

"HARRY WHARTON'S CHALLENGE!" GRIPPING YARN of the GREYFRIARS CHUMS—INSIDE

The GEM 2d



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The LAUGHS ON THE FIRST ELEVEN!



Dr. Helmes welcomed the Rajah of Jaf's lares in a few well-chosen words, and then the Indian cricketers saluted three times before the Head of St. Jim's. "It is a great honor for us to meet and play the honorable St. Jim's cricketers," said the rajah.

CHAPTER I. Most Important!

"DON'T all you fellows talk at once," said Tom Merry. "Weally, Tom Merry—" "And Gussy had better not talk at all—"

"Weally—" "Upon the whole, the talking had better be left to me," went on Tom Merry. "I shall put it straight to Kildare—"

"In the circus—" "Now, Guss, you're not to talk! Would you like to take a run in the quad while we go to Kildare's study?" Tom Merry suggested.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, carefully adjusted his goggles in his eye and fixed a upon Tom Merry. It might have been supposed, from D'Arcy's expression, that he expected Tom Merry to sink through the floor of the study, or to vanish into thin air under that withering glance.

Tom Merry did neither. He grinned. "It's nice and sunny in the quad," Tom Merry went on. "You can take your latest silk hat out by a walk, or you can show the New Haven fellows the latest thing in neckties, or—"

"I refuse to do anything of the sort," Tom Merry said. "—No. 1,478.

Tom Merry," said Arthur Augustus, with a great deal of dignity. "Not that I wish to put myself forward in any way. But you know very well that you fellows will reach up the whole history if I don't come with you. I'm only thinker of the success of the idea."

"Well, will you promise not to say a word?" asked Jack Blake.

"Certainly not!"

"You see," said Tom Merry. "Kildare may listen to us, or he may not. He might even get up rusty. You never know how to take these blessed Sixth Formers. It's quite possible that he may think the whole thing cheek on our part."

"But Jove?" "He might, you know, Gussy. Perhaps it is cheek," Tom Merry remarked thoughtfully, as if struck by a new idea.

"Perhaps it is," grinned Jack Blake. "But we're going through with it, just the same. If an Indian team is coming here to play the seniors, why shouldn't they make a double event of it and play the juniors, too? That's what I want to know!"

"Yaaa, wuthah?" said Arthur Augustus, with emphasis. "And I shall point out to Kildare that—"

"You won't point out anything of the kind," said Blake. "You'll leave the talking to me. Kildare will naturally

expect us to have a sensible chap as spokesman—"

"That bars you out, then," said Monty Loothah.

"Why, you see—" "I quite agree with my friend Loothah," said D'Arcy. "In the circus, I—"

"In the circumstances, I shall do the talking," said Tom Merry firmly. "It's no good coming into Kildare's study and all talking at once. Darrell, Reddie, and Menzies are there with him, too; and we don't want a lot of silly talk before a set of blessed seniors. I'll point out the facts to Kildare—"

"In the circus—" "Manners looked at his watch. Manners had a way that was sometimes quite irritating of looking at his watch when a discussion was going on.

"That's getting on," Manners remarked.

"Go home!" said Blake. "I mean, Kildare will be finished tea and gone out to cricket practice if we don't back up. No good trying to talk to him on the field, I suppose!"

"Manners is quite right. I am surprised at you fellows wastin' time arguin' in this way, when the thing is so simple and straightforward—"

"Oh, come on, then?" said Tom Merry. "And Tom Merry started from the

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

study. The other juniors who were sent in condescendence followed him. They were Blake, D'Arcy, Morris, and Digby of the Fourth, and Mansons and Lowther of the Sixth, and Kangaroo and the Cornstalk. They had been discussing the important matter for a good half-hour without getting any "forwarder," as Jack Blake put it.

It was really time to make a move. Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's, was in his study at ten, and it was a favourable time for catching him. While he was at the tea-table he could not escape, and there were a lot of things to be explained. Tom Merry & Co. meant to explain them, but they had not fully decided which one was to do the explaining. The probability was that they would all start explaining at once, and that might lead to confusion.

They marched downstairs to the Sixth Form passage in anything but order. They arrived outside Kildare's study. The door was closed, but from within could be heard a murmur of voices and the clink of teacups. Kildare was entertaining four fellows of the Sixth to tea—all of them great men in the first instance. It was easy enough to guess what they were talking about; there was only one topic of interest at St. Jim's just then, and that was the coming visit of an Indian team of cricketers.

The Rajah of Jal was to visit St. Jim's on the following day, bringing a team of cricketers who were touring England, and who had already played many famous matches with great success. It was quite a feather in Kildare's cap that he had been able to fix up a match with the dandy team from Jal, and Kildare was very pleased with himself. Whether the St. Jim's boys would succeed in beating the Indians was another matter. At all events, it would be a good match, and all St. Jim's was looking forward to it with keenness.

Tom Merry halted outside the captain's door and wagged a warning forefinger at his followers.

"I refuse to cough—I mean—"
"Follow me in quietly," said Tom Merry severely. "None of your blasted boogalooism now, Gussy!"

The swell of St. Jim's was speechless for a moment. He prided himself very much upon his graceful manners and his elegant customs.

"You catch us?" he burst out, as soon as he found his voice. "Why, I—"
"Daddy!"

Tom Merry knocked at the door, and Arthur Augustus passed. He could not commit assault and battery under the gaze of the captain of St. Jim's.

"Come in!" called out Kildare's clerical voice.

Tom Merry opened the door and the juniors marched in.

Kildare and the other fellows were seated round the table by the open window, which gave a view of the quad and the green old elms, with the cricket ground in the distance. They were chatting cheerfully; but they all stopped as the army of juniors came in, and stared at them in considerable astonishment.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Kildare. "What do you kids want?"

"We're a deputation, Kildare," said Blake.

"A what?"

"A deputation from the Fourth Form and the Sixth," said Mansons.

"Oh!"

"We've come to talk to you—"

"Thank you very much!" said Kildare. "When I want to enjoy the delights of your conversation I'll let you know. Close the door after you."

"Ahem!"

"You know the way out, I suppose?" Bushden suggested.

"You see, Kildare," said Tom Merry, "we've come to talk to you about the match."

"Ka!"

"Yess, wathah! We wothah to have the junsahs passed crash in this way."

"What on earth do you mean?" demanded Kildare, looking puzzled.

"Do you mean that you want to see our match with the Jal team? You can if you like."

"Ahem!"

"You see, Kildare—"

"It's like this—"

"In the circle—"

Kildare's eyes wandered to a cricket stump that lay near at hand. The juniors looked away a little.

"If you've got anything to say to me you'd better say it and bank," said the captain of St. Jim's.

"Well, you see—"

"Peevish you had better let me explain, Tom Mowsey—"

"Oh, ring off!"

"Weslly, Biske—"

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*The visit of the Rajah of Jal's eleven to play the St. Jim's first team was the match of the season for the seniors. Tom Merry & Co. enjoyed themselves, too!*

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"You see, Kildare, it's a jolly important matter—"

"Most important."

"It's a question of the rights of the juniors—"

"And we think—"

"Yess, wathah—"

Kildare rose to his feet.

"There are two ways out of this study," he remarked. "Which do you prefer—the door or the window?"

"Ahem!"

"You see, dear boy—"

"Shut up!" roared Tom Merry. "You're wasting Kildare's time—ahem! If you say another idiotic word, Gussy, I'll jam you!"

"Weslly, Tom Mowsey—"

"Let me explain—"

"In the circle, I consider—"

"Oh, sling him out!" exclaimed Tom Merry, exasperated.

"I wothah— Oh!"

Lowther and Mansons laid violent hands upon the swell of St. Jim's. There was a momentary struggle, and then Arthur Augustus went whirling through the doorway. There was a sound of a bump in the passage and then a gaspilation:

"Ow!"

"Put your feet against the door, Mowsey."

Monty Lowther closed the door, and put his feet against it. Sounds of wrath were heard from the passage. Without taking any notice of them, Tom Merry turned to the captain of St. Jim's and proceeded.

CHAPTER 2.

Checked Out!

KILDARE had dropped into his seat again. He was laughing; he could not help it; and the other seniors were laughing.

Tom Merry was encouraged. At all events, he had not been handled out before he had time to explain, and that was something. With a somewhat flushed face he went on to explain.

"You see, Kildare, the Rajah of Jal is coming here to-morrow with his team of Indians—"

"I believe I was already aware of that," remarked Kildare, with a nod.

"I believe I heard something about that," remarked Montebith, the head prefect of the New House at St. Jim's.

"Have you anything later and a little more surprising in your news budget?"

"Ahem!"

"If you've finished, you may as well join D'Arcy in the passage," Bushden suggested.

"I haven't finished!" said Tom Merry indignantly. "The Indian team are coming here to-morrow to play the Sixth, and I hear that they are staying over the next day."

"That is quite correct," asserted Kildare. "I hope all you youngsters will wash your necks and put clean collars on for the occasion."

The youngsters glared. It was hard to stand this, even from Kildare. Tom Merry coughed violently before he proceeded.

"As they'll be here a second day, we thought that the juniors ought to have a chance," he said.

"A chance of what?"

"Playing them," said Tom Merry boldly.

Kildare jumped. "Playing the Jal team!" he gaspulated.

"Yes."

"My hat!" Kildare burst into a laugh of genuine amusement. "Why, you young ass, they're a big handful for the first eleven to tackle!"

"As a matter of fact, I've often thought that we might beat the Sixth, if we could fix up a match," said Tom Merry.

The seniors looked at one another. That statement took their breath away. The proper place for a Fourth Former or a Sixth fellow, of course, was to watch senior matches and cheer the players. That was right and proper.

For a junior to dream in his wildest and most imaginative moments that he could play against the Sixth, was unheard-of, or should have been unheard-of. It was heard of now, however.

"If you've come here to get a special appointment of thick ones, you kids, you're going the right way to work!" said Kildare, at last.

"We haven't," said Tom Merry. "We want to challenge the Jal team to play the junior eleven, that's all. If they beat us, it's all right. If we beat them—"

"Beat them?" shrieked Kildare. "Do you know that they've beaten Oxford and Cambridge teams, you young ass!"

"I dare say they have."

"And you want to play them?"

"Yes."

"Well, for pure, unadulterated cheek, I think that takes the cake," Montebith remarked.

"I think it does," said Kildare.

"I don't see it," said Tom Merry.

THE GUY LANEY.—No. 1,475.

"Ow! You cheapo!" roared Figgins, trying to collect up his collar and tie. "You silly ass! He came over to have a friendly talk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fathead!" grunted Kerr. "We've got an idea—"

There was a wail of anguish from Fatty Wynn.

"You dangerous ass! You've squashed my tarts!"

Fatty Wynn extracted a bag of squashed jam tarts from under his jacket. The tarts were squashed and the bag was burst. Most of the jam adhered to Fatty Wynn's waistcoat, which was in a very sticky state.

"I was going to offer you tarts all round, you cheapo!" roared Fatty Wynn. "Now—"

"Now we shall decline them, without thanks!" grunted Monty Leather.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We came to have a friendly talk, but—"

"Well, you can have it now, now you've been hampered!" said Monty Leather blandly. "Go ahead with the friendly talk!"

Figgins picked himself up. "You ass!" he grunted. "It's about the Indians. We had an idea of getting up a junior team to play them if Kildare would let us."

"Oh, that's ancient history!" said Tom Merry. "We've thought of that. We've asked Kildare, and we've been checked out of his study."

"Hence the tarts?" said Monty Leather, pronouncing the word "tarts." That was a pun.

"If'n!" said Figgins. "On second thoughts, then, we won't ask Kildare."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's rotten, though!" said Kerr. "We could make up a splendid junior team from both Houses, and I think we should have a chance against the Indians."

"Kildare won't hear of it. He—"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Blake. "Here's the telegraph-boy from Rylcoran. I wonder if it's for us!"

All attention was given to the telegraph-boy at once. Arthur Augustus was known to have remittances wired to him. The boy came up to the School House.

"Which of us is it for?" asked Tom Merry.

"Master Kildare, sir."

"Oh rats!" said Tom Merry crossly. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, grinning. "Take it in, then. He's in his study. I'll show you the way."

Tom Merry went into the House with the telegraph-boy. He knocked at Kildare's door and opened it. The seniors were still chattering over the tea-table. They seemed to be very much amazed by the way the despatch had departed from the study. Kildare fixed his eyes inspiringly upon Tom Merry.

"Have you come back for some more?" he asked.

Tom Merry nodded.

"No, I haven't," he said. "Here's a telegram for you. I was showing the lad the way, that's all."

"Oh, thanks!"

Kildare took the envelope and opened it carefully enough. As he glanced over the contents, however, he started.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

"What's the matter?" asked Monty.

"The match is off!"

"What!"

"The Indians aren't coming!"



Tom Merry and Arthur Augustus were struggling to their feet when Blake was flung out of the study after them by Kildare. He landed on his chair with a heavy thump, and, with wild pain, the three juniors crashed to the floor in an untidy heap.

CHAPTER 4.

Kerr's Great Whizzo!

TOM MERRY heard Kildare's words as he turned away from the study, and he came back.

The news was surprising and interesting. He looked into the study again.

"Excuse me," he said. "I couldn't help hearing what you said, Kildare. The Indians aren't coming, after all!"

"No," grunted the St. Jim's captain. "You can hear the telegram, if you like, kid. Listen, you fellows!"

The captain of St. Jim's read the telegram out.

"Kildare, School House, St. James, Sussex.—Very sorry. Match off. Few men ill. Please excuse. Waiting."

"Well, that's rotten!" said Monty. "Beastly!" said Rushton.

"It's very unfortunate," Darrell remarked. "Glad he's wired. We shouldn't have had a letter till to-morrow morning. Now we can get up something else for the day."

Kildare grunted.

"Yes; I suppose so. But it's a beastly disappointment. We don't have a whole holiday more than twice a term, and now it will be wasted."

"Still, with four men ill, I don't see what he could do," said Darrell. "It's rough on them. They had two men cracked, I hear, and have been playing reserves. They couldn't go into the field with only seven players."

"I suppose not."

"Better send a sympathetic wire back," said Monty.

"Yes."

Tom Merry went down the passage.

grinning. He was sorry for Kildare's disappointment, but it was really a kind of poetical justice. The juniors had been deprived of their chance, and now the seniors had lost their match, as well.

The expression on Tom Merry's face drew general attention to him when he joined his comrades outside the School House.

"Any news?" asked Figgins.

"Yes, rather!"

"Kildare tell you?"

"Yes."

"Bai Jove! What's the news, death boy! What are you grinnin' at?"

"The match is off, that's all!"

There was a general exclamation of surprise.

"The match off!"

"Yes. The Rajah of Jal has four men ill, and his reserves have been laid up before, as Darrell says. He can't raise more than seven players, as he's scratched the match."

"My hat!"

"Bai Jove!"

"That's rotten!"

"It jolly well serves Kildare right! He really deserves it, what'to'thin' to us with such gross disrespect."

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Kerr.

Some peculiar internal change seemed to have taken place in Kerr of the New House. A grin came over his face which grew into a laugh, and the laugh became a wild roar. He held his sides and chuckled. The juniors stared at him blankly.

"What on earth's the matter with you?" asked Figgins.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! What's the joke?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

chap called Chandra Singh. So I've seen in the papers; they had an interview with the rajah, you see."

"Good! Gussy must be careful not to know any English!"

"Well, Tom Merry—"

"If he opens his mouth, he'll give us away at once," said Kerr. "Could we arrange somehow to have Gussy gagged?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should utterly refuse to be gagged, Kerr."

"Well, mind you don't give an away, that's all," said Monty Lowther. "We'll squash you, if you do."

"I should refuse to be squashed—"

"Let's test down to Nylcombe and see about the diagnosis," said Tom Merry briskly. "The sooner the quicker, you know."

"Good!"

And the juniors started for the village at once. They were in the greatest of spirits. Even if the japs against the Sixth were not successful, it would be the biggest thing they had ever undertaken, but they were determined that it should be a grand success.

**CHAPTER 4.
Mysteries!**

THE proceedings of Tom Merry & Co. for the rest of that evening afforded considerable interest and speculation for their friends in the Lower School at St. Jim's.

The first thing that was generally noticed was that they came back from a walk to Nylcombe carrying bags that appeared to be full of something.

There were many curious inquiries as to what the bags contained, but the juniors declined to explain, and the bags were carried into Figgins' study and locked up there.

Arthur Argente had posted a letter to Lord Conway in the village, containing the telegram and as much information as it was good for him to know.

The next day being a whole holiday, most of the St. Jim's fellows were making great plans. They did not very often have whole holidays, and they intended to make the best of that one. As a rule, the juniors would have had a cricket match on, but cricket was off now as far as Tom Merry & Co. were concerned.

The School House juniors were to have played the New House juniors, but as Tom Merry and Figgins were captains of the respective junior sides, that matter was easy to arrange, but it led to some surprise and wrath on the part of the fellows who were not in the secret.

Tom Merry pinned up a brief notice on the board in the Hall, and it was read by the juniors, with many exclamations. It ran:

"NOTICE: The junior match arranged for to-morrow has been cancelled.—Tom Merry (Capt.)."

And the juniors who had been going to play in the respective teams were wroth, as Reilly of the Fourth expressed it.

Bernard Glynn had been let into the secret, as he was to be one of the ducky strangers to arrive on the morrow. But the juniors wisely decided to let the secret go not an inch further. There was too much danger of its leaking out if it were talked about, and that would render the scheme a farce.

Following the old adage that "whoever has a secret to keep, should not only hide it, but should hide that he has it," Tom Merry & Co. did not breathe



Professor: "Didn't I get my last hair-cut in this shop?"
Barber: "I think not, sir. We've only been in business a year!"
Half-a-crown has been awarded to F. Maloney, Jeannette, Charlton Avenue, Montreal-on-Sea.

a word to hint that a jape was intended at all.

The result was an indignant crowd of juniors came to Tom Merry's study to demand an explanation.

The twelve papers were all included in the House junior teams, but there were ten more fellows who were to have played, and they wanted to know the reason why.

Reilly led a band of exasperated fellows into Tom Merry's study to point out that it wouldn't do, but he found the study empty.

The next day being a whole holiday, there was no preparation that evening, and the Terrible Three had evidently gone out.

"Faith, and they're not here!" said Reilly, looking round.

"Let's wrack the study," suggested Green. "It will be a lesson to Tom Merry not to ride the high horse!"

"Rare, we'd better look for him and wrack him!"

"Here, here!" said Harcock. "They may be in Blake's study."

Down the passage to Study No. 5 went the disappointed cricketers, but that study was also empty. They glanced into it in exasperation.

"The spalpeens are gone out, too!" exclaimed Reilly. "I suppose they're gone out together, entirely."

"Over in the New House, of course!" exclaimed Clifton Dane. "They were very thick with Figgins & Co. this afternoon, I remember."

"Let's get over there!"

And the indignant cricketers marched across the quad. They entered the New House and went up to Figgins' study. In the passage they found Redfern & Co. and several fellows who were to play in the New House junior team on the morrow. They were shooting in at Figgins' door, which appeared to be locked.

"Tom Merry is here!" asked Reilly.

Redfern snorted. "Yes, he's in there with Figgins—the whole blessed family of them—and they've got the door locked!" he

exclaimed. "The match is off for to-morrow, and we can't get a session out of Figgins. He says it can't be helped."

"Faith, and I'm going to have a session!" exclaimed Reilly, kicking at the door. "Hallo, is there, ye spalpeens, ye spalpeens! Open the door!"

"Hah!" came back through the key-hole.

"Why aren't you playing to-morrow, Tom Merry?"

"The match is put off."

"But why?"

"Reasons of state."

"Faith, don't be a silly goose! What are you jesting of the match for, ye silly spalpeen!" roared Reilly.

"Can't be helped."

"Faith, and I—"

"Beat the door in!" said Harcock.

Bang, bang, bang! Thump! Boff! Bang!

A sharp voice called up the stairs—the voice of Mr. Hatfield, the House-master of the New House:

"What is that noise? Step it at once!"

It stopped at once. Mr. Hatfield was a near-tempered gentleman and not to be argued with. The juniors scolded away. In Figgins' study, Tom Merry & Co. were left undisturbed.

**CHAPTER 7.
All Settle!**

THE morning dawned bright and sunny.

The fellows at St. Jim's turned out cheerfully on that sunny morning. A whole day without lessons, with nothing to do but please themselves from morning papers to evening prep. That was calculated to make them cheerful.

Tom Merry & Co. seemed to be in extra high spirits.

The disappointed cricketers of the junior Form had made up two House-teams of their own, leaving Tom Merry & Co. out, and they were going to have a cricket match all the same, with Reilly captaining the School House side and Redfern the New House.

Tom Merry & Co. were glad enough to see them so occupied. It kept them off the scene, and provided any chance of a discovery of the great jape.

The juniors were keeping their secret very dark.

Not a word had been breathed outside the twelve, and nothing was known even to their most intimate friends.

The rehearsal in Figgins' study had gone off perfectly successfully, and the plotters, by this time, had not the slightest doubt of success.

They had packed the dignities and the costumes in bags, ready to convey to Wayland, and they only delayed starting while waiting for Kildare to receive the telegram from London. Unless that was safely delivered, of course, the whole thing would have to fall through.

And the chorus of St. Jim's waited in a group at the school gates for the telegraph-boy. He seemed a long time coming, but he came at last. There was a great exclamation of satisfaction as he was seen coming up the road.

"Here he is!"

"Who's it for?" asked Tom Merry as he had come up.

"Master Kildare, sir."

"Good! Take it in!"

The boy went on. Kildare was in the quad, standing outside the School House, chatting with Darrell of the Sixth.

The notice of the cancelling of the match had come too late for the St. Jim's captain to be able to fix up another match, and the first eleven were reduced to the necessity of making up a scratch team from the Fifth and Sixth, or of not playing at all. That was what Kildare intended to do; but it was a non-down after the match he had anticipated.

"Hallo, here's another telegram!" exclaimed Darrell. "It's for you, too!"

Kildare took the wire.

"May have found it possible to come, after all," Darrell suggested.

Kildare brightened up.

"By Jove, I hope so," he exclaimed.

He opened the envelope and read the message. It was brief, but it was to the point, and it brought a smile of satisfaction to the face of the captain of St. Jim's.

"Harush!" he exclaimed.

"Good news!"

"Yes; they're coming!"

"Bravo!"

"Listen!"

Kildare read out the message:

"Kildare, School House, St. James, Sussex.—Previous telegram cancelled. Team arriving Rylocombe ten-thirty."

"Good!" exclaimed Darrell. "I suppose they've got over it, or he's managed to make in some substitute. I rather wondered if the rajah could manage that. They're in London now and there are plenty of Indian cricketers there."

Kildare nodded.

"He hasn't signed it," he remarked. "A big omission, perhaps. But it's clear enough."

"Oh, yes, he says plainly 'previous telegram cancelled.'"

Rushden and Monteith and Baker stropped up.

"Where are we playing?" asked Monteith.

"We're playing the Indians, after all," said Kildare.

"The Indians?"

"Yes. The rajah says he can come."

"Good!" said Baker.

"Kipping!" said Rushden.

"Jolly uncertain sort of beggar, I should think," said Monteith. "Do you mind letting me see the wire?"

Kildare handed it to him. The New House prefect read it through.

"It's not signed," he said.

"No. But, of course, he knew we should know whom it was from," said the captain of St. Jim's, with a smile.

"Nobody but the Rajah of Jal would be likely to write to me that the team was arriving at Rylocombe at ten-thirty."

"No, I suppose not," said Monteith thoughtfully.

Kildare looked at him.

"Why, what are you thinking about, Monteith?" he asked. "The telegram's all right, isn't it?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

Monteith read it again. The New House prefect was of a keen and suspicious turn of mind.

"What could be wrong with it?" asked Kildare.

"Well, as it's not signed it crossed my mind that it might possibly be a jape of those young buggars, to make us expect the Indian team for nothing," said Monteith.

"If we expected them, and they didn't come, we should look a set of asses!"

Kildare laughed.

"I don't think they'd go quite so far as that," he said.

"Hardly," remarked Baker.

Rushden pointed to the telegram.

"Handed in in London," he said. "I suppose no one here could have gone up to London this morning to send that wire!"

Monteith grinned.

"Well, no, I suppose not," he said.

"Anyway, we shall see at ten-thirty whether they arrive or not," said

Kildare. "We'd better have a motor-coach at the station for them. It's all right."

"Of course it is," said Baker.

"Shall we meet them at the station?" asked the New House prefect.

"A couple of us might go. After all, they're foreigners, you know, and it would be only civil."

"Good!"

"We shall have to go down to Rylocombe to arrange about the coach, anyway, as I had cancelled it," said Kildare. "One of you chaps come with me."

Kildare and Darrell strolled down to the gates. They found Tom Merry & Co. in the road, ready to start. Most of the juniors had well-packed bags in their hands. They all looked at Kildare keenly.

"Going out for the day, Kildare?" asked Blake softly.

Kildare smiled.

"No," he said.

"Is your match is off, isn't it?"

"It's on again now."

"The Indians coming, after all?" queried Mussy Lovther.

"Yes; I've just had a wire to say they're all right, and coming, after all, and they'll be at Rylocombe at ten-thirty," said Kildare. "Where are you youngsters going? Out for a picnic?"

"Well, not exactly a picnic," said Tom Merry cautiously. "We're going to make a day of it, though."

"Then you're not going to see the match with the Indians?" asked the St. Jim's captain good-humouredly.

"Yes, wathah!"

"Oh, certainly!" said Tom Merry. "We shan't miss that. We shall be on the ground by the time you start, and we shall stay till the finish!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Herries. Kildare looked a little mystified.

"What is there to chuckle about, kid?" he asked.

Herries turned red, and Tom Merry gave him a severe frown.

"Oh, don't mind Herries!" said Blake. "He's often taken like that—a little weak in the napper, you know!"

"Yess, wathah!"

Kildare nodded and walked along the lane with Darrell. Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another with hostile smiles.

"They're going to arrange about the motor-coach for the team," murmured Blake.

"For us," said Kerr.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "It's all across now, and we've only got to get to Wayland and change, and catch the local for Rylocombe. Come on!"

And the rival Co.'s marched off in high spirits.

CHAPTER 8.

Quite a Change!

"HERE we are!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

The juniors stopped.

The bright morning sunlight was falling through the foliage in a deep glade of Rylocombe Wood, beside a rippling stream.

It was a quiet and secluded spot, just suited to what the juniors had to do. No one was likely to observe or interrupt them there.

The bags were opened and the costumes and disguises taken out. Kerr's services were in general request at once. Kerr was the leading light of the Junior Amateur Dramatic Society. What he did not know on the subject of making-up was not worth knowing.

Billy Bunter's Burglar



Here's a school yarn with a real punch! Everyone knows Horace Coker of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, and what a born idiot he is. But Coker is a remarkably hefty fellow with a punch like a steel-hammer. The great Horace sets out to take Sir Hilton Popper, head and master of Pepper Court, down a peg or two... with what amazing results you will learn when you read **BILLY BUNTER'S BURGLAR!**—the amusing and startling tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, appearing in **The MAGNET**. It's a Frank Richards yarn!

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2

The MAGNET

And Kerr was very industrious and obliging. He superintended the dressing and the making-up with tireless patience.

The juniors discarded their khaki, which were folded up carefully and placed in the bags. They donned the Indian costumes. Indian costumes, chiefly used for local fanny-draw functions, had been very easy to obtain, but they had mostly been many sizes too large. But in Figgins' study the previous evening the juniors had taken note in, so to speak, and the costumes were quite ready for wearing now.

The making-up was carefully done. Their skins had to be tinted a soft brown, and all Kerr's skill was required. But he excelled himself. Figgins was the first fellow finished. He stood with a brown face and hands, and arrayed in white garments, and a turban gleaming with jewels—the jewels being made of coloured glass, of course. There was a tremendous diamond in his turban, which would have been worth thousands of pounds if it had been worth anything at all.

The juniors could not help chuckling as they looked at him. Figgins made a very imposing Rajah of Jal.

"It's ripping!" said Tom Merry. "You're mother wouldn't know you, Figgis."

"Watch out! I say, shall I look anything like that, dear boy?"

"Yes, Gussy."

"But Jove! I trust I shall not look like an old-clothes man who has not washed himself for weeks!"

"My dear chap, all Indian princes look like that," said Kerr. "You have to dress up to the character."

"Yes, but—"

"Keep still or the staff will go into your eye," said Kerr.

"What's the matter?"

"You! You've dabbed that horrid stuff into my mouth."

"Well, you shouldn't talk while you're being operated on," said Kerr. "I can't do a lot of dodging round your mouth while you're gassing. Ring off!"

"Weally, Kerr— Gweogh!"

"There you go again!"

"You speak me! Oh!"

"You'd better shut up, Gussy!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "You'll put it in the mouth every time you talk."

And D'Arcy thought so, too, and the rest of his thoughts remained unuttered.

The work was done at last, and the twelve juniors of St. Jov's stood stained and arrayed like natives of the Eastern empire.

They could not help grinning at one another.

Arthur Augustus arranged his moustache in the right eye, but it did not seem to be comfortable there. He pinched it again and again, and made a round, white circle on his brown complexion.

Kerr caught sight of what he was doing and gave a yell.

"You are! Stop it!"

"Weally, Kerr—"

"You're rubbing the brown off!"

"But Jove, I must wash my glass, you know!"

"Put it away, or you'll get it smeared like the other one!" roared Tom Merry. "I repeat that, in the circle, I am quite willing to bow to the voice of the majority and put it away, dear boy," said D'Arcy gracefully.

And D'Arcy slipped the eyeglass into some recess of his garments. Kerr looked over his face, and touched up his complexion once more.

"Mind you're careful, now," he said. "I can't touch up your silly cherry when we're before the public."

"I am quite aware of that, dear boy."

"Come on!" said Figgins. "We're ready!"

"March!" said Tom Merry. The juniors, carrying their cricket-bags and also the other bags containing their usual clothes in the place of the dignified, left the glade in Rykossie Wood.

Their hearts were beating a little



The American judge stared over his spectacles at the tattooed prisoner brought before him on a charge of vagrancy.

"Have you ever earned a dollar over this?" he asked.

"Yes, your honour," the prisoner replied. "You paid me a dollar when I voted for you at the last election!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. Jones, 27, George Road, Harrogate.

father as they entered the footpath leading into Wayland Town.

Although their disguises were excellent ones, so that they could hardly believe that they were themselves, they felt a certain degree of nervousness at the thought of facing the public in these new complexions and attire.

The sight of Indian, too, was very uncommon in a quiet country town like Wayland, and they were certain to attract general attention.

Indeed, it was quite possible that they would be recognized as the famous Jal touring team and given an ovation.

A constable on the footpath was the first man to see them, and he stood, with open eyes and mouth, watching them till they were out of sight.

Then they entered Wayland. Immediately they arrived down the High Street towards the station, with Figgins strolling majestically at their head, there was a shout.

As if by magic, the small fry of Wayland gathered round to watch them and follow them and cheer or jeer, as the humour seized them.

The juniors marched on with much dignity.

"When are you going to begin?" yelled a small youth, evidently under the impression that the dusky team were nigger minstrels and were going to give a performance outside some public-house.

The juniors could not help grinning. Figgins frowned.

"Keep a stiff upper lip," he said. "Remember, you don't understand English, and mind you don't grin. Oriental gravity is the dodge."

"Yes, weatuh!"

"And mind you don't talk, Gussy!"

"Weally, Figgins—"

"If you have to say anything," went on Figgins, "say one word only, which can be taken to mean 'I don't understand.' You say 'Bang-bang.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It sounds like a Hindi word, and it might mean anything," said Figgins. "If you're simply driven for a word and must say something else, say 'Boggy.' That sounds jolly good Hindustani to me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And, remember, nothing but 'Bang-bang' and 'Boggy.' For the sole chap here who speaks English," said Figgins.

"Perhaps it would be a good idea to speak in French, as lots of Hindustanis know that language, you know. Suppose I say— 'Je ne comprend rien.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or I could say: 'Emmer moi, je vous prie.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't you talk at all," said Figgins. "That's understood."

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Here's the railway station."

A noise crowd followed the Indian team right up to the railway station. That they had evidently been heard of, for the stationmaster came out to meet them in quite a respectful manner.

"Welcome to Wayland, your Highness!" he said, bowing low before the long-legged Rajah of Jal. "We expected you by the train from London, your Highness."

"Bang-bang!" said Figgins.

The stationmaster looked puzzled.

"Yes, your Highness."

"Boggy!"

"I am very sorry, your Highness; I don't speak Hindustani," said the stationmaster; and he ushered the princely traveller into the station, and the porters stood round with great respect as the cricketing team marched upon the platform.

They were in good time for the local to Rykossie.

They crowded into first-class carriage, and the stationmaster himself closed Figgins' door, and stood outside the carriage as the signal was given for the train to start.

"Good-by, gentlemen!"

"Bang-bang!"

"Ahem!"

"Boggy!"

And the train ran out of Wayland Station.

CHAPTER 9.

The Indian Arrival!

KELDARE and Darrell came into Rykossie Station, and with nods to the old porter they walked upon the platform. They were quite sure that the telegram was all right, and they were there to meet the Indians.

The motor-gear was waiting outside the Gate Lanes.—No. 149.

"It's very odd," said Clifton Dane.
 "Well, yes."
 "That fat chap can bat, though," said Gore, as Fatty Wynn drove the ball to the boundary from Rashden's bowling.
 "He can! Bravo!"
 The St. Jim's fellows were all sportsmen, and they cheered every success of the dusky victors. And they had plenty to cheer. The St. Jim's bowling and fielding were both good, but the victors scored quite freely.

Kumar Lal was out at last, and he joined the group of dusky batsmen outside the pavilion. Jal wore six downs for 70 runs.

When any St. Jim's fellow strolled near the group of Indian cricketers, he heard them talking among themselves in a curious language. Words like bang, rang, chang, wallah, bogler, and woggly continually recurring. But when there were no Saints within hearing, they contrived to talk in English.

"It's going on all right," grinned Figgins. "I wonder what Killdare would say if he knew that St. Jim's juniors had knocked up 70 against the first eleven for six wickets!"

"Yas, wallah!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "And wait till they get their innings, and Fatty begins to bowl!" said Kerr.
 "I've always said that Fatty was fit to bowl for the county, and we'll see how he fares against Killdare's lot."

"Yes, rather!"
 "It will be rather an eye-opener for them!" grinned Tom Merry. "Of course, the real Jal team would have taken more than 70 in this time. But if Fatty takes their wickets, we shall keep their score down."

"And beat them?" said Figgins hopefully.
 "Wouldn't that be ripping!"
 "Yas, wallah!"
 "Hush!"
 Some Saints were strolling by, and Figgins, without a change of countenance, went on in an unknown tongue—as unknown to himself as to everybody else.

"Boggly bang wallah sun sing chang huckback!"
 "Oh, huckback—huckback!" said Tom Merry gaily.
 "Sin ting ghustt gummy bong!"
 "Rum bang!"
 "Blessed if I can make out a word of it!" Gore remarked, as he strolled on.
 "Blessed if it seems possible that they understand it themselves!"
 "It's rummy!" said Clifton Dane.

"You're getting on famously," said Lumley-Lumley, addressing the Rajah of Jal.
 "Gomery hlong bang!" said the rajah politely.

"Eh!"
 "Lummy, crickey, chuck-chuck!"
 "My hai!"
 "Gomery tong!"
 "Oh, I give it up!" said Gore.
 "What's the name of that fat chap who's batting?" asked Lumley-Lumley.
 "Panasr Aasi is the name on the list," said Gore.
 "Bravo, Panasr Aasi!" shouted Clifton Dane, as the fat batsman sent the ball to the boundary again.
 "Hurrah!"
 And there was a ripple of hand-clapping.

Panasr Aasi was going strong. But he was clean bowled by Killdare in the

next over, and he came off the field perceiving. The Rajah of Jal looked at him, and an expression of alarm came over his Highness's face.
 "Great Scott!" he whispered. "Get into the dressing-room quick!"

"What's the matter?" muttered Panasr Aasi.
 "Your complexion's turning."
 "My hai!"
 "And you'd better run, too!" grinned Merry loudly.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 And Fatty Wynn belted into the pavilion. Kerr followed him, his artistic touch was required. Kerr, under the name of Bolan Raja, was wanted next, but the rajah himself went in, to give Kerr time to restore Fatty Wynn's complexion.

CHAPTER 11.
 Bowled Out!

THERE was a cheer as the Rajah of Jal came out to the wicket, with his bat under his arm. The hard hitting of the rajah was well known, and the St. Jim's fellows expected to see some fireworks. The rajah raised his cricket cap gracefully to the cheering, and took his place at the wicket. Killdare tossed up the ball to Darrell.

"You'll have all your work cut out to shift that chap, from what I hear," he cracked.
 Darrell laughed.
 "I'll do my best," he said.
 Darrell did his best, but he could not shift the rajah. The rajah was very careful. He blocked every dangerous ball, and only hit out when it was quite



"You—gwoogh!" gasped Arthur Assington. "You've debbed that howald stuff in my mouth!" "You shooldn't talk while you're being operated on," said Kerr. "I can't work round your mouth while you're gasping. Ring off!"
 THE GOLF LINKS—No. 1,478.

and the Saints breathed more freely. At all events, they were not all to be dismissed for duck's-eggs.

They were glad when the over was finished. The Jai men were not likely to have another bowler of quite as deadly a description.

They hadn't. But three, at least, of the best between were out, and the scores could never reach the dimensions that were hoped for—and necessary.

Fatty Wynn had bowled wonderfully well, but fortune had favoured him. He could not expect to repeat the hit-trick.

But later in the innings he bowled Darrell with only 7 runs to his credit, and after Kidders and Monteith, Darrell was looked upon as a tower of strength in the St. Jim's first.

The innings tailed off after that.

When all the wickets were down, St. Jim's first had totalled 30, to balance against the 120 taken by the Indians in their first innings. If it had been a single innings match St. Jim's services would have been looked. But there is nothing so uncertain as the great game of cricket, excepting the weather, and the Saints still hoped to turn the tables upon their opponents in the second innings.

CHAPTER 13.

Something for Levison!

LUNCH was a merry meal to the Indian cricketers, though it was not quite so cheerful as usual to Kidders and his team.

The visitors were entertained in a really handsome way by the Saints, and everything had been provided for their comfort, and they certainly enjoyed their lunch.

Fusar Auni, the bowler, came in for a great deal of attention, and all his warts were well looked after—and his warts were many.

He ate heartily of everything that was offered him, and he was not by any means slow to help himself, and his fat, dusky face grew fatter and shinier during lunch, and his round eyes beamed with enjoyment.

The rajah was seated at some little distance from him, but he cast many anxious glances in the direction of Fusar Auni.

Figgins was afraid that Fatty Wynn would crowd the lunch, and spoil his form for the afternoon (evening), and his fears were well grounded. Whenever Fatty Wynn found himself at a really plentiful spread, he was liable to forget everything else.

On any other occasion Figgins would have spoken to him in the plainest of plain English, but just now English of any sort was barred, and it was useless to say "Bang-bang!" or "Buggles!" to Fatty Wynn.

The fat Fourth Former was enjoying himself, and cricket and everything else had faded quite into the back of his mind.

"Keep that fat bowler off the pavilion as much as you can," the rajah whispered to Tom Merry.

"(Bai Jove!) I'll go and speak to him!" said D'Arcy.

"Shut up!"

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Chundoo cheng bang wallop!" said Figgins loudly.

"Weally—"

Blake pitched D'Arcy, and the result of St. Jim's remembered himself, and was quite silent. Tom Merry crossed over to Fatty Wynn and tapped him on the Gem Lancer.—No. 1,768.

the shoulder. Gore and several other fellows were close at hand, so English was barred.

Tom Merry pointed to the pavilion, and shook his head, and Fatty Wynn understood.

"All right," he said sadly. "I mean, buggles—buggles!"

Gore looked at him very curiously.

"So you speak English, Mr. Fusar Auni?" he said.

"Yes—no, I mean—"

Tom Merry pinched him frantically and Fatty Wynn broke off. The Sheriff fellow dragged him down the table. Gore stared after them curiously enough.

"Those chaps are playing some blessed game with an!" he said. "They pretend they can't speak English excepting the rajah, but they jolly well seem able to speak it all the same."

"Yes, rather!" said Levison of the Fourth, his suspicious eye gleaming. "You notice how they shouted out 'Wall bowled!' once on the field!"

"Well, they'd learn those words, I suppose, if they played much cricket in England," French remarked.

"Yes, but—"

Levison did not finish, but he strolled away. Levison, the end of the Fourth, was as keen as anybody else in the school, and he always followed a scent to a finish, even if it did not concern him in the least.

He joined Clifton Dane and Lumley-Lumley, who were chatting with the Rajah of Jai. He looked at the rajah with a peculiar penetrating expression, and the rajah strolled away. Levison grinned.

"Curious how those chaps drop into English at times, isn't it?" Levison remarked.

"Do they?" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Yes. You chaps went into their dressing-rooms after their first innings, didn't you?" Levison asked.

"How did you know that?"

"I happened to see you!"

"You happen to see a lot of things, don't you?" said Dane disdainfully.

"Well, if you see us there's no need to ask the question."

"I dare say you heard them talking English."

"I dare say you'd better find out."

"They seem an odd lot."

"Do they?"

"Yes," said Levison; "and you two chaps know something about them, or you wouldn't be so jolly thick with fellows you'd never met before."

Clifton Dane and his companion strolled away. Levison's eyes glistened. He felt certain that he was upon the scent of something, and he meant to know what the mystery was. He strolled over to one of the Jai cricketers, an elegant youth, whose complexion was as dark as that of the others, but whose features were of a decidedly European cast. Levison nodded to him cheerfully, scanning his face the while.

"Good match, eh?" he asked.



"Where did you pick up those features?" asked Levison. "A dusky flat shot out promptly, caught Levison."

"Ya—hem! Bang bang bong chank wallop!"

"Warm today for cricket, though?"

"Sam song tooal sleep!"

"That's Hindustani, I suppose!" said Levison.

"Chang-bang."

"Can't you speak any English?"

"Ching ching pannah wallop."

"Well," said Levison, feeling quite secure in talking as plainly as he liked if the Indians could not understand English, "of all the swaggy, lanky, blacking-faced boobies I ever saw, I think you take the glibby boobiest!"

"Where did you pick up those features?"

"Where did you discover that nose—you call it a nose, I suppose?"

"You stink wotiah!" shouted the supposed Indian.

Levison staggered back in blank astonishment.

Hi!

A dusky flat shot out and it caught Levison on the point of the chin. The end of the Fourth sat down in the grass with a bump and a gasp.

CHAPTER 14.

Looking After Levison!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY had given himself away with a vengeance.

Levison sat in the grass, looking at him with a blank and dazed expression.

Fortunately, the spot where they had been standing was screened by the pavilion and a group of trees, and the happening had not been seen by the others.

"D'Arcy!" ejaculated Levison.

"You feeblish wotiah!"



"You uttah wotth!" exclaimed the supposed Indian, at the point of the club, and sent him staggering backwards.

"I'm certainly going to tell Kildare."

"No Joss! If you do, I will give you a faithful thrashing!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Clifton Dune and Lamsley-Lamsley know, and they are not axin' a word. I waly on you, Lovison, to keep mum. Otherwise, we shall all combine to wag you, when the game is given away, and I warn you that you will have a waff time!"

Lovison hesitated. He was the most unpopular fellow in the Lower School, and if Tom Merry & Co. chose to wag him, there was no one to stand by him in his hour of need. He knew that very well; and he knew, too, what a tremendous ragging he could expect if he spoiled a jape of that kind.

"Well, I might keep mum," he remarked. "By the way, I'm pretty hard-up to-day. Could you lend me a pound, D'Arcy?"

The swell of St. Jim's looked at him with immeasurable scorn.

"No you're going to blacken me, are you?" he asked. Lovison shrugged his shoulders.

"I could do with a pound," he said. "Of course, you needn't lend it to me unless you like. If this secret leaks out, though, it would be a pity, wouldn't it?"

D'Arcy looked at him and slowly extracted a pound note from his pocket. Lovison slipped it into his waistcoat pocket, with a grin.

"Thanks!" he said slyly. "You can rely on me!"

"I trust so," said D'Arcy. "If the secret leaks out, you will get such a waggin' that you will think life not worth livin'!"

"Oh, hold on! Somebody else may tittle, all of their own accord!" exclaimed Lovison.

"I trust not, for your own sake. It will certainly be put down to you!" said Arthur Augustus coldly. "P'wary come with me!"

"With you? Where?"

"Where I am going."

Arthur Augustus linked arms with the end of the Fourth, and strolled away with him. He joined Clifton Dune and Lamsley-Lamsley, who were chatting near the front of the pavilion. It was nearly time for the Jal second innings. The two juniors looked at D'Arcy in astonishment as he walked up with Lovison, who was looking sally and uneasy.

"The uttah wotth has bowled me out!" said D'Arcy, in a low voice. "I am afraid I gave myself away wotth!"

"Well, you are an ass!" said Dune.

"Wotth, Dune—"

"I guess you are a prize chump!" remarked Lovison-Lovison.

"Wotth, dear boy—"

"I'm not going to say a word," said Lovison. "It's all right."

"I want you two fellows to see that he doesn't," said Arthur Augustus. "He's such a faithful liab, you know, you can't trust him!"

"We'll stick to him all the afternoon," grinned Lamsley-Lovison. "He shan't get out of our sight!"

"Look here—" began Lovison.

"No good talking. You shouldn't have been so jolly keen on making disclosures," said Lamsley-Lovison.

"You're going to stay with us?"

"Thank you, dear boy! You're awfully good!"

"Not at all; quite a pleasure! We'll keep Lovison from chattering. You can rely on us, Gussy. Only don't give yourself away any more!"

"I shall be very careful not to utter anything—excepting Hush-hush!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy joined the rest of the Indian cricketers. They were preparing for their second innings now.

Lamsley-Lovison and Clifton Dune placed themselves to watch the play, and they kept Lovison between them. It was useless for the end of the Fourth to say that he wanted to spend his time elsewhere.

They would not let him go. And as either of them could have knocked him out in a single round without the slightest difficulty, the end of the Fourth did not venture to count.

"It's going all wrong," Tom Merry remarked, with a chuckle. "Nobody but Dune and Lamsley-Lovison has any idea."

"And Lovison," said D'Arcy.

"Lovison! Dune he suspect!" asked Monty Lovison.

"He knows!"

"How does he know?"

"He guessed. He was talking to me, and—"

Figgins gave a start.

"I guessed Gussy would give it away!" he remarked. "Lovison will let the whole school know now—Kildare first!"

"Wotth! I—"

"Am!" said the whole Indian team together, speaking in English. "Fat-head! Chump! Duffer! Bumptious liabkin! Fwajjus am!"

"Wotth, dear boys—"

"Of all the froggish fatheads—"

"Lovison won't say a word. I've given him a pound—"

"The mean rotter, to take it!"

"Yaa, I was much more inclined to give him a faithful thrashing, dear boys; but it was necessary to be very diplomatic," explained Arthur Augustus. "Of course, you can always wely upon me to—"

"To give the show away!"

"No, Lovethab; certainly not! You can always wely upon me to use tact and judgment when they are required. I have told Lovison up, and Dune and Lamsley-Lovison have agreed to look atth him and see that he doesn't jaw."

"Oh, good! They'll do that," said Tom Merry, greatly relieved. "Gussy hasn't done so very much damage, after all."

"Wotth, Tom Merry—"

"No; he's really a harmless beastie, when you come to know him!" Monty Lovison remarked.

"Lovethab, you see—"

Kildare came near towards the Indians. Tom Merry nudged the swell of St. Jim's heavily.

"Hush!"

"Wotth, you see—"

"Hush! Coo!"

"Oh, all right!"

"You fellows ready?" asked Kildare, with his pleasant smile.

"The readiness is quite prepared," said the Rajah of Jal, in peculiar English which he made up as he went.

"D'Arcy!"

"You wotth'st heart! I— Dai Joss!" The swell of St. Jim's remembered himself a little too late. "Dai Joss—I mean, bang bang bang bang—"

Lovison grinned unrepentantly as he rubbed his chin. He picked himself up slowly.

"So you're D'Arcy, are you?" he said.

"Farkah wotth he poop!" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"Ha, ha, ha! It's not much use trying to keep that up now."

"Bongty bang wotth!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Lovison impatiently. "I know you're D'Arcy of my Fave, and I am great who the rest are now. I wondered what had become of Tom Merry and his crew—they weren't likely to stay away for a whole day while there was a match like this going on."

D'Arcy hit his lip. He was very angry with himself for having given the show away, but it was too late to think of that. The only thing to be done was to make terms with the end of the Fourth Form.

"Of course, you won't say a word about this!" he remarked.

Lovison laughed unpleasantly.

"After your setting me in that way!" he asked.

"You deserved it, you uttah wotth!"

"My hat! Kildare will be pleased to hear this," grinned Lovison. "It will make the Sixth stare a bit, I reckon."

Arthur Augustus looked very much alarmed.

"You wotth'st say a word!" he remarked. "Play the game, you wotth!"

along. "We attend the honorable pleasure of your worthy advice!"

"And his followers chanted in gravelly:

"Bang-bang!"

"Very well," said Kildare, "we're ready for you to open your second innings whenever you like."

Figgins glanced over his team, and spoke to them interrogatively in the mysterious language that was supposed to have originated in the distant land of Jai.

"Furiah narky wallah boosh boosh?" he asked.

"Fusky wallah boosh," replied Black.

"Kaish laish!" said Tom Merry, with a nod.

"And the rajah, as if satisfied, turned to the St. Jim's captain.

"We have the complete and venerable readiness," he said.

"And so the Indians commenced their second innings.

"Hurrah!"

And the group of dusky batsmen standing in front of the pavilion joined in with a yell.

"Bang-bang!"

It was a splendid innings for Tom Merry and Kangaroo. They piled up the runs till the seniors were weary with leather-bunting.

Clifton Duns and Linsley-Linsley specially cheered and clapped. They knew whom they were cheering and clapping. Lewison, too, but he did not cheer. He sat on the grass between the two juniors, looking silent.

Once or twice he made an effort to get away, but he did not succeed. And he had received a solemn warning that if he wandered off, he would be followed, and possibly licked on the spot, and so he had at last resigned himself to his fate. He had D'Arcy's pound note in his pocket, but, excepting for

and went out again with only 3 runs to his credit.

In the next over—with Monty Lewther at the other end—Tom Merry, unshaken by success, tried a run too many. He had made 3 and the ball was still far down the field. He started on the fourth, and Monty loyally backed him up. Then the ball came in, straight as a die, for the batsman's wicket.

Tom Merry left, rather than see, it coming. He strained every nerve and his feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground as he raced along.

The whole field hung breathless upon his movements.

The ball came whining in. The batsman made one more desperate effort, and hurled himself forward and fell—the end of the bat on the cross!

Crash!

The wicket fell in pieces, but the bat was on the cross; the ball, straight and steady from Kildare's hand, had come in a second too late!

The umpire shook his head.

"Not out!"

Tom Merry breathed again.

He rose, gasping, to his feet. The Indians cheered at the top of their voices:

"Bang-bang! Bravo!"

Tom Merry passed his hand across his perspiring forehead. Then he started as he caught sight of a brown stain upon his batting-gloves. For a moment his heart jumped. He knew that there must be some betraying sign on his forehead, where that stain had come off. With a quick movement he pulled his cricket cap lower down.

Monty Lewther's wicket fell in the next over. The innings was petering out; Fatty Wynn came in last to join Tom Merry. But the over-abundant bench was still telling upon the fat Fourth Former, and his movements were heavy and slow.

"Back up!" Tom Merry said to him as he passed.

Fatty Wynn nodded.

"I'm all right."

"Change change!" said Tom Merry hastily, as the wicketkeeper looked at him.

"Oh, hang, fuzzy wuzzy pop!" said Fatty Wynn.

And he went to his wicket.

Tom Merry continued to score, and the Saints realized that it was useless to attempt to shift Chandra Singh from his wicket. They concentrated their attention upon Fatty Wynn, otherwise Pusar Anni. But the fat Indian kept his sticks up gallantly. He did not do much scoring, but he stonewalled steadily, and for a long time he kept his end up.

But Fate overtook him at last.

He was labouring on in a heavy run to the wicket, when the ball came whining in from Darvell, knocking the wicket in pieces.

And the Saints cheered in great relief!

"How's that?"

Fatty Wynn was out, and Tom Merry had finished his big innings not out. The total of runs was exactly 120. It was a good score, making 220 with the score of the first innings.

"And they've got 80 towards it," cried Figgins in his comradely.

"They won't reach it very easily, especially if Fatty bowls as well as before."

"Can't do that twice in one match," said Kerr.

"No; especially as the fathead has
(Continued on page 18.)

CHAPTER 18.

Going Strong!

FIGGINS put down the name of Pusar Anni—alias Fatty Wynn—as last man in. The fat Fourth Former had looked not wisely but too well, and he was not exactly in a state to do his side credit.

Figgins was at present restricted to the mysterious language of Jai; but later on he meant to say some things to Fatty Wynn in English. Figgins opened the innings himself this time, with Kerr for his partner. The crowd cheered the Rajah of Jai as he came on, remembering how he had shaped in the first innings.

Figgins advanced gracefully in response to the cheer.

The Saints looked as if they were determined to make a tremendous effort to get level. They were 20 runs behind on the first innings, which was a fairly big handicap to carry through the rest of the game. But Kildare and his men were on their mettle now.

The Indian batsmen did very well indeed, but the bowling was hot, and the fielding keen, and wickets went down faster than in the first innings.

Figgins himself baited well, and as did Jack Black, but Monteth took Digby's and Hercie's wickets in quick succession for duck's eggs. He did not succeed, however, in performing the hat-trick, and it could not be said that any of the first eleven bowling equalled that of the dusky Pusar Anni.

In half an hour Jai were five down for 28, which was a low score for the Indians, and caused the Saints' hopes to rise high.

Then Tom Merry came in, with Kangaroo at the other end. And the hero of the Shell and the Cornstalk proceeded to make the fur fly.

Both of them were good hitters, and both as keen as mustard. They made hay of the bowling, though Kildare changed Monteth, Darrell, and Baker continually—and took the ball himself sometimes.

The two batsmen were fairly set, and when they could not hit out they played steady, and their wickets remained intact while the runs piled up.

Loud cheers greeted the hard hitting of the two dusky batsmen. Even if the Saints were being beaten, the crowd were ready to cheer any good play.

"Bravo, Chandra Singh!"

The Gem Library.—No. 1,478.

EDHO ANSWERS "WHO ? !"



The Irish sergeant was drilling the new-born squad, and on the order to raise the right leg one of the men lifted his left.

"Niggers!" exclaimed the sergeant. "Who's that swindling duffer lifting both legs?"

Mallem-crowns has been awarded to St. Newman's, Wellington Road, Southtown, Gl. Yarravath.

that, he had reason to rue his keenness. For Lewison was not a sportsman, and he had no desire whatever to watch a cricket match through the whole afternoon. But this time he had no choice in the matter.

Kildare was looking very ruddy and a little winded himself, now. The Indians' score had leaped up to 78, and the two formidable bats were still going strong.

Kildare tossed the ball to Monteth.

"Do get them out!" he exclaimed rapidly.

Monteth grinned rather disconsolately.

"I never saw a pair of boundaries so well set!" he said.

And he went on without much hope. But fortune favoured the New House prefect. Kangaroo drove the ball hard right back at him, and Monteth caught it as it came. He held it up.

"Oa, well held!" exclaimed Kildare.

"Bravo, Monteth!" Kangaroo carried out his bat. Maubers came on to join Tom Merry,



The EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

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! I am starting off this week's chat by handing out a well-deserved compliment to all my readers. No editor could have so loyal and enthusiastic a following of readers as yours truly. Sitting in my office here, reading, day after day, scores of letters from my friends all over the world, I have always been heartened by the loyalty and keenness which has been evident in the expressions of readers in their letters to me. Even when some have had a "grouse," they have invariably ended up by paying a tribute to the old paper, and shown firm allegiance to it. When an editor has such a fair-minded following of supporters, it makes his difficult task of trying to please every one of them so much more easy to perform.

Recently I was greatly pleased by the helpful attitude to the Gem of the boys of the Modern School, of Scarborough, where they run a Gem club. The go-ahead secretary, with the kind assistance of his headmaster, organized an interesting competition among his schoolfellows. Each boy was required to read a number of the Gem and express his candid opinion of the contents.

I had the pleasure of judging the efforts and selecting the best ones, and I must say the boys of the Modern School are adept in expressing themselves clearly and concisely. The general opinion was that the St. Jim's story was wholesome and true-to-life, and, in three days when there is so much far-fetched boys' fiction on the market, it was a pleasure to read a story in which the characters and incidents so faithfully portrayed life at a Public school.

My thanks to the boys of the Modern School for their splendid support of the Gem, to the headmaster for the kind interest shown in the competition, and to the energetic secretary of the Gem club for his successful work in connection with the competition.

I should like to hear of the activities of Gem clubs in other go-ahead schools.

"GREEN AS GRASS!"

Of all the new boys who have made their debut at St. Jim's, there never was such a simperton arrive as Algerman Binkinson. Algy, whom you will meet in next week's humorous story, comes from Hocklebury Heath, Tom Merry's home-town, and really he is as verdant as his native heath! His whole appearance shows that he was born for the special purpose of having his leg pulled, and, needless to say, it is pulled—heartyly! In consequence, Algy adds considerably to the fun and frolic of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's, and the result is a sparkling long yarn that will send readers into fits of laughter. Don't miss reading about the new boy who arrived at St. Jim's pushing a wheelbarrow containing his box—the boy who saluted his Form-master by extending his fingers from his nose! Enjoy a hearty laugh—at Algy's expense!

"HARRY WHARTON'S CHALLENGE!"

In the most gripping chapters of our great story of the early adventures of the Greyfriars class, we find Harry Wharton & Co. on the trail of the notorious kidnapers, grimly determined to recover the property stolen from Marjorie Haseldene. How they track down the culprit, and how they deal with a dangerous situation when it comes to a show-down with the Romany rascals, I will leave Frank Richards to tell you all about, in his own inimitable style, next Wednesday.

But, remember, chums, the surest way of getting your Gem is to order in advance.

AN UNIQUE TIME SIGNAL.

If you want to know the right time, the earthquake will tell you! This might well be the advice offered to a

newcomer to a small town in Canada, and though he would probably regard it as a joke, the advice is nevertheless true.

Day after day, this town, which is situated in the province of Saskatchewan, experiences an earthquake—only a slight one, but sufficient to be felt by the whole township. Regularly as clockwork it comes, at the same time each day, and the people have long since become accustomed to it. When the tremor is felt, they instinctively glance at their watches and clocks to see if they are right! An unique time-signal that!

LAUGHING LESSONS!

Start the day with a good laugh! In 1916 one in a comfortable house of wood tackled more efficiently the problems of the day. This is the line taken by a certain school in Bristol, and it has so far proved very successful. Before lessons begin, the children and teacher engage in a bright chat about amusing things, and, after a hearty laugh, the children get down to their school work much more happily and with far better results. It is a novel idea that is already spreading to other schools. So, soon, it is quite possible, lessons in laughing will become the opening feature of every school's curriculum.

LION'S COURAGE!

A little while ago a man in Assam, attacked by a fierce leopard, coolly thrust his hand into the beast's mouth, grabbed hold of its tongue, and held on to it tightly, thus saving himself from being badly mangled. But not so fortunate, was the cat of a keeper in a game reserve in Transvaal, when he was recently attacked by a lion.

The keeper was climbing a tree to try to spot a lioness, when a lion leaped out from the long grass, clawed at him, and brought him to the ground. But, though badly injured by the lion's claws, the keeper didn't lose his head in this terrifying moment.

With one of the lion's paws pressing him to the ground, he kept perfectly still and quiet, shamming death. The lion then gripped him with his teeth and shook him as a cat shakes a mouse. But not a sign of life did the keeper show, even then, and at last the beast, tiring of playing with its victim, padded off into the long grass again. Though suffering intense pain, the keeper had saved himself from a terrible fate by keeping his nerve.

TAILPIECE.

"Now, boys," said the teacher after a lecture on the lion, "is there a single animal of which the king of beasts is afraid?"

"Yes, sir," replied Johnny promptly, "the lioness."

PEN PALS COUPON
20-2-22



A new feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest to each other. If you want a pen pal, post your notice, together with the coupon on this page, to the address given above.

- Daniel Bolton, 48, Clifford Avenue, East Sheen, London S.W. 14; age 12-11; Jubilee stamps.
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- Miss Peggy Johnston, 1 West Way, Moreton, Walloway, Cumbria; girl correspondents; age 15-16; sports, film, music.

(Continued on page 21.)

THE EDITOR.

been feeding too much," said Figgins. "All of you keep an eye on him during tea, and pinch him if he touches anything but a little bread-and-butter and tea."

"Look here, Figgins——"

"Oh, rats! You ought to have made that innings last longer!" exclaimed Figgins. "Mind, you're going to sit beside me at tea, and you're going to eat just a fragment. You can have a feed afterwards."

"But it's always best to lay a solid foundation——"

"Boo!"

"I really think, Figgins——"

"Boo!"

And Fatty Wynn signed and gave it up. There was evidently no convincing Figgins on that subject. Tea was served under the elm-trees before the Saints commenced their second innings, while the pitch was being rolled.

The Indians were so far ahead that it was clear St. Jim's would have to make a desperate effort to get level. That effort Kildare and his men meant to make, but it was very doubtful if it would be crowned with success.

CHAPTER 18.

The Victim!

KILDARE opened the second innings, with Meredith at the other end. He hoped to give the innings a good start, and put heart into his men. In that, to some extent, he succeeded.

A batsman like Kildare was not likely to earn the dreaded "pair of spectacles"; the duck's egg he had earned in the first innings was his only one. He pitted up the runs now, and even Fatty Wynn found it hard to beat his bat.

Fatty, of course, could not expect to perform the hat-trick again, and he was not, of course, so fresh as he had been earlier in the day.

Still, his bowling was deadly, and clinched cheer after cheer from the onlookers.

The St. Jim's second innings was, all through, a brave and continued effort to retrieve bad luck; and it deserved to succeed. But there was too much against Kildare and his men. They had too much bowing to make up, and the Indians were very smart and keen.

The wickets fell at a steady rate, and when St. Jim's were six down for 50 runs—Kildare's wicket among them—the Saints looked very grave.

As for the Indians, they were jubilant. Fatty Wynn looked the most pleased of all. It was not because he was taking wickets, or because his side was winning. It was because the sooner the innings was over, the sooner he would be able to sit at the hospitable board that was ready for the entertainment and refreshment of the distinguished visitors to St. Jim's. The food was to be a piping one, and mental pictures of it began to flash before Fatty Wynn's brain as he grew hungrier and hungrier.

Perhaps the thought of the feed to come backed him up, for presently he bowled Baskdon and Ledwre one after the other, the first for two, and the second for a duck's egg.

Kildare looked blue as they came out. Fights down for 52, out of 133 that were wanted. Then Darrell went in with Basker at the other end, and Darrell, who was a mighty hitter, retrieved matters a little.

Fatty Wynn, Blake, and Figgins himself bowled to him in turn, without

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being able to move him, and the first eleven's score soared up.

It passed the hundred—it reached the hundred and ten—twenty!

Figgins's eyes began to gleam.

The first eleven wanted ten more to the eleven to win! And they had two wickets yet to fall! And Darrell was hitting away merrily. Another boundary—that was four to Darrell!

A hundred and twenty-four! The Indians would have looked as blue as the sea-don had been, looking if their dusky complexions had allowed them to look anything but brown.

Figgins tossed the ball to Fatty Wynn again.

"You've got to get him out, Fatty!" he said in a whisper.

"I'm hungry."

"You fat blunderer! Think of the feed we shall have if you take these wickets. The longer it lasts the hungrier you will get."

Fatty Wynn granted.

"Yes, I'm thinking of that," he said.

"Do your best, Fatty, old man."

"Rightish, Figg!"

And Fatty Wynn bowled with all his skill thrown into it. And for once Darrell was caught napping. His leg stump was knocked back, and the ball wore on the ground, and Darrell retired, amid a storm of cheering. He had scored well, and brought his side within measurable distance of victory. Six wanted to be seven to win! And nine wickets had fallen!

Last man in!

Fatty Wynn squared his shoulders, and his eyes gleamed. He had one more wicket to take to save his side. The first ball was swiped for three, and the score stood at a 127!

"One more boundary!" murmured Kildare. "That will do it."

One more boundary certainly would have done it; but it was the tail of the St. Jim's side at the wickets now, not boundary hitters. And their life was to be brief. Fatty Wynn sent down a ball that was his best, and it whipped off the pitch just under a watchful bat, and there was a crash of a falling wicket.

There was a gasp from the crowd.

St. Jim's first eleven had been beaten by three runs!

Beaten!

Beaten, as they imagined, by the Indian team—beaten, as fifteen juniors knew, by the juniors of St. Jim's—the juniors of their own school!

The dusky onlookers yelled.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Bang! Bang! Bang! Hurrah!"

And St. Jim's generally gave three cheers. They had fought well for their victory, and they had won it by a narrow margin. They deserved a cheer.

Kildare came up to the Rajah of Jal, with a pleasant smile on his handsome, sunburnt face.

"You've beaten us, sir," he said. "I suppose we couldn't really expect anything else, considering the reputation of your team. But it was a close thing at the South."

"It was an honorable and splendid match, my young friend," said Figgins, inwardly chuckling at his own audacity in calling the captain of the school his young friend. "It reflects equal glory upon both sides, and it is the fortune of the game that the victory rests with us."

And he shook hands with the captain of St. Jim's very heartily.

"Very decent chap," Kildare said to Darrell. "There's something about him that seems familiar to me, too—something in his voice that I think I have heard before somewhere."

Darrell nodded.

"The same thing occurred to me," he remarked. "I dare say it's through seeing their photographs in the papers some time or other."

"Yes, perhaps."

But Kildare still looked a little puzzled.

As for the Indians, they retired to their dressing-room to change, and in the room they chuckled loud and long.

"Beaten 'em!" said Figgins. "Beaten the seniors! Oh, my only hat! If that doesn't fairly take the cake!"

"Yess, watah!"

"And now for the feed!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 17.

Fatty Wynn Changes Colour!

IT had been a great day at St. Jim's, one of the longest and best of the day matches played by the first eleven. And the margin of defeat had been so narrow, and their opponents were such a famous team, that the seniors did not feel much discomfited at losing. If they had known whom their opponents were, their feelings would have been very different; but as yet they were in a state of ignorance which is bliss.

Kildare encountered Mr. Railton as he went in. It was time now for evening call-over, after which the boys had to go to their own Houses. But this was a special occasion, and an exception was made. There was supper laid in the Senior Common-room in the School House, and many New House fellows were coming, especially, of course, those who played in the first eleven.

"Hard luck, Kildare," said Mr. Railton, with a nod; "but you very nearly pulled it off. That is a good bowler of yours. I was watching him."

"Oh, he's splendid, sir!" said Kildare heartily. "Paras Arani, I think they called him. He's a little fat chap; but he's all there."

"They are a very small set of men to play cricket so well," the Housemaster remarked. "Only one of them seems to be a man's size."

"Little but good, sir," said Darrell, with a smile.

"Yes, I suppose that is it," Mr. Railton said, with a puzzled smile. "They perplex me somewhat. I must admit. That stout little bowler is uncommonly like Wynn of the Fourth. I have noticed Wynn's bowling many times, and he has the same delivery, and the same respectlessness about the results."

"Oh, he beats Wynn hollow, sir!" said Meredith. "I don't think Wynn could bowl like that to save his life!"

And some juniors who overheard that remark chuckled.

Tom Merry & Co. walked solemnly into the Senior Common-room with Kildare and the rest, where a really handsome collation was prepared.

Paras Arani's eyes gleamed as he surveyed the well-laid table.

The seniors of St. Jim's had done themselves well in the way of providing hospitality for their guests, and the long, lofty room, with its old oak-paneled walls, was gaily lighted and decorated with flowers.

"My only hat to the Rajah of Jal whispered to Chandra Singh. "I've never been looked after this way before!"

And Tom Merry chuckled.

"It's ripping!"

Kerr bowed over to him. "I say, what about calling-over?" he said.

"Flew!"

The juniors looked dismayed. They had quite forgotten that. During the day the absence of Tom Merry & Co. had excited general remark among the juniors, and some of the seniors had noticed it. But that could be explained by the supposition that they had stayed out for the whole holiday to make a day of it. But if they did not get out for evening call-over, after a day's absence, the matter would become serious. And they certainly could not turn up. Mr. Bailton was already taking call-over in the Great Hall.

Kildare, Darrell, and a few others, escaped from call-over, were remaining with the Indian guests. The other fellows had crowded into the Hall to answer "Adress" to their names. It was impossible for at least twelve juniors to do that.

Lumsley-Lumsley and Clifton Dane consulted on the subject. But they could think of nothing. They might have answered "Adress" once or twice for absent fellows, but they could not stand there and answer half a dozen times each in succession.

"I guess they'll be missed!" said Clifton Dane.

"I guess so!"

"There will be a bit of a row over this," the Canadian remarked. "Still, I don't see how they can find them now. They won't think of looking among the Indians in the mess room at supper."

Lumsley-Lumsley checked.

"I see no use!" he said. "They're all served so long as they keep close."

"Marry!"

The long table was crowded. In the place of honour sat the two captains—Kildare and the Rajah of Jal—on the best of terms. Tom Merry and Blake had D'Arcy between them, ready to put the stopper on it, in the consciousness of the moment, he should attempt to make a speech.

The dusky faces of the Indians glanced round the festive board. There was a merry fire of chatter, most of the fellows talking at once; and the Indians, of course, talked in their own regular language, excepting when they forgot, and then they showed a curious knowledge of English, and even English slang.

"But you were speaking English just now," persisted the New House prefect.

"You asked Kildare to pass the pie."

"Spooner spooner stop bang wallop!"

Monteith looked very much puzzled.

Fatty Wynn buried himself in the pie, and was happy. He did not care whether his prefect was watching him suspiciously; all his thoughts then were of pie. Pie filled up the whole horizon for Fatty Wynn.

But when he had satisfied himself with the pie, he wanted something to drink.

"Anything to drink?" he asked, looking round.



The batsman hurried himself forward and fell—the end of his test on the ground. Crash! The next moment the wicket was hunched to pieces as the ball was flung in with screeching aim!

Kerr pitched him again, and Fatty squeaked.

"What then?"

"Bang clack bang!"

"Oh, yes! Waddy half's khalfis took 'em."

"Here you are!" exclaimed Lervison, harrising up with a siphon of soda-water.

Some of the lads had been given leave to wait at the table, as a great honour, and Lervison had offered his services. He had given Dane and Lumsley-Lumsley the slip at calling-over.

Lervison had his uncomfortable afternoon to atone for, and he did not dare to betray the Indian cricketers openly. But Lervison was never at a loss for a cunning plan.

He hurried up to Fatty Wynn with the siphon of soda-water. He knew the New House junior didn't want soda-water, but there was a reason for his eagerness to supply Fatty's needs. He contrived to stowable and turn the jet of fizzy liquid upon Fatty Wynn's face.

There was a roar from the fat Fourth Former.

"Yarocott! Owi Yeh!"

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" exclaimed Lervison hastily.

"Yow! Oh!"

Fatty Wynn jumped up, choked and blinded, kicking his chair over back.

TOM MERRY.—No. 1, 1919.



There was no reply. Tom Merry was marked down as absent, and he was only one of a dozen. Mr. Bailton was frowning by the time he reached the end of the list.

"They are twelve juniors absent?" he exclaimed. "Three of them belong to the New House, and nine to the School House. This is too bad, even after a whole holiday! Does anyone know where they are?"

"They all went out together, sir," said Bailly.

"Ah, yes; they are probably together," assented Mr. Bailton, remembering whom the juniors were. The three rival Co.'s of St. Jim's were doubtless together, but whether fighting, or on friendly terms, it would have been unsafe to say. "They should have returned before dark. Kinn, will you send there to see when they return?"

"Certainly, sir!" said the prefect.

And the school dispersed.

Meanwhile, the two teams had sat down to supper in the senior mess. More guests arrived after calling-over was finished.

The St. Jim's fellows who noticed it were surprised. It was only natural that the Indians, coming in England, should pick up English; but to make such progress in a single day was very astonishing.

Still, there was the fact, however surprising, and the Saints had to believe their own ears.

There was one cricketer who did not talk at all. That one was Pumar Anni, alias Fatty Wynn. He was too busy to talk. Several fellows tried to compliment him on his wonderful bowling, but Wynn had little or nothing to say.

"You might pass the pie," he said, and his English was remarkably good for a native of Jal, who was supposed to speak only the Jal dialect.

Kerr pitched him.

"Bang-bang!" he whispered.

"Oh, I forget! I mean bang-bang!"

"You do speak English, do?" asked Monteith, with a curious look at the Indian bowler.

"Bang bang," replied Fatty Wynn.

"Don't you understand me?"

"Monkey chackey walcker."

wrink. He put both hands to his face, wiping the foaming soda-water from his eyes and nose and mouth. His face was flushed, and as he wiped his fat fingers over it the colour came off on his palms and his fingers.

There was a gasp from the fellows who saw him. Whiteish streaks appeared all over the dusky complexion of Pussur Assai, and a great deal of his complexion had been transferred to his arsvetic.

"Great Scott!"
 "My hat!"
 Kerr clatched Wynne by the shoulder. There was a chance left yet.
 "Beh!" he whispered fiercely.
 "Light!" muttered the unfortunate Fatty.

He covered his face with his hands and bolted.

CHAPTER 13.
 "Adum!"

FATTY WYNN had rushed out of the room before the heaters had recovered from their surprise.

The door banged after him. Half the company were on their feet now, in alarm and surprise, and there were exclamations on all sides.

"What's the matter?"
 "What's happened?"
 "What's been done to him?"

"It was an accident," said Kildare, turning a rather worried face upon the Rajah of Jal. "A boy splashed soda-water into his face, I am sure, by accident. It was an accident, wasn't it, Levison?"

"Of course!" said Levison. "My foot slipped, and—"

"You can get out now, Levison. We don't want any more accidents of that sort. Leave the room at once!"
 "Very well, Kildare."

And Levison departed, looking charitably as if he had done a noble deed. Certainly, he had observed the change in Fatty Wynn's complexion, but the fat Fourth Formers' fight had been so prompt that Levison's plan had not been carried out. He had meant to show the junior up to the whole table as disgraced, but he had not succeeded in that.

The Rajah of Jal looked perturbed. "I hope Pussur Assai is not offended!" said Kildare.

"Perhaps he is hurt," the rajah suggested. "After such an experience he may not care to return to the venerable host. Will you follow him, Kumar Lal, and see whether he is damaged. Kung being gushy top sorry hang."
 "Oh ho!" replied Kumar Lal.

And he followed the footsteeps of Pussur Assai.

The incident somewhat upset the cheerfulness of the company. Indians were supposed to be touchy fellows,

with all sorts of curious ideas about caste, and there was no telling what unknown offence Levison's action might have given. Besides that, quite half a dozen fellows declared, in mysterious whispers that soon ran round the table, why they had seen a change in Pussur Assai's complexion when he wiped the soda-water off.

"He's not a nigrah at all, then's what I say!" said Levison of the Faith. "It's a little game!"

"I'm sure of it!" said Monteith. "I've suspected something all along—I couldn't quite make out what. I remember, now, that some of the Jal team were crooked; they were going to scratch the match because of that. They're playing substitutes—not Indians at all, but English chaps with their skin browned. That's a very wicked!"

"I shouldn't wonder," said Rushton. "I was sitting just opposite him, and I'll swear I saw him change colour in streaks."
 "So did I!"

"It's not a fair game, then," said Monteith. "The rajah had a right to play substitutes, but he ought to have told us they were white men, and played them in their own colour."
 "Yes, rather!"

"No good saying anything now," said Bakor hastily. "The result would have been the same, anyway, and we don't want to appear to be carping because we're licked."
 "No; but—"

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to squirt some more soda-water, and see if any more of the complexion will come off," growled Levison. "That's what I say."
 Monteith grinned.

"I've a jolly good mind to," he said. "Only—Ha! here comes the fat chap again! He's got his complexion touched up again. That's what he bolied for."

Bhakr led Fatty Wynn back to his seat.

Kildare called across to the fat bewilder:

"I'm sorry for that accident, Pussur Assai, I hope you weren't hurt?"
 "Not a bit—ahem!—nam sing pink bang kook!"
 "It's all right, then?"
 "—hang-hang!"
 "Good!"

"Oh, boggley, boggley! Wallah!" said Pussur Assai.
 And the supper went on cheerfully enough.

Mr. Bailton came into the room and spoke apologetically to Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, turning his head away from the table.

"Have you any idea where the missing juniors can be, Kildare?" the School House master asked.
 "We are they, sir!"
 "Nice School House boys and three

New House boys are missing," said the Housemaster, with a worried look. "It is very strange. It is already an hour after calling-over, and there appears to be no sign of them. Knox reported to me that they have not arrived."

"It is very curious, sir. I don't think I need ask which juniors they are—Tom Merry, Blake, and Figgins and the rest, I suppose?"
 "Exactly."

"I saw them going out this morning, sir," said Kildare, "as I was going down to the village to get the coach for the Indians. They had a number of bags with them, packed full of something, and they looked as if they were going camping out. I remember, though, I asked them, and they said they would certainly be present at the match, and would be on the cricket ground the whole of the time."
 "But they were not," said Mr. Bailton.

"I have inquired in several quarters, and it appears that not one of those juniors has been seen from the time that you received the telegram from the Rajah of Jal this morning."
 "It was just then that I saw them."
 "And they have not appeared since."
 "I can't understand it, sir. Tom Merry and Figgins usually tell the truth, and they said most plainly that they would be at the match."
 "Of course, they might have changed their minds," said Mr. Bailton. "But if they really intended to be at the match, it is curious that not one of them turned up. It seems to point to an accident of some sort. It is surprising that not one of them has returned. I will have them looked for."

And the School House master retired. The Rajah of Jal looked at Chandra Singh and closed his eyes. The thing had to be seen through now, and it could not be helped. Exactly how it was to end he did not know, but they meant to see it through to a finish.

At all events, they would get to the end of the food and keep the game up till bed-time, and then give in at the last moment. But they were reflecting without the aid of the Fourth.

Levison met Mr. Bailton as he left the seniors' room. He stopped in his path, and Mr. Bailton stopped, too, thinking that the junior might have something to tell him of Tom Merry & Co.

"Have you any news, Levison?" he asked.

"Not exactly, sir; but I don't think you need feel anxious," said Levison. "I should not have spoken, sir, only I think you are feeling that there may have been some accident."
 "Do you know anything about the matter?"

"I know they are quite safe, sir."
 "How can you know that?"
 "I know where they are, sir."
 "Indeed! And where?"

PEN PALS
 (Continued from page 12.)

Miss Green Ballard, 97, Carlyton Road, Abbey Estate, Alport, Wessley, Middlesex; girl correspondents; age 12-17; story, books.
 Miss Irene Sheppard, 1214, Fifth Street, East Calgary, Alberta, Canada; girl correspondents; age 12-17; stamps, sports, Gables.
 J. E. Bellchambers, Commercial Inn, Brisbane, Devon; stamps.
 THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 1428.

Geoffrey Joltart, St. Baryens, Alcottown, N.S.W., Australia; age 12-15; stamps.
 Jack Martin, 55, Fencham Hall Drive, Fencham, Newcastle-on-Tyne; age 12-15; stamps, swimming.
 Peter Funn, 28, Sherwell Road, Edlington, Bristol, 4; age 14-15; rabbits.
 Vaseo Alfonso Alves, Postageiro Camada General, 7050, Rua Lapaçote, Shanghai, China; inventions.
 Roy C. Martin, 4523, Wellington Street, Toronto, Ont. Quebec, Canada, wants members for the International Camera and Snapshot Club; age 12-25.
 Eric Dawson Hancock, 19, Hart Hill

Drive, Salford 5, Lancs.; girl correspondents; age 12-15; sweaters; stamps, sports, autographs.
 Miss Marie Rowett, Sunnyhurst, Twicken Avenue, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire; girl correspondents; age 12-18.
 Miss G. Hopkins, 21, Albany Road, Reading; girl correspondents; old Oxen and copies of "Nelson Lock Library."
 C. E. George wants members for the Inverclyde Correspondents Club, Glasgow, 5, Campbell Road, Maidstone, Kent; age 17 up.
 Ernest Quays, 1023, Nardin Street, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada; stamps; age 12-18.
 W. D. Alexander, 7277, Wilmans Avenue, Montreal, Canada; stamps; age 12-16.

"In the school?"
 Mr. Railton gave a start.
 "In the school, Levison?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "Where?"
 "In the seniors' room, sir. I—I can't say more, sir; it would be sneaking, and they would rag me afterwards," said Levison, hesitating. "I don't want to give them away, sir, but—but I thought I ought to speak, as you seemed serious, sir."
 Mr. Railton compressed his lips.
 "I hope that was your motive, Levison," he said. "I shall not mention your name as my informant. You declare that the missing juniors are in the seniors' room?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "Then, they are present at the supper?"

"Exactly, sir."
 "If you see playing a joke in telling me this, Levison, I need not tell you that I shall punish you severely. I shall now proceed to ascertain whether there is any truth in your amazing statement."

And Mr. Railton stepped back into the room he had just left.
 He glanced about the room. There was the long table crowded with juniors, white and brown, gay with flowers, and there was a crowd of flags waiting on the cricketers, but not a sign could the Housemaster see of Tom Merry & Co.

But he was resolved to test the matter. Levison's manner had been convincing, though his statement was so peculiar.

The Housemaster called out Tom Merry's name in loud tones. If the hero of the Shell was there, it was his duty to answer to his name when the Housemaster called.

"Merry!"
 Chandra Singh rose in his place at the table instinctively.
 "Adhem!"
 And there was a general gasp.

CHAPTER 19.

Something Like a Triumph!

MR. RAILTON stared blankly at Chandra Singh, and every eye was turned on the Indian immediately.

"How the——"
 "What the——"
 "What does he mean?"
 "Oh, you see!" murmured Figgins.
 "Oh, you frazzled ass! You've given the show away now, and so mistakes!"
 "Bei Jove! Yaaa, wathah!"
 "The game's up," said Keer calmly.
 "Never mind. It was a jolly good joke."

Masteth sprang to his feet.
 "I understand," he exclaimed. "Tom Merry!"

Tom Merry stood dumb.
 Mr. Railton advanced to the table. It was not only that Tom Merry had replied to his call, but he had recognized the familiar tones. In spite of the inkly complexion, in spite of the name of Chandra Singh, he knew that it was Tom Merry standing there. His face was a study as he looked at the pseudo Indian.

"Merry!" he exclaimed.
 "Yes, sir."
 "What—what on earth does this mean?"

Kildare and Darrell and most of the others were on their feet now. Only one fellow was undisturbed. It was Fatty Wynn. He was wiring into jam tartar at express speed. If the game was up, that was all the more

reason why Fatty Wynn should make good time before he was kicked out with his comrades.
 The room was in a roar. Mr. Railton held up his hand for silence, but it was some time before silence could be obtained.

Amused exclamations, and some angry ones, were heard on all sides.
 "The young hoodlums!"
 "The spooks!"
 "Not Indians at all!"
 "We've been done!"
 "Make them explain!"
 "Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Railton.
 "Let me speak!" And the hubbub died down at last.
 The Housemaster looked at Tom Merry, who was crimson under his paint, although his blunder did not show.

"Now, Merry, kindly explain."
 "Make the rajah explain," said Masteth scornfully. "He's the leader."



Speed One: "You were doing forty miles an hour."
 Motorist: "Bah! Make it fifty—I'm trying to sell the car to my passenger!"
 Mail-express has been awarded to J. Yaggart, 22, Mayflower Street, Moorbridge Road, Belfast.

"Yaaa, wathah! Though, wathah, I should have great pleasure in explaining, and perwaise you fellows had better leave the talkin' to me. In the circus, what is requested is a fellow of tact and judgment, and——"
 "Silence!"
 Figgins stammered and explained.
 "You see, sir, we wanted to play the Indians, and Kildare was down on it. Of course, we don't blame Kildare; we—we never expect the Sixth to understand things."
 "You cheezy young rascal!" said Kildare; while some of the Sixth chuckled, and Mr. Railton could not help smiling.

"Well, sir, we always said we could beat the Sixth if we had a match with them; but they were too high and mighty to play the juniors. So as the Indians weren't coming, we worked it to come down as the Indians, sir."
 "Blas my soul!"
 "Of course, it was only a joke, sir; and Kildare will admit that it's been a jolly good match."
 Kildare laughed a little awkwardly.

To be beaten by a junior team was a bitter pill to swallow, even to the good-natured captain of St. Jim's.
 "Yes; it was a good match," he said. "But your cheek in playing such a joke on us——"
 "Will you see——"
 "I—I never heard of such a thing!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, in amazement.
 "Never in my life!"

"We—we hope you will excuse us for not turning up to call-over, sir," stammered Figgins. "In the—the circumstances, it would have been awkward."
 Mr. Railton burst into a laugh. He could not help it.

"Yes; I suppose it would," he said.
 "Very awkward indeed."
 "We're sorry we had to take you in, Kildare; but you got a good match with a team quite as good as the Indians," said the Rajah of Jal.
 "And, as for Fatty Wynn, I'll bet he's a better bowler than any man in the real Jal team."

"Yaaa, wathah! In the circus——"
 "I think the young rascals ought to be flogged for their cheek!" exclaimed Masteth angrily. "You will punish them, sir!"

"Oh, stuff!" Kildare exclaimed quickly. "It was cheeky of them, but it was only a joke. And, after all, we've had a jolly good match, and it's been a ripping day. I suggest that they are let off, if Mr. Railton thinks it proper. They are a set of young rascals; but—but, after all, it was up to us to see through such a joke, you know. We oughtn't to have been taken in."
 "Yaaa; that's quite true. I must remark——"

"I shall leave the matter to you to settle, Kildare, as you are the victim of this extraordinary practical joke," said Mr. Railton, laughing; and he walked out of the room, still chuckling.

The spoofed Sixth Formers looked grively at the disgraced juniors. The Rajah of Jal and his team had drawn close together, Fatty Wynn with a jam tart in either hand. They were rather expecting to leave the Common-room as they had left Kildare's study the previous day. Masteth and some of the Sixth were looking angry. But the more sensible fellows realized that it would be much wiser to take the whole affair as a joke. It was a case of the least said the soonest mended.

Kildare pointed to the door.
 "You had better go and get those complexioned cleaned off, and get into some civilized clothes," he said. "And if you ever dare to joke the Sixth again——"
 "Washly, Kildare——"
 "Get out!"

The Rajah of Jal and his team got out. Outside juniors awarded round them in swarms to cheer them and laugh. It was a day of triumph for the juniors of St. Jim's. The juniors had beaten the seniors—had beaten the first eleven. It was incredible, but it was true. And the whole of the Lower School rejoiced greatly over the way they had had the laugh of the first eleven.

(Next Wednesday: "GREEN AS GRASS") He was the biggest, strongest, most powerful man in the village! You need meet Algy Robinson, the man who came to St. Jim's yesterday a schoolmaster! Make sure you don't miss this sparkling story—It's another success!

THE CHUMS OF THE REMOVE AT GRIPS WITH GIPSY KIDNAPPERS!



Just as the gipsy was about to bring his weapon down on Wharton's head, Nugent dashed to his chair's aid, and wrenched the nudge away. Bob O'herry was fighting furiously with Baragoo, while Hazel-Jones sprang up the steps of the caravan, to see if his sister was a prisoner inside.

Why Wharton Was Late!

"THAT'S my letter! Give it to me!"

"Rats!"

"You can! Give me my letter at once!"

Harry Wharton of the Remove Fern at Greyfriars heard the altercation as he came down the stairs. He glided quickly down into the Hall. There were half a dozen fellows of the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form—tiro—among them the burly Balstrode, the bully of the Form. Balstrode held a letter in his hand high in the air, out of reach of the junior who was trying to grasp it from him.

"Give me my letter!" shouted Hazel-Jones furiously.

The Remove bully laughed.

"Perhaps I will, if you ask nicely, Vaseline, after I've done with it!" he said mockingly. Gentlemen of the Remove, it is permitted for a fellow of our Form to receive letters from a lady without showing them to the "wield Fern!"

"Certainly not!" grinned King. "I vote that the letter be read out in the Form-room to the whole of the Remove."

Had the letter belonged to anyone but Hazel-Jones, Balstrode would have had no opinion very much against him, but he now cared for Vaseline, a nickname which his only ways had earned for him in the Form. And his propensity for never taking the straight path when a crooked one would serve him better, had not made him popular.

"Fancy Vaseline getting letters like this!" went on Balstrode, with his head lurch. "I spotted the handwriting at once. There's bound to be something interesting in this letter."

"Sure to be!" said King. "Open it and let's hear it!"

HARRY WHARTON'S CHALLENGE!

By Frank Richards.

.....

"Oh, shut up!" said Terror. "You can't open a fellow's letter, even if it's Vaseline's. You must draw a line at that, Balstrode."

The bully of the Remove sneered.

"Must I?" he said. "Then look here!"

And he jerked his thumb into the envelope and tore it open.

"Give me that letter!" exclaimed Hazel-Jones.

"Rats! I'm going to read it out to the whole Form."

"It's from my sister—"

"Then there's no particular reason why it shouldn't be read out!"

"It can't be, you can't—"

"Stand back, you see, or you'll get hurt!"

But, unheeding the warning, Hazel-Jones made a spring for the letter. Balstrode gripped him by the shoulder with his left hand, and, exerting his strength, manly held him back at arm-length.

"Read the letter out, King," he said, "while I hold Vaseline."

"Oh, shut up!" said Terror.

"Shut up yourself, Terror! Read it out, King."

"Certainly!" grinned King, taking the letter.

Harry Wharton came down the last four stairs with a bound. The next moment his grasp was on King's shoulder, just as the fellow was pulling the letter from the envelope.

"Give me that letter, King!"

King stared at him.

"Shan't!"

"Give me that letter!"

Harry Wharton's face looked warlike, and his fists were clenched hard. King changed colour slightly, and then burst into a forced laugh.

"Oh, you can have it if you like!" he exclaimed, and he passed Wharton the letter without another word.

There were few fellows in the Greyfriars Remove who would have cared to tackle Harry Wharton when he looked as warlike as he did now. Harry passed the letter to Hazel-Jones. Balstrode made a grasp at it, but Wharton pushed him back.

"No, you don't, Balstrode!"

The bully of the Remove glared at him.

"What business is it of yours!" he said fiercely.

Harry Wharton gave a shrug of the shoulders.

"It's the business of every decent fellow to interfere in a matter like this," he replied.

Balstrode looked round with a sneer on his lips.

"You hear his opinion of you, you fellows!" he said. "You didn't interfere."

"Oh, cheek!" said Terror.

"Perhaps they're afraid of you," said Harry Wharton, who had not yet learned to control the bitter tongue which had more than once brought him into trouble, "but I'm not!"

ANOTHER THRILLING ADVENTURE OF HARRY WHARTON'S EARLY SCHOOLDAYS AT GREYFRIARS!

There was a clang of a bell. The Hamerite, leaving the quarter where it was, hurried away, the bell summoning them to first lesson. But Baldredo was too intoxicated to care for the bell or anything else.

"You're not, eh?" he said, between his teeth. "I gave you a licking the other day. It seems one is not enough for you! I'll give you another, by George!"

And his fist came out like a flash, finding Harry Wharton scarcely prepared for so sudden an attack, and Wharton went reeling along the Hall from a painful blow on the nose. He sat down on the floor with a bang, King hurriedly put his arm through Baldredo's and drew him away.

"Come on, Baldredo! We'll be late, and you know what old Quokby is like when a fellow is late for class!"

"Oh, you can fight Wharton this afternoon! It's a half-holiday, and you'll have lots of time! What's the good of getting into a row and being detained!"

"Oh, all right!" said Baldredo. And he hurried away with his friend towards the Remove classroom into which the juniors were crowding.

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet. The sudden blow had stunned him. His nose was swelling already, and a stream of red was coming from it. The blood stained his chin and his collar. He caught sight of himself in the glass in the Hall and gritted his teeth.

He hurried upstairs to a bathroom, and there bathed his nose in cold water. Then he rushed away to change his collar, and finally descended the stairs to make his way to the Form-room.

Detained!

WHARTON! Harry Wharton glanced at Mr. Quokby as he entered the room. The master of the Remove was looking annoyed.

"You, sir."
"You are nearly ten minutes late."
"I am sorry, sir!"

"I dare say you are," said Mr. Quokby grimly. "I suppose this is another example of your unobedient habits, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton was silent. The rebuke was undeserved, as it happened, yet he had earned it.

He had come to Greyfriars chafing against all authority, and had gone out of his way to show his contempt for the school discipline. He was learning better now. But it could not be expected that his earlier scrapes would be easily forgotten by the masters. Any disregard of school discipline was certain to be regarded more seriously in Wharton's case than in the case of any other junior; and if he were misjudged sometimes he had only his earlier recklessness to thank for it.

"Have you no reply to make, Wharton?"

"No, sir," said Harry softly.
"Very well. I am afraid I cannot allow the lesson to be interrupted, and the discipline of the Form to be set at naught, with impunity. You will stay in this afternoon, Wharton, until five o'clock, and occupy the time by writing out the first book of the Georgics."

Harry went softly to his place,

"Do you hear me, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall expect to see the work before tea," said Mr. Quokby. "We will now proceed with the lesson."

The lesson proceeded. Harry went through his work with a dark, angry face. He had not deserved that detention, and he had been too proud to explain.

Baldredo grinned at him along the desk. The bully of the Remove was pleased. Harry's claim, Frank Nugent, looked at him curiously. He had not witnessed the scene in the Hall, and did not know the cause of Harry's delay.

"Anything wrong, old chap?" he whispered, while Bob Cherry was constructing at the other end of the Form, and Mr. Quokby's attention was drawn in that direction.

"I was rowing with Baldredo and I had to bathe my nose before I could come in," said Harry, without taking the trouble to lower his voice.

Mr. Quokby turned round sharply.

"You were talking, Wharton!"

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"H'm! I shall have to consider, Wharton, whether I had better send you in to Dr. Locke," said Mr. Quokby.

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*When Hazeldean's sister was kidnapped on her way to Greyfriars, her kidnapers didn't bargain for the astuteness and pluck of these cheery chums of the Remove—  
Harry Wharton & Co.!*

~~~~~

Harry dropped his eyes to his book. To be sent in to the Head meant a flogging, as he knew. But Mr. Quokby did not want to be severe. He allowed the incident to pass with that warning, and the lesson furiously recommenced without any further trouble. But Harry's face was dark as he left the Form-room with the rest, when morning school was over.

"It's too bad," said Nugent. "If you had explained to Mr. Quokby, I don't think he would have been so rough."

Harry shrugged his shoulders, a trick of his which even his friends found sometimes irritating.

"He would have said that I had no business to be fighting," he remarked bitterly.

"Well, no one hadn't," chimed in Bob Cherry. "What did you want to row with Baldredo for, Wharton?"

"Because I chose," said Harry, walking away.

Bob Cherry gave Nugent a significant grin.

"More tactless," he remarked. "I think Wharton might take the trouble to control his beastly temper sometimes. I wanted you both to come out with me this afternoon, and now he's detained."

"He doesn't look to me as if he means to stay in," said Nugent. "I hope he's not thinking of breaking bounds. That would put Quokby's back up, and he would be reported to the Head."

"Cherry! Nugent!"

Hazeldean came towards the doors of the Remove, a letter in his hand. Hazeldean's face was rather bright, and there was a more pleasant light in his eyes than the juniors had ever noticed in them before.

"What's the trouble?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Will you fellows come down to the village with me this afternoon?"

"If you want to stand up a feed at the tackle shop we'll come with pleasure; but if it's only for the pleasure of your conversation, I don't really know whether we can put off our other pressing engagements."

Hazeldean grinned in a rather sickly way.

"Don't rot, Cherry. I should like you to come, and Wharton, too, if he could. My sister's coming down to Greyfriars."

Bob Cherry and Nugent looked interested. They had heard a great deal of Hazeldean's sister, and had seen her photograph—that of a bright-eyed, laughing girl of fifteen.

Vaseline, the end of the Remove, had only been known to stand up in a fight once, and that was when Baldredo had taken the lobster containing Marjorie Hazeldean's photograph, and refused to give it up. On that occasion Bob Cherry, Wharton, and Nugent had stood by him, and the bully of the Remove had been compelled to give in.

"I had a letter from her this morning," went on Hazeldean, "the letter that rotter Baldredo tried to take, you know, and Wharton wouldn't let him."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"What's that? I haven't heard."

Hazeldean explained.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Bob, looking content. "Wharton did jolly well, and I was wrong in thinking that he had rowed with Baldredo out of sheer cowardice, as usual. But I don't see why he couldn't explain. So Miss Hazeldean is coming down to Greyfriars this afternoon. What does she want to see you for, Vaseline?"

"Queer taste, and no mistake!" said Nugent.

Hazeldean coloured.

"I'd rather you left off setting on that subject," he said. "If you don't want to come with me—"

"Sorry!" said Bob Cherry impatiently. "It was a slip. We'll come down with pleasure—to meet the train, I suppose."

Hazeldean laughed.

"Well, she's a girl, you know, so she's forgotten to mention which train she's coming by; but I think it's pretty certain to be the three o'clock. If it's a later one we can put in the time at the tackle shop."

"Jolly good idea."

"Marjorie's coming down to see the school," explained Hazeldean. "I'm going to show her round Greyfriars. She's never been here yet. She'll be glad to see you, and it will look like a welcome to meet her at the station."

"Quite thoughtful of you, Vaseline, and—"

"And look here," said Hazeldean, colouring again. "don't call me Vaseline, please, before her! I shall tell her!"

"Oh, all right—unless it slips out, you know!"

"Don't let it slip out!"

"I won't if I can help it."

"Then you will be ready to start at half-past two," said Hazeldean. "It will take about half an hour to walk it. So-long!"

And he walked away. Bob Cherry looked after him curiously.

"There's some good in that chap," he said. "His sister's a jolly nice girl, to judge by the photograph, and he seems

to be awfully fond of her. I'm sorry about Wharton being kept in, especially as he didn't deserve it this time. But it's no good speaking to the Quitchard. Wharton advised him by the way in arrested in the Form-room, and Quitchard won't release him from detention. See you at dinner."

Nugent nodded and went slowly upstairs and along the passage upon which the Remove station opened. Study No. 1 was shared by Nugent, Wharton, Bulstrode, and Billy Banner.

Harry Wharton was in the study, sitting a cricket-bat, when Nugent came in. He looked up with a smiling face. "I'm sorry about that, Wharton!" said Nugent. "You'll have to stick it out, that's all. Vaseline's sister is coming down to Greyfriars this afternoon."

"Is she?" said Harry Wharton indifferently.

"Yes; and Vaseline has asked Cherry and me to go down to the station with him to meet her. I wish you could come."

"I will come," said Harry.

"Has Quitchard let you off?" asked Nugent hopefully.

"No."

"Then how can you come?"

"I shall come, all the same," said Harry Wharton. "I'm not going to spend the afternoon in the Form-room by myself. If you don't want me, I dare say I can find somewhere else to go."

"You know it's not that," said Nugent quickly. "We do want you; but you'll get into a foolish row."

"I don't care."

"I wish you'd think over it, and——"

"I have thought over it, and I've coming. Do you want me to come with you?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Then that's settled!"

Nugent was silent. It was useless to argue with Wharton when his mind was made up, as he knew by past experience; but there were misgivings in his mind.

The Gipsies!

BOB CHERRY stood at the gates of Greyfriars, his cap on the back of his head, his hands in his pockets, whistling. Haroldiana came down to the gates and Bob gave him a cheery nod.

"Ready?" he asked. "I've got a clean collar on, and tied my pocket straight in the bosom of the occasion!"

Haroldiana grinned.

"Then it's got crooked again since," he remarked.

Bob Cherry made a grimace.

"Has it? It's always doing so. Give it a shove for me!"

Haroldiana gave the troublesome necktie the required shove. Bob Cherry was always careless in his attire, but for all that there was no more likeable or more popular fellow at Greyfriars.

"Hallo, here's Nugent!" Bob exclaimed. "Wharton's with him. Come to see us off, I suppose. He doesn't look particularly amiable, though!"

Nugent and Wharton came up. Harry had his cap on, and was evidently going out. Bob glanced at him inquiringly.

"Are you coming with us, Wharton?"

he asked.

"Yes."

"What about the detention?"

"Never mind that now."

"There'll be a row!"

"Let there be!"

"Oh, very well, it's your funeral!"

retained Bob Cherry. "Come along!"

And the four juniors quitted the

The Gem Library—No. 1428.

gateway. A voice hailed them as they came out into the lane.

"I say, you fellows!"

Bob Cherry stopped. Billy Banner of the Remove came towards them, blinking through his spectacles, which had covered him the nickname of the Owl. Banner was very short-sighted, and his glasses did not seem to assist his vision much, judging by the blunders he frequently made.

"What do you want, Banner?"

"If you're going down to the track, don't I'll come with you, if you like," said Billy Banner generously. "They have a fresh lot of jam tarts in on Wednesdays, you know. I should like to stand you all a treat——"

"Hallo, here you come into a fortnight!" asked Nugent.

"What I mean is, I should like to stand treat to all of you, but I happen to be broke this afternoon. A postal order I was expecting hasn't arrived; so if you like to treat me instead——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can't see anything to laugh at in that, Bob Cherry. Of course, I shall stand a feed in return when my postal order comes!"

"Ahem! You can come along if you like, Banner—or, rather, you must ask Haroldiana, as he is head cook and bottle-washer on the present occasion!"

"Oh, you can come!" said Haroldiana. "But we're not going to the trackshop—at least, I don't suppose we shall."

Billy Banner reflected.

"But you may?" he asked.

"Well, there's a chance."

"I'll come, then."

And the Owl walked on with the party.

The afternoon was bright and fresh, the hedges springing into green. A breath of spring was in the air, exhilarating and invigorating. The juniors felt in buoyant spirits as they walked down the leafy lane. Even from Harry Wharton's brow the cloud was lifted, and he was soon laughing and chatting as cheerily as the rest.

"Hallo, get out of the way!" said Bob Cherry suddenly.

Two large caravans came lumbering along the road, and a couple of rough-looking fellows were walking beside the shaggy horses. They were evidently gipsies, and equally evidently not of the best class of Romany. The dark faces were sallow and heavy, and their black eyes glinted furtively under dark brows.

The juniors stopped out of the road to let the caravans pass. They were lumbering by, with a clanging of hanging pots and household utensils. A growling voice was heard in the leading van, but the words were indistinguishable.

As the vans passed on and the juniors resumed their way, a sudden cry came from the foremost vehicle.

The juniors turned round again quickly.

"What was that?" asked Harry Wharton.

"It sounded like somebody crying out," said Bob Cherry, looking anxiously after the gipsy vans. "Listen!"

The two gipsies walking with the horses had looked back quickly towards the juniors. They evidently feared that the boys had heard that strange cry from the van. Harry Wharton's brow darkened.

"There's something wrong there!" he muttered. "Whoever it is that van did not cry out for nothing."

"Perhaps a kid's being whacked," suggested the Owl.

"It didn't sound exactly like a child," said Wharton slowly.

"I hardly made it out, it was so sudden," Bob Cherry remarked. "What did you take it for, Wharton?"

"Sounded like somebody calling out and suddenly getting a hand clapped over his mouth in the middle of it," said Harry.

"My idea exactly," said Haroldiana. "I—— But where are you going, Wharton?"

"Come along!" said Harry, without answering the question. And he started running for the vans. The juniors hesitated for a moment. But they could not fail to back up a claim, so they followed Harry.

The two gipsies who were walking with the horses were still looking back. They stood at the sight of the juniors running after the vans, and whispered together for a moment. Then one of them fell back towards the rear of the leading van. The vehicles clattered to a halt as the juniors came up, and each of the gipsies reached for a short thick cudgel from the van.

"What do you want with me?" asked the man who had fallen behind the van, evidently with the purpose of preventing any attempt to assist it.

Harry Wharton looked him full in the eyes. The man was a stout but powerful fellow, and the cudgel in his hand looked dangerous. But Harry Wharton was not afraid.

"Who was it cried out in that van just now?" he asked imperiously.

The gipsy stared at him.

"What's that to do with you?" he demanded harshly.

"Answer my question!"

"Answer him, Melchior!" called out the gipsy who had remained by the horses; and then he added something in the Romany dialect.

"Be it so, Haragon," said Melchior solemnly. "If you are curious, it was my son who cried out because he was being beaten. Is there any more you wish to know?" he asked, with a savage sneer.

"Yes," said Harry steadily. "I don't believe you! Let us see into the van and we shall be satisfied."

"Bah! Away with you!" cried the gipsy savagely. "Shall I be dictated to by a boy?"

And the heavy cudgel swung aloft menacingly.

The juniors looked at one another dubiously. They had no right to inquire into what might be passing inside the gipsy van, and violence was a risky and certainly unjustifiable proceeding in the circumstances. Nugent caught Harry Wharton's arm and pulled him away.

"It's nothing to do with us," he said. "Come on. We should be in the wrong, and we can't tackle a pair of loafers like that, anyway!"

It went against the grain with Harry Wharton to give way. But he realized that Nugent was right. He stood with a clouded brow while the gipsy vans lumbered on and disappeared round a bend in the lane. The cry had not been heard again. It was quite probable that the matter was as Melchior stated, and in any case, interference, with nothing to go upon, was impossible. The juniors resumed their walk to the village, hurrying their steps now to make up for lost time.

Missing!

"**T**HREE!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the trucks boomed out from the village church. "We shall be in time. The train's just coming in."

The two juniors had almost reached the station.

Haseldene ran on eagerly. He stopped at the barrier as the passenger began to come out. There were not many of them, and they were mostly country people returning from market. Harry Jess looked in vain for the slim, girlish form he expected to see. The last figure passed, and still Marjorie Haseldene had not appeared.

Haseldene looked worried. "It's all right, old fellow," said Bob Cherry. "It will be the next train."

"I suppose so," said Haseldene slowly. "Let's go to the tankard," said Billy Baxter. "It will be an hour before the next train comes in, and it's no use waiting here."

Haseldene did not move. Harry Wharton looked at him quietly.

"You are uneasy," he said. "Yes, I suppose it's all right. But it's strange for Marjorie to leave it till the four o'clock train. She will have to go home by the six o'clock."

"Perhaps she's on the platform—" "Nobody on the platform," said the porter. "You can go and look if you like."

Wharton slipped sideways into his head, and the juniors went on to the platform.

But the man was right. There was no one there. Marjorie Haseldene had evidently not come by that train.

"I suppose it's not possible Miss Haseldene came by the earlier train?" Harry suggested.

"The two o'clock? But in that case she would have reached Greyfriars before we left it," said Nugent.

"Dahm, perhaps, she's lost her way." "Lost her way as a straight road?" "Well, Haseldene says that she has never been to Greyfriars before, and you know how easy it is to go astray in a strange place."

Haseldene nodded. "It is possible," he said. "Anyway, I may as well inquire of the ticket-collector. He might have noticed if she came. She's not much like the usual run of people who travel on this line." "Let's ask him, then."

The ticket-collector was quite able to give information, as it happened. He had observed a girl about fifteen who had come by the two o'clock train, and had asked him which way to turn on going out of the station to get into the road for Greyfriars.

"I told her it was about half an hour's walk," said the man, "and to keep straight on up the lane until she came in sight of the school."

"Thank you!" The juniors left the station. They halted outside to consider the matter. Their faces were serious enough. It was certain now that Marjorie Haseldene had arrived at the station and set out for Greyfriars.

Why had she not reached the school? She might have stopped to rest—but then why hadn't the juniors met her as they came along the same road that she would have followed? Something had happened—that much was certain.

"You see, she ought to have reached Greyfriars about the time we were having," said Haseldene. "If she was slow in walking, she ought to have met her on the road. She must have taken the wrong turning."

Harry Wharton shook his head. "The lane runs on to Greyfriars," he said. "There are two turnings, but at each there is a signpost plainly directing you to the school. I thought that at first, Haseldene, but now I've

thought it over, I can't believe she has wandered from the road." Haseldene turned pale. "Wharton, what do you think, then?"

"I think we had better get along the lane as quickly as we can," said Harry Wharton abruptly.

"You suggest something? What do you mean?"

Wharton looked at him steadily. "It may be only a suspicion," he said, "but it's come into my mind. Was your sister likely to be richly dressed?"

"Oh, no! Only just ordinary. She always dresses rather smart. Why on earth do you ask?"

"Has she any articles of jewellery about her?"

"A gold watch and a locket, probably."

"Quite enough." "What are you driving at?" asked Bob Cherry.

"You remember the gipsies who passed us on the road, and the cry we heard?" said Harry slowly. "They must have passed Haseldene's sister in the lane."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"I don't like to suggest such a thing," said Harry hastily, "but it's possible. And if Marjorie Haseldene's in the hands of the gipsies—"

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry.

Haseldene had not waited for Wharton to finish. He was tearing away up the road. The chains of the Remove followed him at top speed.

At Close Quarters!

HARRY WHARTON and Bob Cherry were two of the best runners at Greyfriars, but they were hard put to it to keep pace now with Haseldene.

Nugent had fallen a little behind, and farther behind Nugent came Billy Baxter, running as hard as he could, holding his hat on with one hand, and his spectacles on with the other.

Haseldene made the pace, and the others kept to it. The school came in sight, with the long road stretching away past the great brocade gate. They did not halt at Greyfriars. The gipsy vans had evidently passed the school, and the fact that they had gone so far proved that the gipsies had increased their speed after the meeting with the juniors.

Haseldene was panting for breath now. He was not in good condition, and his heart was thumping against his ribs, and his face was streaming with perspiration. But he ran on as if impelled by some inward force that would not allow him to stop in spite of physical exhaustion.

Harry Wharton caught him by the arm and pulled him to a halt as the breathless juniors came out on top of the hill past the school.

Haseldene turned upon him with a furious face.

"What is it? What are you stopping me for?"

"We are off the track." The juniors gathered breathlessly round Wharton at the words. Over the hill ran the long white road, and

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instinctively turned to him as the leader.

"I think Hunter had better go back to the village," said Harry, speaking at last. "He's not much use in a fight."

Buster looked up from his groping in the jans.

"I don't think you ought to talk about a fellow like that, Wharton, because he happens to be short-sighted. I should be able to fight as well as any of you if I could see whom to hit. But when a fellow can't see—"

"Dry up, Buster!" said Nugent. "I shan't! You might help me to look for my spectacles, some of you."

"There they are, just by your hand." "So they are! That's better!" said Buster, putting on his big glasses and getting up. "Now, Wharton, I don't mind going back to the village, if you like. I can call in at the tobacconist. I shall have to pay for all I have, as one of you had better fork out the tin."

"You greedy young rotter!" said Nugent in disgust. "Do you think we're bothering about foods now?"

"I know I'm jolly hungry and I should think that you fellows were—"

"Buster had better go back to the police station in the village," said Harry impatiently, "and explain to them there about Miss Haseldene and the gipsies. He can bring a constable here; or, rather, send one as he's no good at running."

"Well, I like that, after—"

"Shut up! Then he can go to the tobacconist, or go and hang himself, for all I care! You understand, Buster! You're to go to the police station and explain about this—"

"I understand, but—"

"And here's a two-bit bit; you can get a loaf for that at the tobacconist," said Harry Wharton. "I suppose you're hungry?"

"Hungry's not the word for it," said Billy Hunter, slipping the two-shilling piece into his pocket. "I'm famished! I always get famished when I'm out of doors, as I do indoors as well. I'll remember this, Wharton, and when I get my postal order I'll let you have it back."

"Hang your postal order, and you, too! Hiss off, and don't forget the message to the police station."

"Right-ho!"

"Get off, then!" howled Bob Cherry.

"All right! I suppose I can stop to breathe first!"

"Go, you other an!"

"Oh, very well, I'm off." And Billy Hunter went at a trot down the lane; his plump figure disappeared round a bend, and the hedges hid him from sight. Harry Wharton was thinking hard.

"We can't overtake the gipsies," he said, "but we must try to keep them in sight if possible. After all, these vans are too big to be hidden easily. Probably the police will send a car, and it will overtake us on the road. Anyway, the only thing we can do now is to follow the vans."

"We're not in much trim for a fight," Nugent remarked.

Harry shook his head.

"No good tackling them again as we did before," he said. "We must have help first. The thing is to see that they don't escape."

"Right-ho! Let's get a move on, then. We've rested a bit and I feel up to a walk," said Bob Cherry; "though I don't think I could get up a run to save my life!"

Haseldene's face was dark and gloomy. Harry Wharton touched him on the arm.



Gaining a high perch in the tree, Bob Cherry scanned the countryside for the gipsies who had kidnapped Marjorie Haseldene. Suddenly the shadows below heard him give an excited shout. "I've spotted them!"

"Back up!" he said. "After all, you know, those scoundrels won't dare to hurt her; they can only mean robbery. Keep a stiff upper lip." Haseldene nodded without speaking. "Come on, then," said Harry.

Haseldene's Sister!

THE juniors were mostly silent as they tramped along the lane in pursuit of the gipsy vans.

The vans were long out of sight. It had probably been Melchior's intention to camp on Braye Common—a favourite camping ground for gipsy wanderers. But doubtless the pursuit had made him change his intention. The vans had gone along a narrow country lane, leaving the common on the right. There were many paths by which the gipsies could return to it when they had shaken off their pursuers. But they were not likely to shake off the chains of the Berrowe.

The juniors stuck to the chase doggedly. But although they were thinking of the gipsies, and of the prisoner of the caravan, they had eyes for other things. The sound of a sob from under the trees by the roadside struck on their ears suddenly, and they glanced into the shadow of the bushes.

"Hallo!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Look! What's the matter, I wonder!" A girl was seated on a stone there, her face in her hands, crying. She was dressed in old and foul rags, and her hair feet were cut and braided by the sunny road.

The boys halted. The sight of a girl in tears naturally troubled them. Haseldene left the road, stepped under the trees, and touched the girl lightly on the shoulder.

"What is the matter?" he said.

The girl looked up. A pretty, tear-stained face was revealed.

Haseldene gave a shout of astonishment.

"Marjorie!"

The girl gazed at him, amazed. "Marjorie!" repeated Haseldene, in wonder. "I say, chaps, this is my sister!"

The juniors gathered round in amazement. It was a startling discovery.

"How did you come into this rig, Marjorie?" asked Haseldene.

The girl's face brightened up at sight of him. She had evidently doubted the evidence of her own eyes at first.

"The gipsies!" she exclaimed.

The juniors' faces grew very dark. It was clear enough now what had happened. The girl had been kidnapped and carried off in the van. The ruffian and the old crook in the caravan had robbed her, and then abandoned her heartlessly by the roadside. She had been compelled to change her clothes for the foul rags she now wore, and even her shoes had been taken.

"By George!" muttered Bob Cherry. "We'll make those ruffians sit up for this!"

"We will," said Harry Wharton, quietly.

"It's all right now, Marjorie," said Haseldene softly. "I say, those chaps are my friends; they've come with me to look for you."

"Thank you very much," she said, smiling through her tears. "It—it was you who were fighting the gipsies, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said Harry Wharton. "Did you see us?"

"No; I heard you. But when you passed in the lane before, I saw my brother through the little window in the

