twial he is to be allowed to go. He has only come undah that condish."

"All serene," said Tom Merry. "If he's found guilty, we'll lay hands on him soon enough, if there were as many of the Third as there are sands on the seashore."

"What's the row about?" asked Wally, grinning as he looked at Levison. "Levison looks a sight, I know; but he brought it on himself. You Fourth Form chaps shouldn't tackle the Third if you're afraid of hard knocks."

"You're accused of a jolly serious thing," said Manners. "But we're going to give you a fair trial. Speak up, Levison."

"Yaas, wathah! Woll out your lies again, Levison!" said Arthur Augustus encouragingly.

Levison gritted his teeth.

"You've heard what I have to say!" he growled. "Those three young rotters piled on me in the fields. They treated me like this. I told them I had to play in the House team on Saturday, and they only hit me harder. They meant to knock me up so that I couldn't play. Do you 'hink that that kid could have handled me like this alone?"

"Well, I shouldn't have thought so," said Tom Merry. "What have you got to say to that, Wally?"

Wally's eyes were blazing with indignation.

"It's all lies!" he said promptly. "Levison fought me alone, and Curly Gibson and Jimmy only looked on to see fair play."

"You handled Levison like this, all by yourself?"

"Yes, I'll do it again, if he likes." "Did he tell you he was playing in the House team on Saturday?"

"Well, yes," admitted Wally, "he did; but I didn't believe him. He never plays cricket. You must be off your rocker if you're thinking of putting a rotten slacker like Levison into the House team and leaving out a chap like me!"

"But you knew he was going to play when you handled him like that."

"No, I didn't. I tell you, I didn't believe a word of it."

"That is vewy pwob, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Right enough," he said. "Levison never plays in the House team, and his word isn't good enough to be taken, so I suppose Wally was right in not believing him. Still—"

"Hold on!" said Blake. "What was the row about? What did you tackle Levison for, young D'Arcy, if it wasn't to crock him for Saturday?"

"Because the brute chucked a stone at Pongo and cut him!" said Wally, his eyes blazing again.

"Oh!" said Tom Merry. "I see. You didn't tell us that, Levison."

"It isn't true," said Levison. "You didn't hurt Pongo?"

"Pongo wasn't there," said Levison coolly. "Young D'Arcy has only just thought of that."

"Why, you—you—you—" stuttered Wally, in rage and amazement.

"Silence in court!" said Blake. "It can easily be proved, one way or the other. If Pongo was cut by a stone, we've only got to look at Pongo to see."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Get him here, Wally. You can smuggle him into the House—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I can't!" said Wally.

"Why not?" demanded Blake suspiciously.

"Because he didn't come in with me. He went after a rabbit, and I lost him."

"Oh!"

There was a grim silence in the study.

CHAPTER 10.

Bowled Out!

LEVISON smiled sneeringly.

He had seen the fags come in without Pongo, and so he knew, of course, that the dog could not be produced as evidence.

There was a long pause. The juniors knew well enough Wally's affection for Pongo, and how unlikely he would be to desert him outside the gates if he could possibly help it. It really looked as if Levison's story was true, after all.

"So you left Pongo out of doors?" asked Tom Merry at last.

"I had to," said Wally. "We had only just time to get in before calling-over, as it was. The little beast went after a rabbit!"

"Then he's lost?"

"Oh, he'll turn up all right! He knows his way back to the school," said Wally. "He's been lost before. He'll come in to-morrow all right!"

"What a likely yarn!" sneered Levison.

"Why, you know it's true, you black-guard!" said Wally hotly. "You stoned poor old Pongo, and you know it! Herries licked you once for doing the same to his bulldog!"

"Yaas, I wemembah that!"

"And Gibson and Jameson did not touch Levison?" asked Lowther.

"Never laid a finger on him," said Jameson. "He's not a nice person to touch!"

The juniors looked at one another doubtfully.

"Pity you haven't got Pongo here!" said Digby. "That would settle it one way or the other. If Levison hurt the dog, he ought to be licked. House match or no House match!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"If you wanted to fight Levison," said Tom Merry, "you ought to have had the gloves on. That would have made it all right."

"We did have the gloves on," said Wally. "Levison took them off of his own accord, because he wanted to lam me with his bare knuckles. Then I took mine off."

"What? Where did it happen, then?"

"Near Farmer Oates' place."

"How did you get boxing-gloves there?"

"Young Oates gave 'em to us. You know George Oates is a boxer. We should have fought it out with the gloves on if Levison hadn't taken them off."

"It's all lies!" said Levison coolly. "It wasn't anywhere near Oates' Farm. That's miles from here, and these young cads piled on me in the Acre Field!"

"Oh, what a whopper!" said Jameson. "George Oates will tell you how it happened," said Wally. "He saw it all."

"Ahem!" said Tom Merry. "That's all very well. Your blessed witness is miles away, and we can't get at him—and your blessed dog is lost, and we can't see him. It looks jolly suspicious to me!"

The looks of all the juniors showed that they thought it decidedly suspicious, too. The explanation of the Third Former certainly sounded a little lame.

"If you don't believe me——" began Wally hotly.

"It isn't a question of that, but of proof," said Tom Merry quietly. "You've spoiled Levison's chance of playing in the House team. If we suspect you of doing it on purpose, you've only got yourself to thank, after playing the giddy goat as you've done lately!"

"Oh, rats!" said Wally disrespectfully.

"And you won't improve matters by rotten cheek!" began Blake wrathfully.

"Yaas, you should be respectful to your elders," said Arthur Augustus chidingly. "Pway don't be a cheeky young ass, Wally!"

"I think I've proved my case," said Levison. "You fellows can do as you like about it. I think I ought to be played in the House team, as I've been crooked on purpose by these young rotters. It's not my fault!"

"It's impossible with you in that state," said Tom Merry. "I wish we could get George Oates to tell us whether he knows anything about it. But we can't——"

Wally snorted. "You could if you had as much sense as a rabbit!" he said rudely. "Haven't you ever been to Oates' Farm?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Didn't you have your silly eyes open, then? Oates is on the telephone."

"Oh!" said Blake.

"And you can use the telephone here in the prefects'-room, if you want to," said Wally. "Go and ring up Oates, and ask him."

"My hat! I didn't think of that!"

"Of course you didn't!" said Wally sarcastically. "It's necessary for a chap in the Third to do your thinking for you."

"Well, I didn't know Oates was on the telephone. Where are you going, Levison?" Tom Merry asked, as Levison made a move towards the door.

"I'm going to bathe my eyes——"

"Your eyes have been bathed enough for a bit. You can stay here until I've spoken to Oates over the phone!" said Tom Merry sharply.

"If George Oates tells any lies to favour these young rotters——" began Levison.

"He won't do that; we know him, and we know he's fair and square. Keep Levison here, Blake, while I go to the phone."

"You bet!" said Blake.

Levison had changed colour now. He had never even thought of the telephone,

JUST MY FUN

Monty Lowther Calling!



Hallo, everybody!
You can't beat a new-laid egg, says an expert. Then how do you make an omelet?

A reader asks what is it makes geniuses absent-minded? Dash it all, I forget!

They say germs won't stay in a house if you cut up an onion and leave it about. Neither will anybody else!

Then there was the chap who sat outside the Tower of London all night because a policeman had told him to mind the steps.

Yes, and they say Gore got his chest development through patting himself on the back.

Then there was the sailor who grumbled because he was put on duty for several hours at the top of a mast. That was his look-out.

"How much does a taxi driver expect as a tip?" asks a reader. More!

"It is foolish to keep a lot of money in your study," observes Mr. Ratcliff. It's more than that—it's impossible!

"What is a heavyweight boxer?" asks Digby. A chap who has two seconds in his corner and ten on his back!

Young Piggott was caught trying to put a metal disc into an automatic machine. Trying to get "aweigh" with it!

Story: "Pop, did they teach you about William the Conqueror?" "Yes, my boy." "Well, they're still on about him!"

and it seemed likely to upset the cunning accusation he had made against the hero of the Third. His manner was quite enough to make the juniors suspicious. It was pretty clear that the cad of the Fourth did not want to stand the test of the telephone.

"I—I don't really want the matter to go any further," said Levison falteringly. "I've told you fellows just how it happened——"

"You've told us the fags piled on you in the Acre Field!" said Tom Merry sternly. "Now we'll see what George Oates has to say about it!"

"Look here——"

"See that he doesn't get out, you fellows!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther left the study. Levison made a movement to follow, but Blake and Digby were in the way. Levison's heart was beating hard now, and he looked like an animal caught in a trap—as indeed he was.

Tom Merry lost no time in going to the telephone. There happened to be no one in the prefects'-room. Having found the number of Oates' Farm in the book, Tom Merry took up the receiver and asked for it. In a few minutes the voice of the young farmer came through.

"Hallo!"

You heard about the chap who wouldn't go near the wireless because he thought the announcer had a cold?

From the Third Form Room: "Who was Disraeli?" asked Mr. Selby. "George Arliss," replied young Hobbs. "Stars" flew!

Lots of people would do anything for money. And lots want the money without doing anything for it!

"A fast passenger liner can leave a tramp steamer standing," says a writer. Tie it up in "knots," as it were?

A dance-band crooner says he can keep eighty-four tunes in his head. Then why doesn't he?

Aeroplane story: Passenger: "Let me know when you're going to loop the loop again." Pilot: "Well, I don't always know!"

"What sort of grease will keep my hair at its best?" asks a reader. Try elbow grease when you brush it, old chap!

"What is a term?" asked Mr. Selby. Wally D'Arcy replied that it was a period for reflection on the happy holidays just over and the one due next. He got a "term" of detention!

D'you know why Scots always wear wristwatches? Because they hate taking anything out of their pockets!

"It's difficult to meet expenses," complains Crooke. Funny, I seem to meet them everywhere!

Quickly, now: Why is a spectator at a cricket match like a beehive? Because he's a be-holder. Ow!

Must tell you: Skimpole thought floodlighting was a new way of illuminating the floods.

Last shot: "What are we stopping for?" asked the irritable passenger. "The light is green." "Your last remark made me see red!" snapped his friend.

Happy days, chaps!

"Is that George Oates?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes. Who are you?"

"St. Jim's. You know D'Arcy minor? Was he at your place this afternoon?"

Tom Merry heard a faint chuckle over the wires.

"Yes," came the reply.

"Did he have a fight there?"

"Who's asking?"

Tom Merry laughed. Mr. George evidently did not intend to give D'Arcy minor away, if it was a master inquiring about his fistical adventures.

"I'm Tom Merry. It's all right. Levison accuses D'Arcy of piling on him with two other chaps, and we want to know whether it's true."

"It's a lie!" came the prompt reply.

"It was a fair fight. I saw it all."

"Was D'Arcy minor's dog there?"

"The dog? Yes; Pongo."

"Had Levison chucked stones at him?"

"Yes. I caught him at it."

"That settles it," said Tom Merry grimly. "Thank you, Mr. Oates! Good-bye!"

He hung up the receiver.

"Now for Levison!" said Manners. "The awful cad! He was lying again, as usual!"

The Terrible Three returned to the
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study. Levison was waiting for them in a state of great uneasiness. He still had a hope that George Oates might be away, and so be unable to give the required information. But that hope died away as soon as he saw the faces of the Terrible Three.

"Well?" asked Blake.

"I've spoken to George Oates," said Tom Merry quietly. "It's all as Wally says—every word. George Oates himself caught Levison stoning the dog."

"The awful cad!"

"The howwible Ananias!"

Levison made a spring for the door. Blake put out his foot promptly, and the cad of the Fourth stumbled and fell headlong, with a yell.

"Not quite so fast," said Blake genially. "You've got a nice little set of lies to answer for, Levison, my infant."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Satisfied now?" asked Wally, with a sniff.

"Quite satisfied," said Tom Merry. "I'm sorry we doubted you."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Wally. "You've played the giddy ox. But I suppose it's no good expecting anything else of you. The only decent thing you can do now is to put us in the House team."

Tom Merry laughed.

"I'm afraid that can't be done, Wally."

"They are afraid to play them, or they," remarked Monty Lowther. "But if them were equal to they, and they and them were to play they—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Wally. "Look here! You'd made up the team, and you'd put Levison in, hadn't you?"

"Yes; that's so."

"Now there's a place vacant again as Levison is out?"

"Yes, but—"

"Play me; then the Third will be satisfied, with one man in the team."

"Will they?" muttered Curly Gibson.

"Figgins is playing a Third Former," urged Wally. "He's put Jameson in. You put me in, and make it all square. That's fair play."

"Yaas, wathah! I agree with what Wally says. I weally considah that it is up to you, Tom Mewwy."

"I'll consult the committee, and we'll see," said Tom Merry.

And with that Wally had to be satisfied. The three fags left the study, and then the juniors turned their attention to Levison. The cad of the Fourth was standing with a guilty look. He had made a false accusation, and he had been unexpectedly found out, and he knew that there was punishment to follow.

"You are a cad, Levison!" said Tom Merry. "You've jolly nearly made us rag D'Arcy minor unjustly. We're going to rag you justly—see?"

"If you touch me, I'll complain to Mr. Railton," said Levison, between his teeth.

"Good! Then you shall have something substantial to complain of," said Tom Merry. "Lay him on the table. I've got a slipper here!"

The struggling Levison was laid on the table, and Tom Merry made rapid play with the slipper, to the accompaniment of wild yells from Levison. Twenty sounding thwacks were administered, and then the cad of the Fourth was ejected from the study. He picked himself up, and limped away to his own room with a face white with

rage. Mellish, his study-mate, glanced at him in surprise as he came in.

"In trouble again?" he asked.

Levison flung himself into a chair, and then hurriedly rose again. After that slipping a chair was not a comfortable place, and he preferred to stand.

"I'll make Tom Merry sit up for it!" he muttered, grinding his teeth.

"But you were on such jolly good terms with Tom Merry lately," grinned Mellish. "Is there a rift in the lute so soon? Aren't you playing in the House team, after all?"

"No!" growled Levison.

"Phew! What about your uncle?"

"I've written to put him off, confound him! But—but I'll make those rotters smart for it!" growled Levison. "If I don't play in the team, I'll see that—"

He paused.

"You'll see what?" asked Mellish curiously.

"Mind your own business!"

And whatever revengeful thoughts were working in Levison's mind, he did not confide any of them to Mellish.

CHAPTER 11.

Put to the Torture!

"MADE up your mind yet?" Wally asked the question the next morning after lessons.

He was waiting for Tom Merry when the Shell came out of their Form-room.

Tom Merry shook his head, and smiled in a rather thoughtful way. To a certain extent, it was only just that Wally should have the place left vacant by Levison in the junior House team; but there were other considerations to be weighed. Wally was a remarkably good cricketer for a Third Former. But the House match was certain to be a hard tussle, for at least two of Tom Merry's best men were absent, and Figgins & Co. were known to be at the top of their form.

Tom Merry had enough to think about, without the claims of the Third Former—especially as the match was one of the first House matches of the season, and the School House had one defeat to wipe out against their rivals.

"Wally, old man, you're getting on my nerves," said Tom Merry. "Why can't you go and play marbles with the other fags, and be quiet?"

Wally snorted.

"I'm going to play for the House team, or know the reason why!" he said. "I think we're jolly moderate in asking to have only one man in the team."

"Well, I'll consult the committee this evening; but—"

"You'll back me up for the selection—eh?"

"I'm afraid not. You see Figgins & Co. are in simply howling good form, and we shall have all our work cut out to keep our end up," said Tom Merry. "This isn't the time for playing the giddy goat, Wally."

"That's what I want to stop you doing."

"Oh, run away and play!"

"There'll be trouble!" said Wally.

"Br-r-r-r-r!"

Tom Merry walked on, leaving Wally glaring wrathfully. Tom was smiling at the idea of the Third Form going on the warpath to coax him in his selection of players for the all-important House match.

But he did not smile ten minutes later,



Grasping firmly the stout tendrils of the ivy, Tom Merry, old tower. Slowly, slowly, testing the ivy before foot by foot. But could he reach the cricket

when, coming back to the School House after a visit to Figgins about the match, four or five fags made a sudden rush upon him from ambush.

"Collar him!" yelled the well-known voice of D'Arcy minor.

"Got him!" chuckled Frayne.

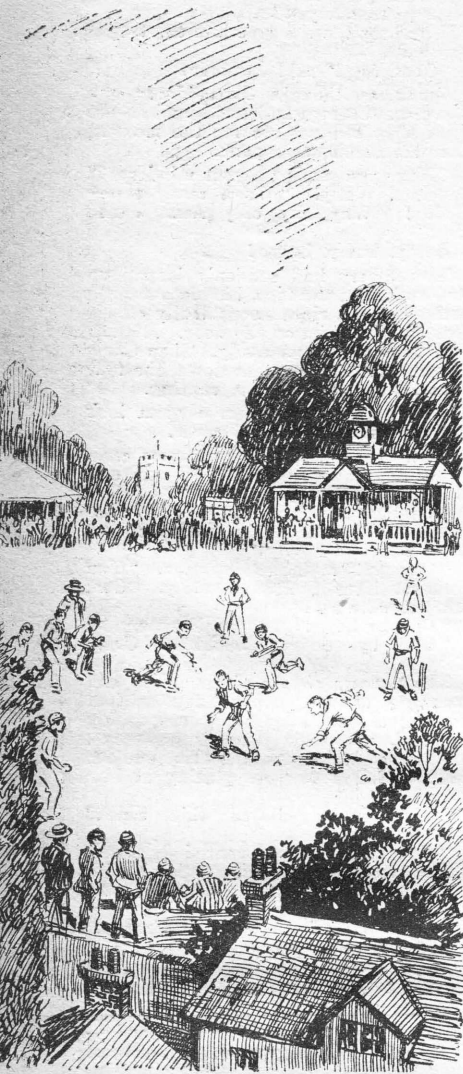
Tom Merry was on the ground, with the fags sprawling over him, before he knew what was happening. He gave one shout, and then he gave no more, for Wally dragged a large flour-bag over his head, and secured it round his body. Then the struggling Shell fellow was lifted in the arms of the chuckling fags, and carried bodily away.

The captain of the House eleven struggled violently.

But there were too many of the fags for him. The bag over his head drowned his shouts, and prevented him from seeing. The ambush had evidently been carefully planned by the astute leader of the Third. Wally was on the warpath now, with a vengeance.

"Into the old tower with him—quick!" came Wally's voice.

The old tower, an ancient part of St. Jim's, was unoccupied, not indeed being in a fit state of repair for habitation; and it was a good distance from the



Tom Merry worked his way down the wall of the schoolhouse, putting his weight on it, he lowered himself in time to be of any use to his team?

School House. There was little likelihood of Tom Merry's chums finding him there, unless the fags chose.

The prisoner was dumped down heavily on the stone floor, and then Wally's voice was heard again giving orders:

"Rope him up!"

Tom Merry renewed his struggles. But the noose was passed over his wrists and drawn tight, and another over his ankles, and knotted with equal thoroughness.

Then the captain of the Shell lay helpless, and Wally drew the flour-bag from his head. The fags gave a yell of laughter as his face was revealed.

The bag had been empty; but enough of its original contents had remained sticking to it to rub off on Tom Merry's face, hair, and clothes, to reduce him to the whiteness of a ghost. Flour was in his hair, in his nose, in his mouth and ears, and he was gasping and sniffing spasmodically.

"It's a giddy ghost!" chuckled Curly Gibson.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you cheeky young rotters!" spluttered Tom Merry. "Let me loose at once! Do you hear?"

D'Arcy minor nodded. "Yes, we hear!" he said cheerfully. "Untie me!" roared Tom Merry furiously.

"No fear! You're a giddy prisoner. Shut the door, Curly, in case any silly ass comes nosing round!" said Wally. "If you call out, Tom Merry, I shall shove my handkerchief into your mouth, and gag you, as they do the brigand in Figgins' serial in the 'Weekly.' Savvy?"

"You—you—you—" "This is where you take a back seat," said Wally calmly. "The Third are on the warpath. I made you a liberal offer—only one in the House team—"

"Go and eat coke!" "I'd rather watch you eating flour," said Wally, with a grin, as Tom Merry spluttered the dusty stuff out of his mouth. "But to come to business. We've collared you to make terms. You're going to play Curly and Frayne and me in the House team?"

"I'm not, you young ass!" "Then we shall put you to the torture, same as Figgins' brigand does to his prisoners when he wants ransom for them."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Wally jerked out a copy of "Tom Merry's Weekly" from under his jacket, and opened it at the page of the thrilling serial by Figgins of the New House. Figgins' taste in literature was somewhat lurid, and ran to brigands, pirates, slavers, and other fearsome beasts of the same kind. Tom Merry had often grinned over Figgins' instalment of the "Blood-Red Brigand"; but he did not grin now as Wally read out a description of the torture inflicted to pay his ransom.

"Ha!" cried the Blood-Red Brigand—so Wally read out. "Ha! At last I have you in my clutches! Pile the burning coals upon his neck, and drive the red-hot steel into his feet, and pour the boiling oil over his head! Ha, ha! Behold him writhe!"

"That sounds rather hot, doesn't it?" said Wally, with a chuckle. "Figg's got a splendid imagination. That blood-red brigand must have been a regular corker. Now you know what to expect, Tom Merry, if you don't pay your ransom—I mean, if you don't shove us into the House team."

"Let me loose!" roared Tom Merry. "Are you going to do the decent thing, or do you prefer the torture?"

"I'll jolly well give you a thick ear when I get loose!" grunted Tom Merry.

"It's the torture, then. Sorry we haven't got any red-hot steel or boiling oil," said Wally thoughtfully. "Still, we shall be able to behold you writhe, all the same. Take hold of his nose, Jimmy. You've got fingers like a pair of pincers."

"What-ho!" said Jameson. He took Tom Merry's nose between his finger and thumb.

"Squeeze!" said Wally.

Jameson squeezed.

"Groo-ooo-oo!" spluttered Tom Merry.

"Ha, ha, ha! Behold him writhe!" yelled Wally.

And the fags roared with laughter. Tom Merry roared with pain.

"Had enough?" asked Wally genially.

"Grooogh!"

"Good! Are you going to do the decent thing? Three of us in the team?"

"No!" yelled the Shell fellow.

"Give him another nip, Jimmy!"

Jameson cheerfully gave the prisoner another nip.

"Groo-ooooogh!"

"Now then, Tommy, are you going to give in?"

"No! Groogh! No!"

"Obstinate Shellfish!" said Wally.

"It will have to be the red-hot steel after all. We'll leave him here to think over it."

"Rescue!" bawled Tom Merry, in the faint hope that some of his chums might be near the old tower.

Wally chuckled, and jammed his handkerchief into the Shell fellow's mouth. The handkerchief had seen good service, and was not in the cleanest possible state; but it was quite all right as a gag. Tom Merry's voice died away in a faint grunt.

"Now we'll leave you here for a bit," said Wally. "Nobody's likely to find you. When you want your dinner, perhaps you'll come round and show some sense. If you miss afternoon lessons you may get into trouble with old Linton. It's your own look-out. Come on, you fellows."

And the fags, grinning, quitted the old tower and closed the heavy door after them, and Tom Merry was left alone.

CHAPTER 12.

Fatty Wynn's Find!

FIGGINS of the Fourth linked his arm in that of Fatty Wynn and grinned. Fatty Wynn, though he was one of Figg's best chums, did not seem to appreciate that mark of affection. He wriggled.

"I say, Figg, aren't you going down to the cricket before dinner?" he asked. "Yes, my son, and so are you!" said Figgins.

"I'll join you there," said Fatty Wynn.

"You'll come with me!" said Figgins.

"I—I say, Figg, I'm hungry, you know," said Fatty Wynn. "Dinner isn't for more than half an hour yet, and— and Mrs. Taggles has some lovely new tarts—"

"I knew what you were after," said Figgins, dragging his plump chum away from the tuckshop, upon which Fatty's eyes lingered lovingly. "I've told you that you're in training. We've got to beat the School House in the House match."

"But the House match isn't until Saturday," protested the fat Fourth Former, "and—and to-day's only Thursday! And I'm hungry—"

"Take his other arm, Kerr," grinned Figgins. "I told you you're in training, Fatty, my fat tulip! No more gorging till after the House match. If we beat the School House it will give 'em something to think about, as we've already got one victory to our credit. You're going to stick to practice, and keep on short commons, and bowl your very best on Saturday."

"I always play better on a solid foundation, Figg, old man."

"Rats! Come on!"

"Just a few tarts. Say a dozen."

"This way!"

"Only six, then. Four—three—two!" pleaded Fatty Wynn.

"This way!" said the inexorable Figgins. "You're in training. I'm going to keep an eye on you at dinner, too, and see that you don't have a second helping of pudding."

"Look here—" began Fatty Wynn wrathfully.

"We can't have our champion bowler getting crooked through overfeeding," chuckled Kerr. "You're in for it, Fatty. Come on!"

And the unhappy Falstaff of the New House was dragged down to the cricket ground. It was very hard on Fatty Wynn. The luscious tarts in Dame Taggles' little shop seemed to dance before his eyes. He had money in his pocket, and it was burning his pocket until it was expended in tarts. Fatty Wynn's fat face was quite clouded as he went on to bowl.

But Fatty was watching his opportunity. When he handed the ball over to Redfern for a change, he strolled into the pavilion. Figgins and Kerr considered him safe there, and went on batting.

But Fatty Wynn was very deep. He dropped out of the window at the end of the pavilion, scuttled round the building, and reached the tuckshop.

Then his money was quickly exchanged for a bag of fresh and lovely jam-tarts.

But the fat Fourth Former did not dare to linger. Figgins might be on the track at any moment. He put the bag under his arm and hurried out. He caught a glimpse of Figgins sprinting towards the school shop, and fled.

"It's rotten!" gasped Fatty Wynn, as he dodged away among the old elms. "As if a chap can't have a snack before dinner."

He turned his steps in the direction of the New House, but he paused. Figgins was sure to look for him there. Doubling round the gymnasium, Fatty Wynn made for the old tower. That building was distant enough to be safe for him, at least until he had consumed the tarts.

The old oaken door was closed. Fatty Wynn pushed it open and ran in. The interior was very dark after the brilliant sunshine of the quadrangle.

Fatty Wynn was opening his bag of tarts when he gave a sudden start. There was a low moaning sound in the dusky room.

"M-m-my hat!" ejaculated Fatty Wynn. "There's some blessed animal here."

Grunt!

Fatty Wynn looked round uneasily. He started again as he caught sight of a form seated on one of the old stone benches.

"Great Scott! What's that?"

Grunt!

For a moment Fatty Wynn almost fancied that the reputed ghost of the old tower had presented itself to his inspection.

But a second glance assured him that it was only a junior, smothered with flour, and tied up with great lengths of rope.

"Great Scott! Tom Merry!" exclaimed the New House junior, in astonishment. "Why don't you speak, you ass?"

Grunt!

"Oh, my hat!" Fatty Wynn perceived that the captain of the Shell was gagged.

He jerked the handkerchief out of the Shell fellow's mouth.

"Ow!" gasped Tom Merry. "Thanks!"

Fatty Wynn chuckled.

"Who fixed you up like that?" he asked.

"Third Form fags!" gasped Tom Merry. "Untie me, Fatty, there's a good chap!"

"Oh, it isn't a House rag, then?" said Fatty Wynn.

"No; it's Wally. Cut me loose."

"Wait a minute. I want to eat these tarts—"

"Can't you eat them afterwards?" howled Tom Merry, exasperated.

Fatty Wynn shook his head. His jaws were too busy for the moment to allow of speech.

Tom Merry eyed him as if he would eat him.

"Will you cut me loose, you fat idiot?" he demanded sulphurously.

"Wait a tick," said Fatty Wynn, with his mouth full. "Figgy may be along here any minute. The silly ass doesn't want me to have any tarts."

"Fathead! Blow the tarts! Let me loose!"

"Shan't be a tick!"

"You—you dummy—"

"Here he is!" roared Figgins, rushing into the tower, with Kerr at his heels. "He's been eating tarts!"

"Only—only six!" gasped Fatty Wynn. "Look here, you leave my tarts alone! I— Oh groooogh! Yah!"

Figgins seized the remaining tarts and plastered them wrathfully over Fatty Wynn's face.

"Groooogh! Ow! You silly ass!" spluttered Fatty Wynn. "I— Ow! Groogh!"

"Now come on!" howled Figgins. "I'll— Hallo! My hat! What's that?"

"Tom Merry!" yelled Kerr. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry glared at them.

"Let me loose, you cackling asses!" he shouted.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Figgins obligingly took out his pen-knife and cut through Tom Merry's bonds. Then the three New House juniors quitted the old tower, Figgins and Kerr chuckling, and Fatty Wynn furiously dabbing at the jam on his face with his handkerchief.

Tom Merry dusted away the flour furiously. He did not want to appear in the quadrangle looking like a ghost. He had been in the old tower half an hour when Fatty Wynn came in, and he was cramped and in a decidedly wrathful temper by this time. He had just finished dusting himself when there was a sound of footsteps and voices outside. He smiled grimly as he recognised Wally's tones.



"We'll see whether the silly ass has come to reason yet," Wally was saying. "If he hasn't, we'll give him the frog's-march."

"Good egg!" said Jameson.

Quick as thought Tom Merry sat down, as the fags had left him. In the dusk they did not see for the moment that his bonds were gone.

"Have you made up your mind yet?" chuckled Wally. "We're ready to— Hallo! Why, my only Aunt Jane! Ow!"

Bump, bump, bump!

Tom Merry had suddenly leaped up and rushed at the fags, hitting out right and left. His right swept Wally off his feet and laid him on the floor. His left laid Jameson across Wally. Then Curly Gibson and Frayne went down, the four fags rolling on the floor, roaring.

Tom Merry gave them a grim look and strode out of the old tower.

Wally sat up. He felt his nose carefully, to make sure that it was still there. It felt as if it wasn't.

"Ow!" gasped Wally. "My only Aunt Jane! Ow! The beast has got loose somehow! Ow!"

"Groogh!" mumbled Jameson. "You couldn't have tied him safely. Ow! Oh, you silly ass!"

"Oh, my heye!" moaned Frayne. "Oh, by dose!" mumbled Curly Gibson.

There was a chorus of mumbling and moaning as the helpless fags picked themselves up. They had been roughly handled, and their prisoner was gone. Wally was looking rather blue, and his faithful followers were glaring at him furiously.

"Well, we're dished this time!" growled Wally.

"You silly duffer!" roared Jameson. "Nice mess you've got us into, with your blessed schemes, haven't you? Look at my nose!"

"Look at my heye!" howled Frayne.

"Oh, bump him!" yelled Curly Gibson. "Bump the silly ass! If he can't think of any better schemes than this, bump him hard!"

The fags wanted to bump somebody—badly. Tom Merry was out of reach, so they bumped Wally. They bumped their unfortunate leader hard, and stamped away and left him gasping.

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Wally. "Oh, scissors! Oh!"

And Wally limped out of the old tower after his comrades.

CHAPTER 13.

Wally's Warning!

"WELL hit, Wally!"

"Bravo!"

Tom Merry heard the shout, and paused on his way to the cricket field. It was the day following his unpleasant adventure at the hands of the fags, and since then Wally had apparently gone off the warpath. At all events, he had not given Tom Merry any further trouble. The scamp of the Third seemed to be devoting himself to cricket practice, perhaps in the hope of being picked for the House team on his form alone.

And his form was certainly good. Tom Merry stood watching him for some time. Wally was at the wicket, and Curly Gibson was bowling. Wally was batting wonderfully well for a fag of the Third Form. Tom Merry looked at him with an approving eye and nodded.

"Wally is shapin' all right, Tom

(Continued on page 13.)



Let the Editor be your pal. Write to him to-day, addressing your letters:
The Editor, The GEM, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, chums! What have we got for next week? Well, I have some good news for you. The main story of the programme is just what the doctor ordered! A sparkling long St. Jim's yarn that will be enthusiastically received by all readers. It is called:

"FATTY WYNN'S HUNGER-STRIKE!"

Can you imagine it—Fatty Wynn, the Falstaff of the New House, the fellow who can put himself outside a meal large enough for three chaps, going on hunger-strike? It doesn't seem possible, but that is Fatty's declared intention. It is his form of protest against the treatment of him by Mr. R. Ratcliff, whose wrath he incurs. "Ratty" puts Fatty in the punishment-room on a bread and water diet as a punishment, and because the irascible Housemaster thinks Fatty gorges too much.

It is then that Fatty declares his hunger-strike, and the fun and excitement that follow make a better story than you will get anywhere. Fortunately, Fatty Wynn's hunger-strike has happy results for all concerned—except Mr. Ratcliff! Take my tip, chums—don't miss this splendid yarn.

"THE MAKING OF HARRY WHARTON!"

As I told you, I expected an avalanche of readers' letters about this great Greyfriars story, and my expectations are fully realised! Judging by the mass of correspondence I am receiving every day, I should think that nearly every GEM reader has written to me! All the letters I have had time to deal with are full of praise for this special yarn, the only criticisms being that the instalments are not long enough! By a little wangling, and reducing the size of the pictures, I have endeavoured to make the instalments as long as possible without shortening the St. Jim's story. So I hope readers will realise that I am doing my best for them.

Next week you will read further of the first adventures at Greyfriars of cheery Bob Cherry. By a pure accident Bob has made an enemy of Wharton, and you can be sure the sullen, obstinate Harry will not let the matter rest until his proud nature has been satisfied by getting revenge on Bob. Their quarrel is brought to a climax in the gym, where they fight it out to a finish. These gripping chapters of Frank Richards' grand story are the most exciting yet. Look out for them.

CONQUERING THE AIR!

The conquest of the air goes on apace. All quarters of the world have been reached by plane, the earth itself has been circled, and space has been annihilated. Thirty years ago people would have laughed if someone had said that Paris would, in time to come, be brought within an hour's journey of London, and that Australia would be reached from England in a week-end's flight. But, as we all know, the flights of fancy of years ago are now flights of reality.

But there is still one big flying problem to be conquered—the ascent and descent of a plane without the necessity for a large landing-ground. Even the autogyro—that queer-looking machine with a large propeller mounted above the wings—the nearest approach to mastering vertical ascent, requires a long take-off.

When a machine is invented which can rise and land with the facility of a bird, and hover motionless in the air, then flying will quickly become as popular as motoring, and the hundred-pound planes will surely follow as night follows day.

The time cannot be far distant when such a plane will be produced. As a matter of fact, a big step in this direction has been made by the invention of an engineering student. The main principle of his invention is the use of air-jets. The force generated by the pressure of air through the jets and striking against a vane can be utilised for making a plane rise and descend vertically. The pilot of a plane fitted with this device can regulate the air-pressure, and so vary the speed of the rise or descent of the machine. If, when tested on an aeroplane, this invention proves successful, it should revolutionise aviation, and make flying as safe as riding in a railway carriage.

EGGSTRAORDINARY!

By the way, talking about aeroplanes, I heard a humorous story this morning of the comical reception a tribe of Indians in Columbia—to whom aeroplanes were unknown—gave to a big, three-engined passenger machine which was forced to land in their midst.

While the crew and passengers were away seeking help at the nearest town, the Indians gathered round the plane in awe, staring in amazement at the strange monster of the sky. Presently

two of the Indians plucked up enough courage to crawl forward and get under the machine. Then they began searching about.

When the pilot returned he found them still at it, and it was with great reluctance that they were compelled to give up their quest. When asked what they were searching for, the Indians said they were after the eggs of the monster bird! They wanted to hatch them out and have flying birds of their own!

A BANANA BAFFLER!

Here's another of those little problems for you to solve:

Three men—who will call them A, B, and C—started out to sell bananas. "A" had fifty on his barrow; "B," thirty on his; while "C" had only ten. They sold their bananas at the same prices, yet when they returned with their barrows empty all three had taken the same amount of money. How much did they take, and at what prices did they sell their bananas? Have a shot at working it out before looking at the answer given at the end of this chat.

A TRAVELLING TRICK!

The cutting-down of travelling expenses to and from work was solved in an original way by a family living in Portland, Oregon, but it led to trouble when the trick was discovered. How the family wangled it was like this:

The son departed in the morning for work, taking with him a homing pigeon. He had a tramcar season ticket, and when he got to work he dispatched the pigeon back home with the ticket. The father, who was employed at the same place as his son, next used the ticket to travel to work, also taking the pigeon with him. He did the same as the son, sending the bird back with the ticket. For a third time that ticket was used, the mother travelling to the works with midday meals for her husband and son! It only remained for them to train the pigeon to bring the ticket to the works of an evening and the travelling expenses of the family would have been reduced to a minimum!

PEN PALS.

Bill Lockett, 151, Blake St., Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs; football and other sports. Thomas Atkins 15, Bennett St., Lewisham Rd., London, S.E.13; age 16-18: stamps, coins; overseas.

Kenneth Cormack, 66, Eastwoodmains Rd., Giffnock, Glasgow; stamps; overseas. Billy Alexander, 7227, Wiseman Av., Montreal, Canada; age 13-15: stamp collectors.

Miss Joan Cox, Hyrstelea, Shinfield, Horsham, Sussex; girl correspondents; Ireland; overseas; age 15-17: music, films, cycling, stamps.

PUZZLE SOLUTION.

A, B, and C each returned with tenpence. "A" sold forty-nine bananas at seven a penny, and one for threepence; "B" sold twenty-eight at seven a penny, and two for sixpence; while "C" disposed of seven for a penny, and three for ninepence.

TAILPIECE.

Teacher: "Where is this sentence wrong: 'It was me what ate all the pie'?"

Tommy: "'It wasn't me what ate all the pie'?"

PEN PALS COUPON

9-5-38

THE EDITOR.
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Mewwy, deah boy," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at his elbow.

"Yes, he's looking up," said Tom.

"Quite a good ideah to put him into the House eleven, Tom Mewwy. You haven't decided on anybody instead of that wottah Levison yet."

Tom Merry pursed his lips.

"He's jolly good for a fag," he admitted. "But the fact is I'm blessed if I can put him in, after his awful cheek. When a chap ties up the cricket captain and squeezes his nose to make him give way, it's time the cricket captain got his back up."

Arthur Augustus grinned. Tom Merry's experience in the old tower was the talk of the School House, and the fellows had all chuckled over it. Tom Merry did not chuckle; his dignity as captain of the Shell and great chief of the junior House team was concerned in the matter.

"Yaas, it was awfully cheeky of Wally," Arthur Augustus agreed. "All the same, it would be the pwopah capah to play him in the House eleven. I weally do not approve of a D'Arcy bein' left out, Tom Mewwy."

"Then I shall have to wriggle along somehow without your approval, Gussy," said Tom Merry cheerfully. "I'll try to bear it."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"By Jove! That was a good hit," said Tom Merry, as the leather flew from Wally's bat again and the fieldsmen started in pursuit. "The young beggar is hot stuff, I don't deny it. If it wasn't for his awful cheek I might think of it."

"I twust you will put him in, deah boy. I'm afwaid the young wascal has some othah plot in his bwain, and Figgins & Co. may not happen along next time to welease you," said Arthur Augustus, with a grin.

Tom Merry's brows knitted.

"Ass!" he said politely. "Do you think a cricket captain is going to be argued with like that? I'll jolly soon show your minor whether he can rag me into putting him into the team! He's going to stay out—that's flat!"

"Bai Jove!"

And Tom Merry walked away. Arthur Augustus looked a little dismayed. He wanted his minor in the team, if only for the honour of the name of D'Arcy, and he really considered that Wally's form entitled him to a place in the House eleven. But it was certain that Tom Merry couldn't allow himself to be convinced by such arguments as Wally had used.

"Well, is Wally going in?" Levison's sharp, unpleasant voice broke in upon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's meditations.

D'Arcy frowned at him.

"I twust so," he said. "Anyway, you're staying out, Levison. And I shall be obliged if you will wefwain fwom addressin' me. I wegard you as a wottah."

D'Arcy walked off with his nose in the air. Levison cast a dark glance after him. He had heard the exchange of remarks between D'Arcy and Tom Merry, and he was busy thinking.

He rejoined Mellish and Crooke a little later, and the precious trio repaired to the tuckshop. Levison, who was in funds, stood ginger-beer and doughnuts, and over their refreshment the three cads of the School House conversed in low whispers.

If Tom Merry & Co. had observed them then they would have guessed that mischief was brewing; but Tom Merry and his friends were on the cricket field, thinking of anything but Levison and his wretched scheming.

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The junior House match was on the morrow, and both teams were out at practice for the last time. Figgins & Co. were in great form, and Fatty Wynn's bowling had seldom been better. Fatty Wynn was the great man of the New House team, and Figgins placed great reliance upon him. That was very flattering to Fatty Wynn, but the fat hero found it a little awkward, too, for his visits to the tuckshop were under a rigid censorship. Figgins almost allowed him to mouthfuls, as Fatty Wynn complained bitterly—without getting any sympathy for his sufferings.

When the practice was over, both teams came crowding into the tuckshop for ginger-beer and lemonade.

"Hallo! Slacking as usual!" exclaimed Jack Blake, as he caught sight of Levison, Mellish, and Crooke finishing their doughnuts.

Levison did not reply; he strolled out of the shop with his friends; and the ruddy, cheerful cricketers crowded up to the counter, demanding ginger-pop.

There was a sardonic grin on Levison's face, and Crooke's expression was a reflection of it, but Mellish was looking a little uneasy.

"No need to feel funky," said Levison, with a scornful look at his companion. "It will be as safe as houses."

"The fellows will be wild if the School House loses," muttered Mellish.

"That's what we want. If they want us to wish the School House luck they should give us a chance of playing for the House."

"Yes, rather!" agreed Crooke viciously.

"And it will be put down to young D'Arcy," said Levison. "That's the beauty of it; we shall pay out both at once. D'Arcy's minor has fairly laid himself open to it by the way he's been playing the giddy ox lately."

"Tom Merry won't be easy to handle," said Mellish.

"Pooh! Three of us can do it."

And Levison & Co. walked on to the School House, discussing their scheme. Whatever it was, it seemed to afford much satisfaction to the precious trio, and they chuckled over it with great glee.

That evening, as Tom Merry was doing his preparation in the study with Manners and Lowther, D'Arcy minor looked in. The Third Former had a truculent expression on his face.

"Well?" said Tom Merry, looking up.

"Well?" said Wally.

"Well?"

"Oh, blow your 'wells!' " growled Wally. "You know jolly well what I've come for!"

"Is it to ask more questions about them and they?" queried Monty Lowther. "If they and them will play them and they—"

"How many of the Third are playing to-morrow?" shouted Wally.

"None!" grinned Tom Merry.

"Not even me?"

"Not even you. We realise what a fearful loss we shall suffer, but we're going to bear it as well as we can. If we survive—"

"Oh, talk sense!" snapped Wally. "There will be trouble. I've a jolly good mind to raid the blessed pitch and stop the game!"

"If you did, my son, you wouldn't stop the game, but you'd get such a terrific licking you wouldn't be able to crawl home," said Manners.

Wally snorted.

"There'll be trouble!" he said. "I'm warning you!"

"Thanks for the tip. I expect you'll find the trouble if there is any. Good-evening!"

"Look here—"

"Shut the door after you," said Tom Merry blandly.

"You silly ass!"

Monty Lowther picked up a cricket stump and rose to his feet. Wally left the study and closed the door behind him with a slam that could be heard at the end of the Shell passage. The Terrible Three chuckled and returned to their preparation.

CHAPTER 14.

Caught Napping!

THERE was one subject uppermost in the minds of the St. Jim's juniors the following morning.

It was cricket.

The juniors often condescended to take an interest in the first eleven matches. They followed the fortunes of Kildare and the school eleven with keen interest. But for events of really first importance in cricket annals the junior House matches loomed largest in the minds of the juniors.

It was unfortunate for the School House that Kangaroo, Reilly, and Herries were still laid up with their colds. They were pulling round now, but they were not fit to play. Tom Merry had filled their places, with one exception.

That place would have been Levison's, if Levison had been lucky. As it was, it was not filled yet, and the whole of the Third Form, at least, thought it ought to go to Wally.

Tom Merry had not decided yet, for the simple reason that there were many claimants, all of whose claims were about as well-founded as one another.

The vacant place was still unfilled on Saturday morning, and Tom Merry turned it over in his mind during morning lessons. He was not quite decided whether to let Wally have it. But it was not a matter he was supposed to consider in lesson-time, and so Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, appeared to think, for he bestowed upon Tom Merry a hundred lines for his absent-minded answers before the morning was out.

Before dinner Tom Merry changed into flannels ready for the match, and then left the School House and went round to the cycle-shed to see whether a puncture he had mended in one of his bike tyres was satisfactory. He was thinking of the House match and the still vacant place as he entered the shed, and of anything but trickery at that moment.

Tom Merry pushed open the door and strode in. As he did so, an open sack descended over his head and shoulders, completely enveloping him, and arms were thrown round him, and he was borne to the ground.

Tom Merry was taken so utterly by surprise that he had no time to utter a sound or to struggle.

He fell heavily on the ground, and three forms piled on him, and his hands were dragged together, a slip-knot passed over them and drawn tight.

The sack was kept over his head, completely shutting out the daylight, and the ends of it were pulled tight with a string about his waist.

The Shell fellow was dazed for a moment or two, so astounded was he by that sudden and unexpected attack. He had not caught the slightest glimpse of his assailants. They had been waiting for him in the shed, with the sack raised ready, having doubtless watched his approach from the window. The instant he appeared the inverted sack had swooped down on him. The interior of the shed was very dusky compared with

the brilliant sunshine without, and Tom Merry had seen no one.

But though he had seen no one, he knew who his assailants were.

"Wally again, of course!" he thought. He began to struggle in the sack, but it was useless. It choked him and confused him, and his hands were tied.

"Now, Wally!"
It was a muttering voice. He did not recognise the voice, but he heard the name, and he was quite certain now of his assailants.

"Wally, you young rascal," he gasped, "let me go! Take this sack off my head!"

He heard a chuckle, but received no other reply. Then he felt himself being pushed out of the shed.

He gave a shout, but the sack muffled it, and the next moment a cord was passed round the sack and tied, closing it tightly over his face, so that he could only breathe with difficulty.

He was hurried along, with a grip on either arm. Blindfolded as he was, he thought he could guess where he was being taken. His captors were hurrying him round to the old chapel—a spot likely to be utterly deserted at that time, when the fellows were going into their Houses to dinner.

Thence he was hurried on and pushed through a doorway, and he knew that he was in the old tower again. Tom Merry was in a state of fury by this time.

He had no doubt whatever that he was in the hands of the fags again. And he was "fed-up" with Wally & Co. But he was utterly helpless. With the sack over his head, and his hands tied, he could not resist. And he was almost suffocating in the thick sack tied closely over his face.

He expected to stop now that he was in the tower; but he did not. He was hurried to the old spiral stairs, and up the stone steps—up and up. Whenever he paused, the hands that were grasping him dragged at him savagely, and once or twice he was roughly bumped. He was surprised as well as hurt. Wally was a reckless young rascal; but he was not brutal, and Tom Merry wondered.

He tried speaking through the thickness of the sack, but there was no answer. He was stopped at last, in the topmost room of the old tower.

"What is your game, you young villains?" he gasped.

Only a chuckle responded. Then the three rascals passed a rope round him, knotting it securely, and fastening his legs as well as his arms. He was thrown on his back on the floor, a mass of ropes, the sack still over his head and face. But a penknife was drawn carefully across it to admit air through a slit for him to breathe.

Tom Merry was astounded. This looked as if he was to be left in that condition. And he could hardly believe that Wally would be guilty of such an action. And there was the House match in the afternoon.

Tom Merry felt a chill.
Was he to be shut up there to miss the House match? Was that Wally's game? He heard receding footsteps, and he shouted desperately.

"Wally, you young idiot, let me go! Have you forgotten the House match this afternoon? Let me get at once! Do you hear?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
That mocking laugh was all Tom Merry heard in response. Then the door of the room closed, and he heard iron bars being put in their places.

Tom Merry groaned.
He was a helpless prisoner now. Even if he could wriggle loose of his bonds, he could not get out of the room. It

was a room that had been used as a cell by the monks in the old days, and the door was of thick oak, and the bars of solid iron. The window was sixty feet or more from the ground.

The House match would be starting soon—and what then? Tom Merry could not doubt what he had been brought there for. He was to remain a prisoner in the old tower while the House match was played and lost. For the School House had plenty to do to win, even with Tom Merry in the ranks. And without their captain and best bat they would be walked over by Figgins & Co.

Tom Merry gritted his teeth with rage as he struggled with the ropes that were knotted round his limbs.

good many fellows were inquiring for Tom Merry.

"Hallo, Lowther! Where's Tom Merry got to?" demanded Blake.

"Yaas, wathah! I want to know if he has decided to put Wally into the team?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked.

"Can't find him," said Lowther.
"Bai Jove!"

"The silly ass seems to have gone off somewhere," said Lowther, with a worried look. "I say, I suppose your silly minor hasn't been playing any more of his tricks? Wally—"

Wally, who was with his major, grinned.

"No larks!" he said. "I'm still



Clack! went the willow on the leather, and Tom Merry cut it away over point's head. Redfern made a desperate leap to reach it, and School House hearts stood still for a moment—for only two runs were wanted to win!

CHAPTER 15.

The House Match!

"WHERE'S Tommy?"
Monty Lowther asked that question as the Shell fellows went into the dining-room. Tom Merry was not in his place at the dinner-table.

"Gone up to change before dinner, perhaps," said Manners, who was already in his flannels.

"He has changed," said Lowther. Mr. Linton glanced along the table.

"Is not Merry here?" he asked.
"No, sir. I saw him go out into the quad," said Vavasour.

"Indeed! He should be here to his dinner."

But dinner finished without Tom Merry. Manners and Lowther were looking and feeling perplexed as they left the dining-room with the other fellows. What could their chum be doing?

They went into the quad, and looked in various places for him; but Tom Merry was not to be seen.

They came back to the School House, more puzzled than ever. A

hoping that Tom Merry will do the sensible thing. I'm ready to play."

"Wally has been with me evah since mornin' lessons," said D'Arcy major. "He was bowlin' me a few before dinnah, and he went into dinnah with me. Besides, Wally would not play a twick on Tom Mewwy just before a House match."

"No fear!" said Wally. "Besides, I want to play. The last place isn't filled yet."

"Where the dickens can Tom Merry be, then?" said Lowther, convinced that Wally knew nothing of the whereabouts of the captain of the Shell.
"What has he taken himself off for like this, and missed his dinner?"
"Look for him," Digby suggested.

"Yaas, wathah!"

The juniors hunted high and low for Tom Merry. Two or three of them even looked into the old tower, perhaps doubting Wally's assertion that he had not played any tricks on the junior captain.

But the old tower was empty, and no one thought of mounting to the top of

the long spiral stair. They might suspect Wally of a reckless "lark," but not of a deliberate attempt to keep the House captain from the match. It was close upon time for play when the dismayed and astonished juniors gathered again on the cricket ground—without Tom Merry.

"What's the matter with you chaps?" asked Figgins of the New House, who was already on the ground with his followers.

"Tom Merry's missing," said Lowther shortly.

Figgins stared.

"Missing? My hat! What's he missing for?"

"Blessed if I know! He went out into the quad before dinner and disappeared. He didn't come into dinner—he's missed that."

"Must be ill," said Fatty Wynn seriously. "A chap wouldn't miss his dinner if he could possibly help it. He's had an accident."

"He must have gone out," said Blake. "We've looked for him everywhere. Can't understand it. We know he's had no message or anything. And we know he intended to play, because he changed into his flannels."

"We'll wait a bit, if you like," said Figgins. "It won't do to wait too long, though. We shall both be doing a lot of batting, and we shall want time to play in. Suppose we give Tom Merry an extra quarter of an hour?"

"Good egg! That's agreed!"

The juniors waited.

The quarter of an hour passed slowly. Still no sign of Tom Merry.

Some of the juniors were growing exasperated; and some were puzzled and perplexed, and even a little alarmed.

But most of the New House junior team hinted pretty plainly that it was time for play, and that if the School House skipper didn't choose to turn up, it was no good wasting the afternoon waiting for him.

Kangaroo was vice-captain of the School House junior eleven, but he was in the sanatorium now, and not in the team for the House match. In the absence of both captain and vice-captain, Jack Blake took the lead. Blake had a little puzzle to solve before the match. There was a vacant place to fill, and Tom Merry's absence left another vacant place. Blake thought it over, and signed to Wally.

The scamp of the Third came up eagerly.

"You're in flannels, I see," Blake remarked, with a grin.

"Yes, rather! Do you want me?"

"You'd better get in. We shall want another man, too."

"Make it Curly," suggested Wally.

Blake shook his head.

"One of the Third is enough. Curly's not up to this match. Gore—where's Gore?"

"Here I am!" sang out Gore of the Shell.

"If Tom Merry doesn't turn up in time to bat, you can take his place," said Blake. "Of course, if he does turn up in time, he will play."

"Good enough!" said Gore cheerfully.

Blake tossed with Figgins for choice of innings. He won the toss, and decided to send in the New House to bat. That would give Tom Merry more time to return, if he meant to return. It would be two hours at the very least before the School House batsmen were wanted. And if Tom Merry was coming back, he would surely be back by then.

"I suppose you'll let us play a sub-

stitute to fill, Figgy?" said Blake. "If Tom Merry doesn't come back, we shall keep the same man on to bat."

"Of course," said Figgins.

"You'll be wanted to field, Gore."

"Right-ho!" said Gore.

Blake led his men out to field. There was still no sign of Tom Merry, and the cricketers had no more time to think of him now. All their attention had to be given to the game.

Figgins and Kerr opened the innings for the New House. Round the field quite a crowd had gathered, even some of the seniors condescending to come. Some of the boys' relations had come to see the match. Glyn's father and sister could be seen seated outside the pavilion, and D'Arcy's Cousin Ethel was expected later in the afternoon, as well as the sisters, cousins, and aunts of other fellows.

"Your uncle isn't here, Levison?" Mellish grinned, as he stood with his idle hands in his pockets, leaning against a tree near the ground.

Levison scowled. Levison's eyes were rimmed with deepest blue-black now, and looked even more disfigured than when they were quite black. It was likely to be some time yet before he was quite recovered from his encounter with D'Arcy minor of the Third.

"No," said Levison, "he's not coming."

There was a shout from the crowd now, interrupting the talk of the two black sheep. A ripple of hand-clapping floated round the field.

"Bravo, Figgy!"

"Well hit!"

The batsmen were not running. It was a boundary. Figgins and Kerr were going strong at the wickets.

The New House score was piling up handsomely. It was at thirty when Figgins was caught out at last. Fatty Wynn joined Kerr at the wickets. Fatty Wynn was a great bowler, but he was a good bat, too, and he added ten to the score before Jack Blake bowled him. Then Redfern went in. Kerr's wicket went down, and Lawrence joined Redfern.

Redfern and Lawrence between them made the fur fly, as the delighted Figgins expressed it. Runs piled up. The score had topped eighty when Redfern was caught out at last. Owen came in to join Lawrence, and brought it up to ninety-six with his aid.

The New House fellows were feeling highly satisfied. It was a single-innings match, and all depended on the score of the innings. Even the "tail" of the New House team "wagged." Pratt knocked up ten, and Thompson of the Shell eight, and then Jameson of the Third came in.

Wally, who was in the long field, greeted his friendly enemy with a yell. "Go it, Jimmy!"

And Jameson grinned at the fieldsmen as he took his place at the wicket. Figgins was perhaps a little doubtful about his Third Form man, but Jameson made up quite a decent figure at the wicket. He scored seven runs for his side. He would have made more, but a nimble figure leaped up at the ball as he drove it, and Wally D'Arcy took a brilliant catch.

"How's that?"

Wally tossed the ball into the air and caught it again as it came down. And there was a yell for the hero of the Third.

"Bravo, Wally!" yelled Curly Gibson and Frayne and the Third generally.

Figgins clapped Jameson on the shoulder as he came off.

"Very well done, kid!" he said. And Jameson was happy.

The New House innings were petering out now. The announcement of all down for a hundred and thirty-five was greeted with cheers by the New House. Figgins & Co.'s innings was over, and there was a pause.

Then the School House fellows remembered Tom Merry. The captain of the Shell had not put in an appearance.

Arthur Augustus found his Cousin Ethel outside the pavilion with Glyn's sister Edith as he came off from fielding. Cousin Ethel had already heard of Tom Merry's extraordinary absence, and she was as puzzled as the juniors.

"It's extwaordinawy, deah girl," said Arthur Augustus. "The boundah is cuttin' the House match, you know. We're playin' Gore instead, and it may mean losin' the match. Of course, I shall buck up like anythin' and take a lot of wuns."

"To say nothing of a duck's-egg!" murmured Monty Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

When the time came for the School House to bat there was still no sign of Tom Merry. Gore of the Shell gave Blake an inquiring look.

"I'm afraid we shall want you, Gore," Blake remarked. "Last man in, if Tom Merry doesn't turn up."

And Gore nodded assent.

Blake opened the innings with Lowther. Figgins & Co. went out to field, and Figgins grinned as he tossed the ball to Fatty Wynn. Fatty Wynn grinned, too, as he received it.

"Go and put 'em out of their misery, Fatty!" said Figgins.

"What-ho!" said Fatty Wynn.

Jack Blake, however, was not so easily put out of his misery. He stood up to the New House bowling well, and scored runs. Lowther had bad luck—Fatty Wynn taking his wicket for a duck's-egg, after Blake had scored 3. And there was a yell from the New House crowd.

"Well bowled, Fatty!"

"Give us the hat-trick, old man!"

And a little later Fatty Wynn gave it to them. Arthur Augustus came in when Fatty was bowling his fifth over. Redfern having taken Manners' wicket in the last. Arthur Augustus gave Cousin Ethel a reassuring nod, as though to impress upon her that she was going to see the innings saved. Unfortunately, it did not work out quite like that. Fatty was in his best form, and Arthur Augustus' wicket went down to the first ball. The swell of St. Jim's grazed down at his wrecked wicket in surprise.

"Bai Jove!" he murmured. "What an extwaordinawy fluke!"

And he walked off. Digby came in, and there was another fluke, Dig being dismissed for a duck's-egg. Then came Vavasour, and Vavasour was caught out by Figgins from the next ball. Then the New House roared.

"The hat-trick! Hurrah!"

Jack Blake was looking a little blue. The wickets were going down fast, and the runs were going up slowly, very slowly. Kerruish came in, and the Manx junior knocked up 10 runs before he was caught out by Redfern.

But the innings was going very badly. The School House juniors were six down for 40 runs when Blake's wicket fell. Blake went off with a grim expression on his face. Three more wickets to fall, and 85 runs wanted. And the grins on the faces of the New House fellows showed only too plainly that they considered it all over bar shouting—and Blake was inclined to agree with them.

CHAPTER 16.

Well Won!

AND Tom Merry? In the little room at the top of the old tower the captain of the School House junior eleven was still writhing in his bonds.

He had been there for hours, but it seemed centuries to him.

Faintly from afar he had heard the shouts from the cricket field, the volume of sound reaching even to that distance.

The Shell fellow had not been idle. He had not rested a moment, and his efforts had told at last. Inch by inch he had struggled out of the ropes that bound him. His hands were free at last—

but when his hands were free the rest was simple. He dragged asunder the cords that bound his lower limbs; he jerked off the suffocating sack, and stood up, free at last, panting, perspiring, and furious.

He rested a few moments to recover his breath after that long and painful struggle. He was free now, but he was still a prisoner in the topmost room of the ruined tower.

When he tried the door he found it, as he expected, fast. The iron bars were in their places outside, and the door, which opened outwards, could not be moved. After a few minutes Tom Merry gave up the attempt; it was useless.

He crossed to the window, and caught the bars in his hands and drew himself up and looked out.

In the distance he could catch a glimpse of the cricket ground.

He saw the School House batsmen running, and he knew, from that circumstance, that the New House must have batted first. For the afternoon was late now—the sun was sloping down in the west. What was the New House score? How were the School House doing? If he could get out before the last wicket went down, there was still time to bat for his side.

The old bars in the window had been strong in their day, but they offered little resistance to Tom Merry now. In ten minutes he had hacked one of them from the crumbling mortar that held it, and was able to squeeze head and shoulders through the opening.

But as he looked down, he hesitated. Below him was a sheer descent of sixty feet or more, and there was nothing but the clinging ivy to offer him hold.

He had determined to climb down, but—

A fall was death!

Far below was the hard earth, and only the frail support of the ivy would be between him and a fall that was certain to be fatal.

He looked towards the cricket field again. If he shouted he would not be heard. And there was no chance of anyone coming near his place of imprisonment. All were on the cricket field, and all eyes were on the cricket.

But it was only for a few moments that Tom Merry paused.

He would not stand there idly watching his side defeated—and he knew that it would be that. The School House could not spare a man in that closely contested match. Even as he looked, he saw Blake's wicket fall, and heard the roar of the New House triumph.

It had to be done.

Tom Merry set his teeth, and squeezed himself through the narrow opening. Clinging to the remaining bars, he swung from the window, and felt for a hold below on the ivy.

The ivy, ancient and thick and heavy,

was very strong. It held his weight, and he swung clear, his hands grasping the stout tendrils.

He dared not look down.

Foot by foot he worked his way downwards, feeling and looking about him for a safe hold, but keeping his eyes from wandering earthwards. He knew that the height would have made his head swim.

Slowly—slowly!

It seemed an age to Tom Merry as he worked downwards, ever downwards. But he was down at last.

As he felt the firm earth under his feet the junior leaned against the wall to recover himself. The reaction after that dangerous descent told on the junior.

Then, recovering himself after a few minutes, he started for the cricket field. It was well for Tom Merry then that he was accustomed to keeping himself fit and hard. That brief rest had restored his strength, and he broke into a quick run. All eyes were on the pitch, and he was not seen till he dashed up to the pavilion.

Then there was a shout.

"Tom Merry!"

"Here he is!"

"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Wally. "Where have you been?"

"Yaas, watah! Where have you been, Tom Mewwy, deah boy?"

Tom Merry's eyes blazed.

"I've been tied up hand and foot—shut up at the top of the tower!" he almost shouted. "And you know it, you young villain!"

Wally jumped.

"I—I don't know anything about it."

"My only hat!" exclaimed Blake.

"How did you get out, then?"

"I climbed down the ivy."

"Great Scott!"

There was a hush of awe. The juniors realised only too well the great risk their leader had run.

"Bai Jove! That was fwightfully wisky, deah boy."

"There was no other way. I was shut up there to keep me away from the House match. And it was Wally—"

"It wasn't!" howled Wally.

"Steady on!" said Blake, catching Tom Merry's arm as he made a movement towards D'Arcy minor. "It wasn't Wally. He's been with Gussy ever since morning lessons. It's a clear alibi. We thought of that."

"One of the rotters who collared me spoke to another as 'Wally,'" he said.

"It was a wotten twick to make you think that it was Wally!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "If I hadn't been keeping an eye on Wally you would believe that he had done it. I'll wagah it's that cad Levison again!"

Tom Merry set his teeth.

"I shouldn't wonder. If you're sure you haven't lost sight of Wally—"

"Quite sure, deah boy."

"Do you think I'd do such a thing?" howled Wally. "Why, I—I—I—"

"All right," said Tom Merry. "I'm sorry. I'll find out afterwards who it was. How is the match going?"

Blake's face was long.

"Hundred and thirty-five for the New House," he said. "We're seven down for 43 now. Wally hasn't batted yet—I put him in—and I was going to play Gore if you hadn't come back; but now—"

"Sorry, Gore!" said Tom Merry, with a smile.

"Oh, all serene!" said Gore heroically. "I want the House to win. You may just pull it out of the fire—who knows?"

"I'll try," said Tom Merry.

There was a shout.

"Well caught, Reddy!"

"Man in!" said Blake.

And Tom Merry hastily put on pads, took his bat, and went in. The New House fieldsmen greeted him with a cheer. They were glad to see the School House junior captain back among his team. And Fatty Wynn went on to bowl, to greet Tom Merry with his most dangerous deliveries.

Eight down for 43—that was the score. If Tom Merry was to pull the match out of the fire he had plenty to do.

But it was in such moments that Tom Merry of St Jim's was at his very best.

He soon showed that his experience in the old tower had not impaired his form. The first ball from Fatty Wynn was knocked away for two, and the second for four, and the third was a boundary. Then the School House yelled, and Cousin Ethel clapped her hands in delight. There was a chance yet!

Tom Merry had added twenty to the score when his companion at the wickets was bowled by Fatty Wynn. Nine down for 63. Blake looked at Wally.

"Last man in!" he said grimly.

"Play up for the Third, Wally, old man!" said Curly.

"What-ho!" said Wally.

With perfect coolness the scamp of the Third made his way to the wicket. He gave Tom Merry a cheeky grin as he passed him.

"Depends on you and me now, Tommy!" he said.

Tom Merry laughed.

"Play up, Wally, and don't take risks," he said.

"Right-ho! Rely on me!"

And Wally played the game of his life. It was in vain that the bowlers tried to lure him to hit out and take risks. Wally knew what was wanted—to keep the innings open for Tom Merry to score. And he did it. Fellows who had uneasily expected that the Third Former would try to "show off" his own powers and be clean bowled in the first over were soon relieved of their fears. Wally wanted to prove that it was worth while to play him, and he proved it up to the hilt. Only now and then he took a single run—in order to give the bowling to his captain. At other times he blocked the balls with a patience that made the School House fellows cheer with delight.

And Tom Merry was in great form. Never had he seemed such a mighty hitter. The way the score jumped made the New House fellows rub their eyes.

Eighty, ninety, hundred, hundred and ten—twenty! Piggins was looking serious now. But still Wally stopped the best that Fatty Wynn or Redfern could send him, and still Tom Merry knocked the bowling far and wide.

Hundred and thirty—thirty-three! Hundred and thirty-four! One wanted to tie, two wanted to win, and the School House crowd were almost in hysterics now.

"Play up!"

"Hurrah!"

Fatty Wynn was bowling again to Tom Merry. The great bowler of the New House sent down a ball that would have puzzled many a county bat. But Tom Merry was in the flood-tide of success just now.

Clack! went the willow on the leather, and Tom cut the ball away over pointer's head. Redfern made a desperate leap at it, and for a moment the School House hearts stood still; but he did not reach it, and the batsmen were running across and across—and then there was a roar!

"School House wins! Hurrah!"

(Continued on page 28.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,473.

"HALLO, HALLO, HALLO!" THE CHEERY VOICE OF BOB CHERRY, NEW BOY, IS HEARD—

THE MAKING OF HARRY WHARTON!

Fag Wanted!

"FAG!" Carberry of the Sixth Form at Greyfriars put his head out of the study and bawled along the passage.

"Fag! F-a-ag!" There was a faint sound of scurrying feet at the nearest corner, and then no other sound save the echo of Carberry's voice in the wide flagged corridor upon which the Sixth Form studies opened.

Carberry frowned darkly. He knew perfectly well that that scurrying of feet was made by some junior who had heard his call, and who had immediately cut off to get out of sight to avoid being called upon for fagging duties.

"Fag!" shouted Carberry again, his rather coarse face growing red with anger. "I'll be among you in a minute if you don't come, some of you young scoundrels!"

A footstep sounded on the flags.

Carberry looked along the passage, and calmed down somewhat as he saw a junior coming from the direction of the staircase.

"Here, Wharton, I want you!"

Harry Wharton of the Remove at Greyfriars stopped and looked at him. Wharton was a handsome, well-built lad. His face was very calm and quiet in expression, his manners reserved; but there was a half-slumbering fire in his eyes which showed that he could be very passionate when aroused. His habitual expression would have told an observer that his temper was hot and hasty, and might be obstinate, but that he had it as a rule well in hand.

"Did you call me, Carberry?"

"Yes, come here."

Harry Wharton did not stir to obey the order of the Sixth Former, imperiously as it was given.

"What do you want?"

"Come here!" shouted Carberry.

"I can't fag for you, if that's what you want," said Wharton quietly. "I didn't come along in answer to your calling, Carberry; I am going to Wingate's study."

Carberry came out of the room with a glitter in his eyes.

"You are not going to the captain's study, Wharton; you are going to fag for me!"

Harry Wharton's face set hard.

"I am not!"

"I've had an eye on you ever since you came to Greyfriars," said Carberry, who had a reputation in the Sixth of being a great deal of a bully, and deserved it. "I've been thinking that you put on a little too much side for a youngster in the Lower Fourth Form. You have been really asking for a hiding for some time."

Harry Wharton stepped back a pace, his eyes burning.

"You had better not touch me," he said quietly.

The Sixth Former grinned.

"You will hurt me if I do, I suppose?" he sneered. "You'll wipe up the passage with me and knock me into the middle of next week, won't you?"

Harry compressed his lips.

"I shall try."

"You'll try, will you?" ejaculated

By Frank Richards.

Carberry, staring at him in astonishment. "Are you aware, you cheeky young blackguard, that you are talking to a Sixth Former and a prefect, and that you are a worm in the Remove?"

Harry Wharton did not reply, but his eyes were watching the Sixth Former without once leaving his face, and there was a glitter of grim defiance in them.

"I've had an eye on you," the prefect repeated. "You're an unlicked cub. You'll want a good many lickings, I expect, before you settle down. I've decided to take you in hand, as much for your own good as anything else. Stop where you are, Wharton. Where are you going?"

"I am going to the captain's study to fetch a book for him."

"Oh, you can fag for Wingate, but not for me?"

"I'm not fagging for Wingate. He asked me to fetch the book."

"More fool he; I should have told you to!" sneered Carberry.

"And I should not have fetched it," said Harry quietly.

"You—you cheeky young villain! By Jove, you want a lesson even worse

"Just another new kid!" thought the juniors of Greyfriars when Bob Cherry coolly blew in. But Master Robert Cherry soon made his presence "felt"—particularly where Harry Wharton was concerned!

than I thought. But I'll put you through it."

"I'm not going to fag for you," said Wharton; "I am not going to fag for anybody. I did not come to this school of my own accord, and I'm not going to be a fag. That is settled."

"By Jove! Now I've listened to you, Wharton—"

"Will you let me pass? Wingate is waiting for the book."

"No, I won't let you pass! Stand where you are. I've listened to you, and now you listen to me. You are my fag from this moment; you understand?"

"I am nothing of the kind!"

"You will now go into my study and get my tea. That young rascal, Hazeldene, has not turned up. By the way, do you know where young Hazeldene is?"

"Yes."

"Where is he then? I owe him a licking."

Harry Wharton did not reply.

"Where is he?"

"It is not my business to tell you."

"I order you to."

"I will not."

The Sixth Former turned red with rage. He raised his hand and pointed to his open study door.

"Get in!" he said.

Wharton did not stir.

"Get into that room!"

"I won't!"

Carberry wasted no more time in words. He sprang at the junior and seized him by the shoulders, and, with a mighty heave, sent him whirling towards the door of the study. In the grip of the powerful senior, Harry Wharton, strong as he was, was helpless, and he crashed against the study door with stunning force. He slid from the door to the floor inside, and Carberry followed him in and kicked him brutally as he lay dazed on the carpet.

"Get up and get to work!"

Harry Wharton slowly rose to his feet, but he had not the slightest intention of obeying the prefect. His eyes were blazing dangerously. He stood gasping for a moment or two, his hand resting on the edge of the table.

"I will not fag for you!" he said thickly.

Carberry gritted his teeth. "I'll break you in!" he snarled. "I'll give you a lesson you've long wanted. I'll teach you the place of a Remove fag at Greyfriars!"

He started towards the junior. Wharton's eye roved wildly round the study for a moment, and fell upon a heavy inkstand on the table. In a second he caught it up and whirled it above his head. The inkpots rolled off it and splashed upon the books lying on the table.

"Stand back!"

The words, hissed through clenched teeth, backed up by a white furious face and flaming eyes, daunted the prefect.

Like most bullies he was a craven at heart. He knew from Wharton's look that he would strike, and a blow from the heavy metal inkstand might be a serious matter.

"You young cub!" he hissed.

"Keep your distance!"

"I'll—I'll thrash you for this!"

Harry did not speak again, but his burning eyes were eloquent of scorn. The craven heart of the bully peeped out even in his savage words. The scorn in the face of the junior maddened Carberry. He made a movement forward, and Harry's hand came swiftly towards him. The prefect sprang back.

"What—what do you mean by that?" he gasped. "Do you think you can defy a prefect, you young fool—you, a brat in the Remove?"

"I will not fag for you!"

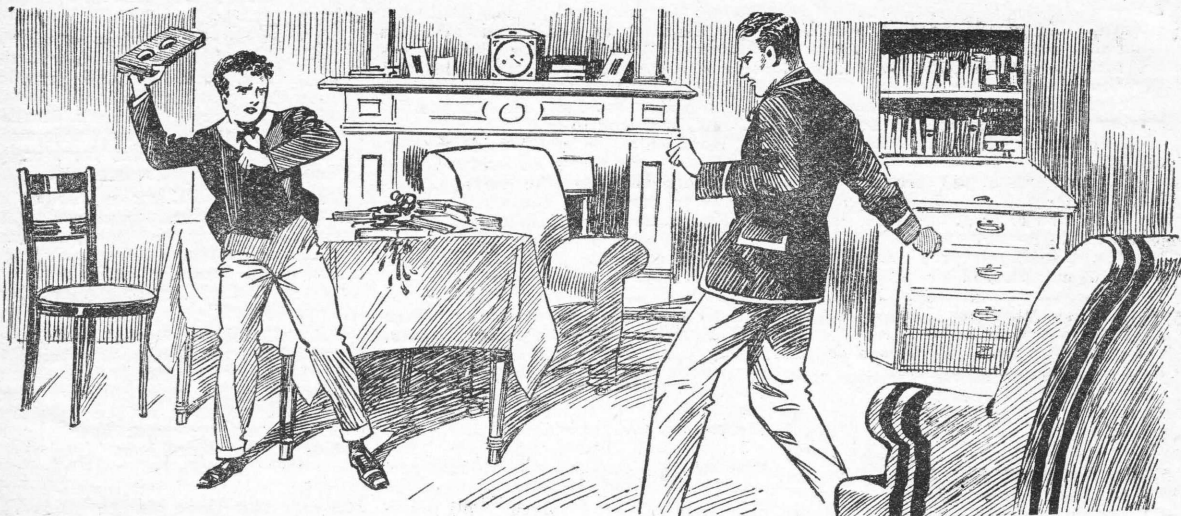
"You shall, by—"

The prefect broke off. There was a footstep in the passage, coming along towards the study door. Harry's attention was for the moment diverted, and Carberry did not lose the chance. He sprang forward, and a blow on the wrist sent the inkstand whirling from the junior's hand. It crashed heavily into the firegrate, and the next moment the grip of the senior was on Harry Wharton.

"Now, you young cub—"

Harry returned grip for grip, and, youngster though he was, he was strong and determined, and for a moment Carberry reeled back. The next, and Harry would have been whirled off his feet, but an amazed face looked in from the passage, and a voice called out to the prefect to desist.

—AT GREYFRIARS IN THIS GREAT STORY OF THE EARLY DAYS OF HARRY WHARTON & CO.



In a second Harry Wharton caught up the inkstand and whirled it above his head. The inkpots rolled off it and splashed upon the table. "Stand back!" exclaimed the junior. "You young cub!" hissed Carberry. But he did not venture nearer Wharton. "I will not fag for you!" said Harry.

"Hold on, Carberry! What the dickens are you doing?"

It was the voice of Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, and Carberry, in spite of himself, stopped and released the junior.

Wharton, white and breathless, but determined still, reeled away and leaned on the table.

Knocked Down!

WINGATE looked at the two with a curious expression on his rugged, honest features. From the angry, savage face of the bully, his glance turned to the sullen junior, and then it travelled back again to Carberry.

"What is this about?" he asked quietly.

Carberry made a savage gesture. "Is that any concern of yours, Wingate?"

"Yes, certainly it is. As captain of the school, I have every right to ask the question, and to expect to have it answered, too."

"He refused to fag for me." "Did he tell you I had sent him to my study?"

"Yes, but—" "Then you had no right to call upon him when you knew he was doing something for me. You have your own fag."

"Hazeldene did not come when I called."

"That is your own business. You should keep your fag in order. You know that I oppose this indiscriminate fagging of the juniors. It is not fair to them."

"Are you going to stand by this insolent cub in cheeking me, then?"

"In this instance you were in the wrong."

"He refuses to fag for anyone on any account," sneered Carberry, "and he would say the same to you yourself!"

"I don't think so." "I will not fag!" said Harry Wharton, between his teeth. "I said so to Carberry, and I will say the same to anybody!"

Carberry burst into a harsh laugh. "You hear him?" he said.

"Yes, I hear him," said the captain of Greyfriars calmly. "I shall speak to you again on the matter, Wharton. If that is the line you intend to take, you are booked for a rough time at Greyfriars, I can tell you. At present you can go and fetch the book I sent you for and take it to the Common-room."

Wharton nodded and left the study. Wingate remained behind, his eyes fixed sternly on the quailing face of the bully of the Sixth.

"Wharton is an unruly and obstinate young monkey, Carberry," he said. "He has had a bad home training, I should say, and has been spoiled for years. But he has the makings of a fine fellow in him, as he proved by risking his life to save young Nugent of the Remove from drowning the day he came to Greyfriars."

Carberry sneered, but did not reply. "For that reason," resumed the Greyfriars captain, "I want to be as patient as possible with him and give him a chance."

"If you are going to back him up against the Sixth—"

"I am going to do nothing of the kind. But I am not going to have him bullied, Carberry. You were using him in a brutal manner, which could not be justified in any circumstances. And you know that you had no right to call upon him when he was already doing something for me. I don't want to have any words with you, Carberry, but you're going on the right road to find trouble, and you'd better take care!"

And, without waiting for the bully of the Sixth to reply, Wingate turned on his heel and walked out of the study.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton had gone to the captain's room. Of late he had been growing more reconciled to life at Greyfriars, but the experience in Carberry's study had roused up again all the old passionate hatred and resentment that had lain dormant in him.

He found the book he had been sent for, and took it to the Senior Common-room, and left it in Wingate's chair. Then he went out into the Close.

"Hallo, Wharton! Did you catch it hot?"

It was a silky, insinuating voice. Harry Wharton turned round abruptly, and looked at Hazeldene of the Lower Fourth—or Remove, as the Form was termed at Greyfriars.

Hazeldene was rather a curious character. A greater contrast to the hot-headed, passionate boy he confronted could not be imagined. Hazeldene was slim and slight, with light hair and light eyes, a smooth face and insinuating manners.

There was something almost eel-like in his quietness and silkiness; and though he could when he liked make himself pleasant enough, few would have trusted him. In fact, he was known in the Remove by a corruption of his name, which was far from flattering, and which was supposed to express the peculiar oiliness of his nature. But Hazeldene, who never resented anything, showed no sign of resenting his nickname of "Vaseline."

Wharton looked him grimly in the eyes.

"Did you speak to me?"

"Yes, I did. I asked you if you had caught it hot? I scooted when I heard Carberry call 'Fag!'" explained Hazeldene, with a grin. "I thought you might as well do anything he wanted."

"Well," said Wharton, "I did not do it!"

Hazeldene grinned. "You refused, I suppose?" "Yes, I refused!"

Hazeldene winked expressively. The colour mounted into Harry Wharton's cheeks.

"You can tell that to the marines!" Hazeldene remarked. "I know exactly how much a Remove fellow would dare to refuse a prefect—"

"Do you mean that you doubt my word?"

"My hat! Mustn't your word be doubted now?" grinned Hazeldene. "Do you happen to be any relation to the great Panjandrum?"

Harry compressed his lips. "You are not worth quarrelling with," he said contemptuously.

"Go hon! My dear kid, I know that

what you told me just now was a fib, and—"

Biff! Harry Wharton's clenched hand shot out, and Hazeldene, much to his amazement, sat down suddenly in the Close.

He sat there rubbing his nose, and staring up at Harry with an expression of bewildered surprise that was almost comical.

"Do you want any more?" asked Harry quietly.

"No, I don't!" ejaculated Hazeldene, scrambling to his feet. "What a beastly spitefire you are! Keep your paws off me, please!"

"Then you had better measure your words next time you speak to me!" said Harry Wharton disdainfully.

And he walked away. A sunny-faced junior came out of the Cloisters, and passed an arm through his.

Harry Wharton's face cleared at once. The newcomer was Nugent of the Remove, the only fellow at Greyfriars for whom the proud and lonely Wharton felt anything like friendship.

"You're looking in the dumps, Harry," said Nugent. "Anything gone wrong?"

"Only a row with Carberry."

"What did he do?"

"What he's always doing—bullying and fagging."

"H'm! I saw you dot young Vaseline on the nose just now. What was his high crime and misdemeanour?"

Wharton gave a quick glance at his friend. He felt that Nugent was poking fun at him. But Nugent's face was perfectly grave.

"He doubted my word."

"Then you were right to slay him. But, I say, Harry, you ought to be a

little less handy with those fists of yours, you know—at least, until you have learned to box," said Nugent seriously. "Vaseline, for instance, is bigger than you are, and if he had the pluck of a mouse he could knock you into a cocked hat. He can box."

"He's welcome to try," said Nugent. "But there are plenty of fellows in the Greyfriars Remove who have. Bulstrode, of our study, for one."

"I'm not afraid of Bulstrode."

"I never said you were. But, I say, come along to the gym and have the gloves on. It will do you good."

Harry nodded, and the chums walked into the gymnasium. There was a serious shade on Nugent's face. Harry Wharton was a difficult fellow to deal with, and, although Nugent had patience and tact, and liked Harry very well, he found it sometimes hard to bear with his new chum.

Harry had been brought up by a maiden aunt, and allowed to run perfectly wild, and at nearly fifteen he was headstrong, reckless, and determined—the last fellow in the world to knuckle under peaceably to even the most necessary discipline.

Nugent and Wharton shared the same study with Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove, and Billy Bunter of the same Form. And Study No. 1 was, as often as not, a scene of strife and discord, and much of it was due to Harry's hard and unyielding temper. But Nugent, even in the most trying moments, could not forget that Harry had plunged recklessly into the deadly grip of a whirlpool, and saved his life at the imminent risk of his own. That remembrance kept Nugent patient, and he needed it.



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No 525

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On sale Thursday, 7th May, at all Newsagents.

Bob Cherry Arrives!

"THE—the beast!"

Peter Hazeldene stood rubbing his nose, which was very red, and a little swollen. There was considerable pain in the nose, for Harry Wharton's knuckles had hit hard there. Peter's nose was a prominent feature on his face, and it looked now like a little beetroot.

"The beast! I'll make him sit up for that some time," muttered Peter ruefully, caressing his damaged organ. "The absolute beast! Fancy dotting a fellow on the nose for nothing!"

"Hallo, kid! Anything gone wrong with the boko?"

Peter Hazeldene started and looked round at the sound of a new voice. A lad of about his own age had just walked in at the open gates of Greyfriars. In nothing but his age, however, did the newcomer bear any resemblance to Hazeldene. He was a finely built, nimble lad, with shoulders well set back, and head well poised. His hair was thick and curly, and he wore his cap stuck on the back of it. His face could not be called exactly handsome, but it was a pleasant and cheerful countenance.

"Who are you?" asked Hazeldene, stopping the caressing of his nose in his curiosity. "You don't belong to Greyfriars."

"Your mistake," said the stranger coolly; "I do."

"I haven't seen you before."

"Nothing remarkable in that as this is the first time I have been here."

"Oh," said Hazeldene, with an affection of disdain in his voice, "a new kid."

"Exactly; a new kid."

"And what may your name be?"

"Oh, any old thing! But I was christened Robert, and my surname is Cherry, of that ilk. Bob Cherry for short."

"Well, Master Bob Cherry, you've got altogether too much cheek for a new kid," said Hazeldene, "and the sooner you chuck it the better."

The newcomer shook his head.

"Can't be did! You must love me as I am, or not love me at all. But what's the matter with the boko? Is that a new idea in colour design, or have you been running it up against a football boot?"

"Mind your own business!" growled Hazeldene.

"Certainly!" said Bob Cherry, with unabashed cheerfulness. "May I ask you the way to the headmaster's quarters?"

"You may ask," said Peter. "But whether I tell you or not depends."

"Oh, don't be silly!" said Bob Cherry. "I want to know where to put my box, too. There's a chap at the gate with it. I was told to report myself to the Head on my arrival. Where is he?"

"Oh, I'll show you, if you like!" said Hazeldene, with a sudden assumption of cordiality which would have put anybody who knew him on the alert at once. But Robert Cherry did not know him yet. "I suppose one ought to do all one can for a new fellow. I was new once myself."

"Were you?" said Bob Cherry. "You're looking a bit shop-soiled now, I must say. But lead the way, and I will follow on."

Hazeldene, with a curious twinkle in his eyes, led the way. Bob Cherry followed him into the great greystone building, little abashed by his new surroundings. He looked about him

with perfect coolness, and asked questions every moment. They ascended the stairs to the corridor on which the Sixth Form studies opened, and Hazeldene pointed to the door of Carberry's room.

"There you are! That's the Head's room!"

"Not much of a place for the Head of a school like this, I should say," remarked Bob Cherry, with a whistle of surprise.

"Have you ever been to a school like this before?" asked Hazeldene.

"No, I haven't."

"Then don't be so ready to make remarks on things," said Hazeldene. "As a matter of fact, the Head has his study in this corridor so as to keep an eye on the Sixth Form fellows, to keep them from gambling and smoking in their rooms at night."

"My hat! Do they do that?"

"They would if the Head didn't keep a sharp eye on them," said Hazeldene.

"Well, there's the study. If the Head isn't there, wait for him. If you find a fellow there, tell him that Wharton wants him, and that he's to buck up and come to the gym. I'll look after your box."

"Are you Wharton?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes; Harry Wharton of the Remove."

"Right-ho! I'll give him your message; and thanks!"

And, with a nod, Bob Cherry walked on to the Sixth Form study, tapped at the door, and entered it. Hazeldene, with a grin on his face, beat a rapid retreat.

Carberry was seated in his chair, working, when Bob Cherry entered. He glanced up far from amiably.

"Well, what do you want?" he snapped.

"Nothing," said Bob Cherry calmly, looking round the study. "I came here to see the headmaster."

"You came here to see the Head? Are you mad?"

"No; quite sane, in fact. I'll wait. And, by the way, Wharton wants you." Carberry could hardly believe his ears.

"Wharton! Wharton wants me?"

"Yes; Harry Wharton of the Remove. He wants you to go to the gym, and you're to buck up," said Bob innocently.

Carberry turned crimson.

"You young hound!"

"Hallo! What's the matter now?" asked Bob Cherry, in astonishment. "I believe I've given you the message correctly."

"You cheeky reptile!"

"I say, draw it mild, old fellow!" exclaimed the new junior. "I'm not accustomed to being called names like that, you know. I don't like it."

"You—you don't like it! I'll—I'll—Get out of this room!"

"What for?"

"Get out!" roared Carberry.

"Rats! I've come here to see the Head."

"You utter idiot! He is not here."

"I know he isn't; but there's no reason why I shouldn't wait for him."

"Fool! He is not coming here. This is my study."

Bob Cherry laughed.

"You can't pull my leg, you know. I know that this is the Head's study."

Carberry glared at him in sheer astonishment.

"You—you utter young ass! Do you think the Head of Greyfriars College has a little study like this in a row with the Sixth Form studies?"

"I know that he has to hang out here to keep you fellows from gambling and



A yell rang through Study No. 1 as the contents of the inkpot splashed over the upturned face of Harry Wharton. Bob Cherry stared at that inky face in astonishment. "My only hat!" he gasped. "It's the wrong kid!"

smoking at night!" said Bob Cherry, with a nod.

"You—you—you— Out you go!"

Carberry seized Bob Cherry by the shoulders and swung him into the passage, and slammed the door behind him. Bob reeled against the opposite wall, and then righted himself. There was a puzzled look upon his frank face.

"Looks as if there were a mistake somewhere," he murmured.

He opened the door again and looked in.

"I say, aren't you going to the gym? Wharton wants you."

Bob closed the door hurriedly as a heavy lexicon came hurtling towards him, and it crashed on the oak.

"Certainly a mistake somewhere!" murmured Bob Cherry. "That fellow Wharton must have been rotting. Hallo, kid!"

This remark was addressed to Bulstrode of the Remove, who happened to come along the passage at that moment. Bulstrode, who was the oldest and biggest fellow in the Form, and considered himself cock of the Remove, stopped and stared at Bob Cherry.

"Who are you?"

"A new kid," said Bob cheerfully. "I want to ask you a question. Can you tell me whether that is the Head's study?" And he pointed to Carberry's room.

"No, you young ass, of course it isn't," said Bulstrode. "What do you mean by asking me such a fool's question?" And he turned away.

"Then that kid Wharton was pulling my leg," muttered Bob Cherry. "I'll punch his head for him when I see him again!"

Bulstrode stopped at the sound of the name.

"Did Wharton tell you it was the Head's study?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, it isn't; it's Carberry's. You were slung out, weren't you?"

"Quite so."

"That's why he sent you there, I suppose. A joke on the little stranger," grinned Bulstrode. "Wharton is an utter rotter, in my opinion. If you want to get your own back you'll find him

any time in Study No. 1 in the upper corridor. I'll show you to the Head's quarters, if you like."

"Thanks awfully!"

Bulstrode led the way. This time Bob Cherry was guided to the right place, and Bulstrode tapped at the door for him, and left him there.

In response to a "Come in!" in a deep voice Bob Cherry entered the study, and found himself in the presence of Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars.

A Free Feed!

"BRING that box in!" Hazeldene had hurried to the gates of Greyfriars immediately after leaving Bob Cherry in the Sixth Form corridor. He had told Bob that he would look after his box, and he intended to do so in his own way.

A porter from the station had wheeled up Bob Cherry's box, and he carried it into the House at Hazeldene's order, but not upstairs. Hazeldene guided him into the Junior Common-room.

There were a good many of the fellows of the Fourth Form and the Remove in the room, and they looked round curiously at the sight of the box being brought in by the porter.

"What's that?" asked Billy Bunter, peering at the box through his big spectacles. "What have you got there, Vaseline?"

"A few little presents for distribution to the Form," said Hazeldene, grinning. "Set it down here, my man. Drop it; I want to bust the lock as the key is lost."

The porter stared and hesitated; but Hazeldene gave the box a push with his hand, and sent it crashing to the floor on its side. The concussion burst the lock, the lid flew open, and half the contents rolled out on the floor.

The porter, who had been paid at the gate by Bob Cherry, grinned and retired, and the Greyfriars juniors gathered round the box.

"What's the little game?" asked Trevor of the Remove.

"Is it a new kid's box?" inquired Billy Bunter.

Hazeldene nodded.

"Exactly. I told him I would look after it for him. I am going to do so. Let's see if there's any tuck in it. He looked rather a well-fed sort of bouncer, and I'd bet almost anything that he has cakes and things here."

"Let's look!" exclaimed a dozen voices.

Hazeldene was right. There was a considerable quantity of tuck packed away in the box. Cakes, apples, tarts, and pies were soon forthcoming, and several bottles of currant wine, one of which had been broken in the fall on the floor. The red liquid was staining the shirts packed there; but no one heeded it.

"My word!" said Hazeldene. "This is all right! Who says plum cake?"

"Plum cake!" howled a dozen voices.

"Who says currant buns?"

"Currant buns!"

"Jam tarts?"

"Shove 'em over!"

The juniors were soon all feasting gleefully. It seemed a ripping joke on the new boy, though probably no one but Hazeldene, in the first place, would have ventured to open another fellow's box.

Bulstrode came into the room and stared about him in astonishment at the sight of half the Remove feeding away

as if they had never eaten anything before, and as if expense were not to be regarded. Tuck was in plenty and of the best quality.

"Hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "Has anybody here come into a fortune? Where did all this come from?"

"It's a new fellow standing a feed," said Hazeldene.

"Well, that's ripping of him! Where is he?"

"Blessed if I know. Last I saw of him he was searching in the Sixth Form studies for a headmaster. Don't know whether he's found one yet."

"Ha, ha! But did he tell you—"

"You see, the box fell on the floor and busted open, and, of course, he can't object to us sampling the tommy, can he?"

"You're taking jolly big samples!" grinned Bulstrode. "Hand over some of that cake. I'm on in this scene. I see now. He's standing the feed, but he doesn't know it."

"Quite so."

"Well, it's quite right that he should. He must pay his footing, like everybody else. I like this cake. I'll have some more."

"The tarts are pretty good, too," said Hazeldene, handing them over.

The cad of the Remove was anxious to keep on the right side of Bulstrode, in case of a row with Bob Cherry over the breaking of the box.

"You're right—they're good!" exclaimed Bulstrode, digging his teeth into one. "This chap's people had a fine taste in pastry, I must say."

"But I say, you fellows—" began Billy Bunter.

"Well, what have you got to say, Owl?"

Billy Bunter was called the Owl in the Remove on account of his big spectacles, which gave him an owl-like appearance, but did not seem to assist his vision very much. He was always making ludicrous mistakes through his short sight. He was standing now blinking at the feasters doubtfully, but not joining in the feed.

"I say, you fellows, won't the new kid make a row about his grub being wolfed up like that?" he asked.

"Shouldn't wonder!" said Bulstrode.

"Well, and what are you going to do then?"

"Lemme see. Oh, I shall explain to him that it's one of the things a new fellow must expect to put up with," said Bulstrode. "If that doesn't satisfy him, I shall wipe up the floor with him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled Hazeldene. "That's the style! You can trust Bulstrode to keep up the honour of the Remove, and shove a newcomer into his proper place."

"Rather!" said Bulstrode, with a satisfied grin.

"Yes; but I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, don't say anything more, Owl! Have a tart?"

"Well, I don't mind if I do. I may as well have one, I suppose, as I can see that you don't mean to leave any."

"Here you are. Anybody say tarts?"

"Tarts!"

"Help yourselves. Bob Cherry is standing this feed, and—"

"Hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry was looking in at the doorway. He gazed over the feasters, and his gaze fell on the broken box, and he recognised it as his own. For a moment the sunny good-temper vanished from his face, and a blaze came into his blue eyes.

"Is that my box?"

He came quickly into the room.

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"Yes, I believe so," said Bulstrode, as no one else seemed inclined to answer. "I believe it is your box, Blackberry, or Cherry, or whatever your name is. Have you got anything to say about it?"

"Lots!" said Bob Cherry. "In the first place, I am to belong to the Remove, and I was told to come to this room, where I should meet my Form-fellows; but I didn't expect to find them burgling my box!"

"It burst open, you see," said Hazeldene.

"Because you shoved it over on the floor," said Billy Bunter.

"Hold your silly tongue, Bunter!"

"Shan't, Vaseline!"

"And, of course, we thought you wanted us to have a feed at your expense," said Bulstrode. "That's the proper caper for a new kid in the Remove, you know."

The anger faded out of Bob Cherry's face. He looked the kind of fellow who could never be angry for long.

"Well, that's all right," he said. "I don't much mind your scoffing the grub, though you might have asked permission first, merely as a matter of form."

"Quite right!" exclaimed Trevor. "And I for one don't mind saying I'm sorry, Cherry. It was rather a caddish thing to do."

"Oh, it's all right!" said Bob.

"You're welcome! I intended to stand a feed, anyway, and you've only been a bit previous, that's all."

"Well, you're a good sort!"

"But I don't want currant wine spilt over my shirts," went on Bob; "nor my valuable articles of wearing apparel scattered over the floor and trodden on. I didn't want the lock of my box busted. And if the chap who had the confounded cheek to bust it will have the decency to own up about it, I will be very pleased to wipe up the floor with him!"

Hazeldene had been gliding towards the door, and as Bob finished speaking he vanished. But Bob Cherry had seen him go. Billy Bunter pointed to the door.

"That's the rotter. He's gone!"

"You may as well finish the grub while you're about it," said Bob. "I'm going to have a little talk to that amateur burglar!"

And he left the junior room.

"Well, he's a jolly good fellow!" exclaimed Trevor. "And if he gives Vaseline a hiding it won't be any more than he deserves. It was a bit thick breaking the lock of a fellow's box, and no mistake!"

Bob Cherry went quickly out into the passage. Hazeldene had disappeared, but in front of the notice-board in the Hall Bob found Nugent of the Remove. He did not know Nugent, but he tapped him on the shoulder as coolly as if he had known him for fifty years at least. Nugent looked round.

"Have you seen Wharton?" asked Bob Cherry. "I suppose you know him? He's in the Remove."

Nugent grinned.

"Well, yes, I fancy I know him," he said.

"Well, have you seen him?"

"Certainly!"

And Nugent turned to the notice-board again and recommenced reading. Bob Cherry gave him another tap on the shoulder.

"I asked you if you had seen Wharton!" he exclaimed.

"Well, and I told you I had."

"You ass! I want to know where he is."

"Oh, do you? You should have said so before then. If you want him he's in Study No. 1 on the upper corridor."

It did not take Bob long to find Study No. 1. The door of the room was half open, and Bob caught a glimpse of a fellow in an Eton jacket sitting at the table, with his back to the door. The junior was alone in the study, and though Bob Cherry could not see his face, he had no doubt that Nugent's information was correct.

Quietly, on tiptoe, Bob Cherry stole into the room. Without making a sound, he stepped behind the chair of the junior who was writing, and suddenly reached over his head and picked up the inkpot. The movement made Harry Wharton look up suddenly, and as he looked up the inkpot was inverted over his head.

A yell rang through Study No. 1 as the contents of the inkpot, which happened to be quite full, splashed over the upturned face of Harry Wharton. He sprang to his feet with such violence that his chair crashed backwards. He whirled round and stood glaring at Bob Cherry with rage in his eyes, and the black ink running in streams down his face and collar.

"My only hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "It's the wrong kid!"

Bob's First Fight!

HARRY WHARTON was too enraged to speak for a full minute. He stood glaring at the new boy, his face convulsed with fury; but his aspect, with the black ink streaming over his crimson face, was so ludicrous that Bob Cherry could not help grinning.

Bob, although he had a weakness for practical jokes, would never have played such a trick for the kind of fun it afforded. He had regarded it tit-for-tat, in return for the breaking open of his box, and the "scoffing" of his tuck. He was utterly dismayed to find he had swamped a perfect stranger with ink.

"I—I say—I'm, sorry—" he stammered.

He was really sorry, but he could not help grinning. No one looking at Harry Wharton at that moment could have helped it. Harry found his voice at last.

"How—what—who—" he stuttered.

"It was a mistake," said Bob penitently, though his lips were twitching, and his eyes sparkling with fun. "I thought you were—"

"You—you have drenched me with ink!"

"I thought you were Wharton."

"I am Wharton!"

"Eh? Are there two Whartons at this school?" asked Bob Cherry. "I asked a fellow in the Hall where Wharton was, and he told me here, and I didn't see your face, you see?"

"You utter idiot!"

"Well, I suppose I was a bit of an ass for not making sure; but I thought you were Harry Wharton."

"I am Harry Wharton!" roared Harry.

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"Are there two Whartons in the Remove?"

"No, only one, hang you!"

"Then you must be mistaken. You can't be Wharton!"

"Fool! You have smothered me with ink!"

"Yes, you do look rather smothered, and, I tell you, I'm really sorry, as you're not Wharton."

"You dummy, I am Wharton!"

"Well, if you're Wharton you've only got what you've been asking for," said Bob Cherry. "If you're Wharton you're the right passenger."

"I'll wipe up the study with you!"

"Here, hands off! I tell you, I'm

sorry for the mistake; perhaps the chap didn't tell me his right name, after all."

"You dummy!"

"Draw it mild! I don't like being called names. When a chap calls me names I generally make him sorry for himself. Now——"

Harry Wharton wiped the ink out of his eyes. His face was as black as a nigger minstrel's, his collar was soaked, and the ink was running over his jacket and waistcoat. Wharton was about as enraged as he could possibly be. His exercise, on which he had spent ten minutes, was ruined, too. He looked daggers at Bob Cherry as he wiped away the ink.

"You dolt!" he snapped. "You ought to be put in a lunatic asylum! I've a good mind to take you by the neck and rub your face in the muck you've made on this table!"

Bob Cherry grinned.

"You'll excuse me," he remarked, "but I really don't think you could do it. Don't get into a temper. It was a mistake, and I've apologised. That ought to be enough for any decent fellow. Now, keep your paws off. I don't want to quarrel with you."

"Get out of this study!"

"You might put it a little more civilly——"

"Get out, or I'll kick you out!"

Bob Cherry's eyes flashed.

"I think you had better kick me out then," he said quietly. "I've never obeyed an order put like that in my life, and I don't intend to start now!"

Harry Wharton wasted no more time in talk. He reached out to seize the intruder, and was surprised to find his hand knocked aside as easily as if it had been a feather. With a savage glance he hurled himself straight at Bob Cherry and caught hold of him.

"Now, out you go!" he panted.

Bob Cherry returned his grip, and for a moment they struggled. The ink that smothered Wharton came off on Bob's face and jacket, till he was almost as inky as Harry. Beyond that, Wharton was unable to damage him. Instead of hurling Bob Cherry from the study, he found himself in an iron grip he could not escape from.

He struggled desperately to hurl the new junior to the door, but in vain. Bob Cherry stood like a rock. With all his efforts Harry Wharton could not shift him one inch. Bob was probably not the stronger of the two, but evidently he had had more experience in personal encounters. There was a slight smile on his inky face as he gripped Wharton and held him fast.

Breathless, Wharton gave up the attempt and strove to release himself. But he found that equally impossible. Bob Cherry's strong arms were round him and he could not free the grip.

"Let me go—let me go!" he panted.

Bob grinned in his face.

"Will you behave yourself if I do?"

"Hang you! I'll—I'll——"

"Well, you're a nice, good-tempered lad to chum with, I should say," Bob Cherry remarked coolly. "Haven't you ever had a licking in your life to teach you to keep your rotten temper in better order?"

"Let me go!"

"No hurry. I'm not going to have you running at me like a wild beast. I told you I was sorry for the mistake I made, and that ought to have been enough for a decent fellow. You would have licked me if you could."

"I'll lick you yet!"

"Get on with it then," smiled Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton made a desperate effort to tear himself loose. This time



Bob Cherry slid down the banister at terrific speed, to reach the bottom at the same moment as Mr. Quelch was about to ascend the stairs! One of Bob's boots thumped upon the chest of the master, and he went staggering backwards. "That's torn it!" gasped Bob.

he succeeded, and he went reeling away from his unmoved adversary. He leaned back against the mantelpiece, breathing heavily. Bob Cherry watched him warily. He had never met a lad quite like this before. Wharton's exhibition of savage temper was something like a shock to a good-natured, sunny-tempered fellow like Bob.

It was only a few moments that Wharton leaned there, recovering his breath. Little as he knew of the art of boxing, Harry had never shrunk from any encounter, and he did not shrink now. The moment his breath came back he hurled himself at Bob Cherry.

Bob's temper was rising now, but, in any case, he had no choice but to hit out—and hit out he did, straight from the shoulder. Harry Wharton caught the blow on the chin and it nearly lifted him off his feet. Back he went, staggering helplessly, and down with a crash, and there was a thud as his head dashed against the fender.

He lay dazed, and in the brief instant the anger faded out of Bob Cherry's face. He ran forward anxiously and knelt by Wharton's side.

"I say, I hope you're not much hurt. I didn't mean——"

Harry did not reply. A big bruise was already forming under his thick dark hair, and the concussion had almost stunned him.

"Let me see it," said Bob.

Wharton pushed him dazedly away.

"Leave me alone!"

He sat up blindly. His head was aching horribly, and the pain of the bruise was for the time intense. His face was white, but more with passion than with pain. Bob Cherry drew back, a shadow on his frank brow.

"I didn't mean to hurt you," he said quietly. "It was an accident, your head striking the fender."

Wharton did not speak, but his look told of the desire for revenge he was feeling. He staggered to his feet. Bob involuntarily put out a hand to help him, but it was rudely dashed aside.

"Harry, what's the matter?"

Nugent came into the study. He stared at Bob Cherry and at Wharton in amazement.

"What have you been doing?"

"Just a little scrap," said Bob Cherry. "Wharton knocked his head against the fender when he fell, that's all."

"You're hurt, Harry?" Nugent came quickly towards his friend. "What on earth were you rowing about? What's this new kid doing here, anyway?"

"I came to look for a chap who told me his name was Wharton," said Bob. "I suppose he took me in. I inked this chap by mistake, and then he cut up rusty. I'm sorry he's hurt, but it was his own look-out. I couldn't do more than apologise for a mistake!"

"Well, that's right enough," said Nugent uneasily.

He liked the frank face of the new boy, and he could not help feeling that Harry's passionate temper had placed him in the wrong again, as it had done many times before.

"I say again that I'm sorry," said Bob Cherry. "It was a mistake, and I'm willing enough to be friends."

And he held out his hand to Wharton, but Harry did not make any move to take it.

"Harry," muttered Nugent, "a fellow can't say fairer than that. Take his fist!"

Wharton's face assumed a sullen, dogged look.

"I won't!"

Bob Cherry's hand dropped to his side. His glance showed plainly enough the scorn he felt for Wharton.

"As you like," he said, shortly. "If you choose to bear malice, have your own way!" And he walked out of the study.

Harry Wharton gritted his teeth. There was something noble in Bob Cherry's manner, at that moment—something which made Harry realise quite clearly that he had wounded a generous nature, and that he was deserving of the contempt he read in the new boy's glance.

"I wish you had shaken hands with him, Harry."

Nugent spoke quietly, and Harry Wharton's face immediately hardened again. At a hint of criticism he was like a hedgehog—impervious.

"Well, I wouldn't—and I won't!" he said.

Nugent was silent. Harry Wharton rubbed the bruise on his head. It hurt him, and he was still somewhat dazed. And the look on Nugent's face did not please him. There was a silence in the study for some moments, and Harry Wharton broke it.

"You offered to teach me boxing, Nugent."

Nugent brightened a little. "So I will, Harry. You've had a lesson this afternoon, and you picked it up wonderfully. I'm glad to see you taking to it!"

"I want to learn as quickly as I can." "That's right. You'll be able to tackle Bulstrode in a week if you stick to it. You're so quick on your feet, and you've got plenty of driving power."

"I don't want to fight Bulstrode!" "But you said you wanted to get on with the boxing lessons."

"So I do!" "Whom do you want to fight, then?" "That new fellow—Bob Cherry."

Nugent compressed his lips. He had sworn to be Harry Wharton's friend, and to help him at Greyfriars, but the task was turning out harder than he had reckoned upon.

But in that moment of impatience came a remembrance of a whirling

chaos of wild waters, of himself sinking, succumbing in the midst of it, and of a hand that had drawn him from death, whispering words of encouragement, and the impatience vanished. But Harry Wharton would probably never know how much he owed to Nugent's gratitude.

"Stop! Hi, stop!"

As he left Wharton's study, Bob Cherry suddenly caught sight of Peter Hazeldene in the passage. He did not know Hazeldene's name, but his face was not easily forgotten. Bob dashed towards him at once, and Hazeldene, changing colour a little, turned and sped down the staircase.

"Stop! Stop, you rotter!"

But Hazeldene did not stop. Bob Cherry looked as though he meant business, and the cad of the Remove had not the slightest intention of paying the piper if he could get out of it.

He went down the stairs three at a time. But Bob Cherry knew a quicker way which was quite in Bob's line.

He flung himself over the banisters, and went sliding down backwards at a terrific speed. The staircase made a turn in the middle; but Bob was used to that mode of descent, and he steered himself round the bend without turning a hair, and shot onwards down the sloping polished oak.

But he could not see who was down at the bottom of the staircase, and as he reached the bottom, one of his outstretched legs thumped full upon the chest of a master who was about to ascend the first step.

"My hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "That's torn it!"

He slipped off the balustrade and landed on his feet. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was not upon his feet. He was upon his back in the wide flagged hall, with his mortarboard on one side of him and his glasses on the other!

(Bob Cherry's put his foot in it now! Don't miss next week's chapters of his exciting adventures at Greyfriars, in which is described Bob's big fight with Harry Wharton. Order your GEM early.)

WALLY ON THE WAR-PATH!

(Continued from page 21.)

Tom Merry had saved the match, and the delight of the School House was unbounded. And Wally had saved the match, too, and the Third Form simply rose to the occasion. Wally was shouldered round the field by the exuberant Third, and the Fourth and the Sixth were almost surprised to hear themselves roaring out cheers for Wally.

It had been a close thing, and Figgins & Co. took it cheerfully. There was a great celebration after the famous match. In the general glee a little thought was given to the trick that had been played on Tom Merry; Tom himself had almost forgotten it by that time.

But later on it was remembered, and Levison & Co. had a very painful interview with the School House juniors. Mellish, under threat of a record ragging, gave the whole game away, and for that reason he was let off a little lighter than Levison and Crooke.

Leaving the cads of the School House feeling very sorry for themselves, Tom Merry & Co. went to the study, where Cousin Ethel and Edith Glyn and Figgins & Co. had gathered for a very happy celebration. Kangaroo, Herries, and Reilly, fresh from the school sanny, joined the merry feast. It was a great occasion; but it was perhaps outdone by the celebration that was going on at the same time in the Third Form Room.

There Wally was the hero of the hour, and the Third could not make enough of Wally. He had played for the House team and won the match—at least, the Third considered that he had—and Wally was given a grand time. The scamp of the Third enjoyed his triumph to the full, and certainly it was a very happy ending to the exploits of Wally on the warpath!

(Next Wednesday: "FATTY WYNN'S HUNGER-STRIKE!" You'll simply revel in this sparkling story of St. Jim's, starring the Falstaff of the New House in a new role. Watch out for it!)

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