

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

# The GEM 2d



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THE CRICKET MATCH THAT WAS THE JAPE OF THE TERM AT ST. JIM'S!—



Dr. Barnes welcomed the Rajah of Jaff's team 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 happiness for us to meet and play the honourable St. Jim's cricketers," said the rajah.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### Most Important!

"DON'T all you fellows talk at once!"  
"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, Gussy, 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 eyeglass in his eye and stood in 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 ladies silk hat off and get a walk, or you can show the New House fellows the latest thing in neckties, or——"

"I refuse to do anything of the sort," Tom Gossamer said. —No. 1,479.

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 make up the whole bimby if I don't come with you. I'm only thinking 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 mayn't. He might even cut 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."

"Rai Jove!"

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

"Perhaps it is," groaned 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!"

"Yaa, wathah!" 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 at spokesman——"

"That bairn you eat, then," said Monty Lovett.

"Why, you are——"

"I quite agree with my friend Lovettah," said D'Arcy. "In the circus,

"In the circumstances, I shall do the talking," said Tom Merry. "It's no good crowding into Kildare's study and all talking at once. D'Arcy, Bushell, and Mansfield are there with him, too; and we don't want a lot of silly gabber before a set of blighted seniors. I'll point out the facts to Kildare——"

"In the circus——"

Mansfield looked at his watch.

Mansfield had a way that was sometimes quite irritating of looking at his watch when a discussion was going on.

"I'm a's getting on," Mansfield remarked.

"Go on!" 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!"

"Mansfield 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

# —THIS SPARKLING STORY OF SPORT AND FUN IS ONE LONG LAUGH.

## By MARTIN CLIFFORD

study. The other juniors who were not in conference there, followed him. There were Blake, D'Arcy, Herries, and Digby of the Fourth, and Mansers and Lowther of the Sixth, and Kangaroo, the Cornishman. They had been discussing the important matter for a good half-hour without getting any "farther," 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 tea, 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 click of tea-pans. Kildare was entertaining four fellows of the Sixth to tea—all of them great men in the first eleven. 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 stickmen.

The Rajah of Jai 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 colleges with great success. It was quite a feather in Kildare's cap that he had been able to fix up a match with the dusty team from Jai, 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.

"Order!" he said.

"I wedge to order—I mean—"

"Police are in quietly!" said Tom Merry severely. "Name of your blessed bogusmann now, Garry?"

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

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

"Order!"

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

"Come in!" called out Kildare's cheerful 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 chattering cheerfully, but they all stopped as the army of juniors came in, and stared at them in considerable astonishment.

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

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

"A what?"

"A delegation from the Fourth Form and the Sixth," said Manser.

"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."

"Aham!"

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

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

"Eh?"

"Yesss, wedah! We upjose to have the junians passed ovah 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 Jai team? You can if you like."

"Aham!"

"You see, Kildare—"

"It's like this—"

"In the circ—"

Kildare's eyes wandered to a cricket stump that lay near at hand. The Juniors backed 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—"

"Pleasee you had better let me explain, Tom Merry—"

"Oh, ring off!"

"Weally, Blake—"

*The visit of the Rajah of Jai'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!*

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

"Most important."

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

"And we think—"

"Yesss, wedah!"

Kildare rose to his feet.

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

"Window!"

"You see, dear boy—"

"Shut up!" roared Tom Merry. "You're wasting Kildare's time—about it if you say another idiotic word, Garry, I'll tan you!"

"Weally, Tom Merry—"

"Let me explain—"

"In the circ, I consider—"

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

"I wedge— Oh!"

Kildare and Manser laid violent hands upon the stool of St. Jim's. There was a necessary struggle, and then Arthur Augustus went whirling through the doorway. There was a sound of a bang in the passage and then an ejaculation:

"Ow!"

"Put your feet against the door, Monty."

Monty Lowther closed the door, and put his foot 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.

### Choked 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 enraged. At all events, he had not been handled out before he had time to complain, and that was something. With a somewhat flushed face he went on to explain.

"You see, Kildare, the Rajah of Jai is coming here to observe 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 Manser, 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," Rushden suggested.

"I haven't finished!" said Tom Merry indignantly. "The Indian team are coming here to observe 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 Jai team?" he ejaculated.

"Yes."

"My hat!" Kildare burst into a laugh of genuine amazement. "Why, you young un, 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 assortment of thick cans, 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 Jai 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 un?"

"I dare say they have."

"And you want to play them?"

"Yes."

"Well, for pure, undiluted cheek, I think that takes the cake," Manser remarked.

"I think it does," said Kildare.

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

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"Suppose they beat us, there's no harm done."

"We think we ought to have a chance," said Monty Lowther.

"That's it," said Blake.

"Yess, whatah!" came a muffled voice through the keyhole. "You must admit that that's only right and reasonable, Kildare, dash boy."

"Do you think they would play you?" asked Kildare, still good-humouredly.

"Well, they could decline if they liked, you know."

"They would take the challenge as a jape, you young see. You cannot ask them. Mind, I mean, that," said Kildare, frowning. "You can't be allowed to play monkey-tricks of that sort at distinguished visitors."

"Look here—"

"And now, if you will kindly depart, we'll go on with our tea," said the captain of St. Jim's.

"I don't see why—" began Blake.

"You see, Kildare, we've never had a chance of playing as Indian teams before," Tom Merry argued. "It's rotten to leave us out like this. Besides, we're thinking of the honour of St. Jim's."

"The honour of the school?"

"The honour of the school," said Tom Merry firmly. "Suppose they beat the Sixth?"

"That's quite likely."

"Well, then, if we beat them on the second day—"

"Eh?"

"That would retrieve the disgrace, you see," explained Tom Merry.

Kildare gasped.

"Sir if they beat the Sixth, you think that the Fourth and the Shell might beat them," he remarked.

"I hope so."

"Yess, whatah!" came a muffled voice again. "I say, open this door, you boundah." It would be best for me to put it straight to Kildare—"

"Shut up, Gassy!"

"Really, you fellows—"

"I really think you might be reasonable, Kildare," said Tom Merry. "We've got a jolly good team. Faith Wynn of the New House is a marvellous boxer, and Figgins has like Sottili and Hammond rolled into one. We're all jolly good, in fact."

"I'm glad to see that you have such a good opinion of yourselves," said Kildare. "Certainly if you would win cricket matches, the juniors of St. Jim's would have a splendid record."

"Let's have a try with the ruggers."

"Don't be an ass!"

"But really—"

"You know your way out of the study," said Kildare, "and if you don't take it I shall have to help you. Now, are you going?"

"Aham!"

Kildare rose to his feet. The other seniors rose, too. The juniors retreated towards the door very warily. But they were not finished yet.

"Wasn't you lot as challenge them and take our chance?" asked Blake.

"Certainly not! It would be ridiculous!"

"Yes, Kildare, I'm really thinking of you," argued Blake. "It would be rotten if followes supposed that the Sixth were jealous of the Fourth!"

"Eh?"

"Followes might think so, you know. And if the Indians beat you, think how rotten it would be to let them go away winners, when you might have won their colours on the second day if you give us the chance."

"You—you young see?"

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"We're in sipping form, you know, and—"

"Get out!"

"Outside!" roared Kildare. "For goodness' sake, lend a hand chucking them out, you followes, or they'll go on talking all the evening."

"Oh, we'll go!" exclaimed Tom Merry hurriedly. "We'll go— Oh!"

"We did!"

Monteath and Rusden seized him by the shoulders, and Darrell opened the door. The hero of the Shell was swung out of the study. He crashed into Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, and both of them rolled on the floor.

"Ow!"

"Baa Jove!"

"Leggo!" roared Blake, as Kildare's powerful grasp closed upon him. "Ow! I'm going!"

"You are!" grinned the captain of St. Jim's.

And Blake went.

Tom Merry and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy were struggling to their feet when Blake landed upon them.

"Crash! Bump!"

The juniors were distributed over the floor of the passage again. There was a swirl of anguish from Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, as his elegant, tight-living Shell jacket split up the back.

"Baa Jove! Twerwoch!"

Bump, bump, bump!

In quick succession, junior after junior was tossed out of the study. The last one having been hauled out, Kildare closed the door.

Frogs within the study came a sound of loud laughter, and in the passage was heard a wild scuffling and grunting and snorting from the heap of dusty and enraged juniors. The degradation to the captain of St. Jim's had not been a success.

## CHAPTER 3.

### The Telegram!

**B**a! Jove!"

"Oh!"

"Darrell!"

"Carragh!"

"Oh, my head!"

"Oh, my ear!"

"Oh!"

Tom Merry & Co. were sorting themselves out in the Sixth Form passage. They sat up, or stood up, and looked at one another. The juniors were very dusty and rumpled, and somewhat sore. They were resignant, too. They had gone to Kildare's study to point out the facts of the case, and to try to induce the head of the Shell to listen to reason. This was the result of it.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy groped for his eyeglasses. He found the card, but the eyeglass was no longer in existence. Somebody's foot had crushed it in the struggle, and it lay in tiny fragments at the bottom of the passage. The scroll of St. Jim's clutched down his clothes and started with indignation.

"Eh! Jesst! I regard this as utterly rotten!" he exclaimed. "I consider that we ought to wait Kildare's study out, and then tell those wotahs!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" grunted Blake, slapping his gen. "What silly chump knocked his silly head against my fancy-bone!"

Digby was rubbing his head, and he glared at Kildare.

"Was it your fatherless elbow that biffed on my nupper?" he demanded. "I should think you might have had more sense, really!"

"Ow!" grunted Kangaroo. "I feel as if I had been used as a punching-ball!"

Whose silly idea was it to come to the place at all? Oh!"

"If you follow had left the whole history to me, it would have been all right." I told you that I ought to do the talkin'!"

"Oh, ring off!"

"I refuse to ring off! In the circus—"

Tom Merry grunted expensively.

"Gassy's cleaned up the whole thing!" he said. "I think we can agree that it was all Gassy's fault?"

"You, rather?"

"Weally, you followes—"

"Let's bump Gassy!" said Monty Lowther. "It was all his fault! And it would be a satisfaction to bump somebody!"

"I wishes to be bumped! E—"

"Look here," said Blake. "Kildare can eat up as rusty as he likes, but I don't think we ought to give up the idea. We're entitled to challenge the biggots!"

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Can't do that, against Kildare's orders," he said. "That's settled. But it's rotten—really rotten! I should like our eleven to play the Hajah of Jaff's team."

"Tass, whatah! I think the thing ought to be worked somehow. Let's go and think it over in the quad. I don't feel inclined to stay here and be grizzled at by those silly duffers!"

There were a good many grizzling frogs looking out of the doors of the Sixth Form studies. The juniors went down the passage, feeling very dusty and exasperated, and a sound of mocking laughter followed them.

Tom Merry & Co. had very seniors fell quite as wild about anything. It was not only that they were disappointed in their scheme of playing against the Rajah of Jaff's team, but they had been treated with contemptuously; the Lower School had been mauled.

They emerged into the sunny quadrangle. Blake was still tentatively caressing his funnybone, and Digby was rubbing his head. D'Arcy was flicking dust from his trousers with a crumpled handkerchief. They looked, as Monty Lowther expressed it, a set of wrecks.

It was not surprising that three juniors who were coming across the quadrangle grinned at the sight of them. The three juniors were Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn—Figgins & Co. of the New House. They stopped and regarded the School House seniors with great interest.

"Anything happened?" asked Figgins. The question was really superfluous. It had an unceasing effect upon the School House juniors.

"Oh, buss off, and take your face away; it worries me!" snapped Blake crossly.

"Yes, whatah!"

"What are those bounders doing on the respectable side of the quad, anyhow?" demanded Tom Merry. "Us for them!"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Figgins. "We've come over to have a—"

"Licking!" said Monty Lowther.

"Bump them!"

In a moment Figgins & Co. were in the group of the School House juniors, and were being heartily bumped.

They struggled in vain; the odds were too great. They were bumped and bumped till they were reduced to a mere wracked and dusty condition than Tom Merry & Co.

"There!" panted Tom Merry. "I feel better now, anyway!"

"Tass, whatah!"

Figgins & Co. sat in the quad, feeling dazed. They did not feel better,

"Ow! You chumps!" roared Figgins, trying to catch up his collar and tie. "You silly ass! We came over to have a friendly talk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fatheads!" grunted Kern. "We've got an idea—"

There was a wall of anguish from Petty Wynn.

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

Fatty Wyman 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 Petty Wyman's waistcoat, which was in a very sticky state.

"I was going to offer you tarts all round, you chumps!" roared Petty Wyman.

"Now—"

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Well, you can have it now, now you've been dumped!" said Monty Leather steadily. "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 pan.

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's rotten, though!" said Kern. "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—"

"Hello!" exclaimed Blaize. "Here's the telegraph-boy from Ryecroft. I wonder if it's for us!"

All attention was given to the telegraph-boy at once. Arthur Augustus was known to have relatives 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 chocking over the tea-table. They seemed to be very much annoyed by the way the delegation had departed from the study. Kildare fixed his eyes impishly upon Tom Merry.

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

Tom Merry snorted.

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

"Oh, thanks!"

Kildare took the envelope and opened it curiously 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 Blaize was flung out of the study after them by Kildare. He landed on his stomach with a heavy bump, and, with wild yells, the three juniors crashed to the floor in an ugly heap.

#### CHAPTER 4.

##### Kerr's Great Whirls!

**T**OM 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," growled the St. Joes' captain. "You can hear the telegram, if you like, kid. Listen, you fellows!"

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

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

"Well, that's rotten!" said Monty. "Really!" said Kershaw.

"It's very unfortunate," Darrell remarked. "Glad he's sick. We shouldn't have had a longer till tomorrow 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 crocked, I hear, and have been playing reserves. They couldn't go into the field with only seven players."

"I suppose not."

"Better and 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, dear boy? What are you grinning' abt?"

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

There was a general exclamation of surprise.

"The match all!"

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

"My hat!"

"Bai Jove!"

"That's rotten!"

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

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Kern.

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 shrieked. 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!"

"I dare say it's funny for Kildare to be dished in this way, but not so funny as all that," said Jack Highe country. "What are you cackling at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Kerr.

The juniors glared at him, exasperated. Their jingers were a little short just then. Figgins and Fatty Wynn seemed as exasperated as the School House fellows. They all gathered round Kerr threateningly. Kerr did not seem to mind. He shrieked with merriment. "You *stink* us!" roared Kangaroo. "What are you squeaking at?"

"Yaa, waaah! Explain, you *ass*!"

"What's the matter, *champ*?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, *squash* him!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Bump him against the wall and make him speak!"

Many hands collared the shrinking junior. Kerr was strong to the School House wall and leaped upon it. Still he yelled with laughter:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump him!"

"Sit on his head!"

"It's *hysterics*!" exclaimed Blaize.

"Thump him on the back!"

"Yaa, waaah!"

"Thump, thump, thump!"

"Ow!" shrieked Kerr. "Stop it! Oh!"

"Explain, then! What are you cackling at?"

"Lemme! I—I'll explain! Ow! Ha, ha, ha! You see—" gasped the New House junior. "It's a whoos—a grand whoos! Ha, ha, ha!"

He yelled with laughter again.

"Bump him!" roared Blaize.

Bump, bump, bump!

"Ow! Stop it! I'll explain! You—  
you see— Ha, ha, ha! It's a grand  
whoos up against the Sixth. Ha, ha,  
ha!"

"What is it, then, you cackling at?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Look here, the Indians  
are not coming!"

"We know that, fathead!"

"But why— Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get out!"

"Why shouldn't they come, all the  
same?"

"What?"

"Not them, you know, but us!"

"Us?"

"Yaa, Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! He's *wanderin'* in his  
mild, doof boy! What does the silly  
ass mean?"

"Us!" shrieked Kerr. "In disguise  
with our chivvies blackened. See? Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors stared at him blankly for a few seconds. Then they went off into a wild roar together.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## CHAPTER 5.

### Figgins is Agreeable!

**T**OM MERRY & CO. laughed and laughed till their sides ached.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! Really, you know— Ha, ha, ha! I regard that as *awfully* funny! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my Aunt Matilda! Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors snorted.

The scheme was so utterly unheard of that it took their fancy at once. Such a jape against the Sixth would make the whole school jump when it came out. It would be a just punishment to the seniors for the way they had acted. And if, by some miracle, the "spoil" team should win—what glory for Tom Merry & Co.!

They yelled with delight at the mere thought of it.

The Gem Library.—No. 1,479.

They gathered round Kerr when they had recovered a little, and thumped him on the back. Kerr was the hero of the hour.

"It's always old Kerr who thinks of these things," said Figgins admiringly. "He's got a head on him!"

"It takes a Scotman to think of things," Kerr remarked modestly.

"Oh wait!"

"Shut up, Gassy!" said Tom Merry. "Let Kerr speak as much as he likes after thinking of a *wholesome* idea! He's worth his weight in toffee!"

"Yea, rather!"

"Why, it's ripping!" said Blaize. "It's curious that a New House chap should be the one to think of it; but it's ripping!"

"Splendid!"

"Gorgeous!"

"First class!"

"Well, I think it's a rather good dodge," said Kerr. "We can make-up as easily as anything. We've done it before for the amateur theatricals, and we've got all the grease-paint and things we need. We only want the Indian costumes, and we can get those at the costume's."

"Hurray!" said Figgins. "Do the Indian cricketers travel in costume?"

"Blessed if I know; but it would be more convincing. We should change into Savars for the match, anyway."

"Yea, that's all right."

"Yaa, waaah!"

"Kildare can get a wife saying it's all right, after all," said Kerr. "Of course, we couldn't send a wife in the rajah's name—that wouldn't do. But we can word it so as to make Kildare imagine it's all *permitted*, without committing ourselves."

"Oh, yes, that will be easy enough! I will draw up the telegram with pleasure."

"If the Indians came," resumed Kerr, thinking it out as he spoke, "they'd have to come to Wayland Junction, and change there into the local train for Ryelands. We can walk over to Wayland in the morning, make-up there, and come over in the local."

"Good!"

"But the wife will have to come from London," said Monty Leather.

"Exactly. We'll get some chap in London to send it."

"My goodness! Conway is in town now," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I can write to him to-night and enclose the telegram for him to send. He will get the local first post in the mornin'!"

"Yes, Conway will do it. You can explain it's a jape, and he'll know there's no harm in it," said Mansfield.

"Yaa, waaah!"

"My hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "It's the best jape of the term. There never was anything like it before—not since Kerr dressed up as a general!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That was ripping!" said Figgins. "But this will be *rippingest*!" Figgins was too excited to care about his con�atives.

"Yaa, waaah!"

"Hurray!"

"We can go down to Ryelands at once and see about the costume," grinned Kerr. "We can fix that quite easily. And we'll make up this evening for practice in the study, so as to be sure that it will work all right."

"Oo, ripping!"

"There's just eleven of us here," went on Kerr. "We ought to bring in an extra man, as we may as well take another chap *up*—say Bernard Glynn. He's a Shell fellow, and we all ought to be as big as possible."

"Yes, that's rather against it," Tom Merry remarked thoughtfully. "They will be surprised to see a team of Indians so *jilly* small."

"Well, the girls' team are small fellas," said Kerr. "I've got their photos in the daily paper, and they are small men. Indians don't grow very large, you know."

"No, I suppose not."

"And nobody here has seen them. They haven't been in England three weeks, and they've been touring and playing matches, and they haven't been in Sussex at all. I've been following their movements in the papers, you see."

"If Kildare should catch on—"

"He won't, unless we give ourselves away," said Kerr confidently. "Of course, we shall have to have a sensible chap as captain."

"And the captain had better do most of the talking," Mansfield remarked.

"That's right."

"Yaa, waaah! I propose that I should be skipper. I'm not a fellow to put myself forward, of course, but on an occasion like this, what you *really* waaah is a fellow of tact and judgment, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no reason whatever for *waaah* laughah. I consider—"

"My dear chap, your beautiful accent would give you away at once," said Tom Merry. "Besides, as I am junior cricket captain, I should have to be leader."

"We could make an exception on an occasion like this," Figgins remarked thoughtfully.

"Yaa, waaah! Figgins agrees with me."

"No, I don't!" said Figgins promptly. "What I was going to say was that as it's a New House dodge, I think that a New House chap ought to be skipper for the occasion."

"Hooray, hooray!" said Fatty Wynn and Kerr together.

"Oh, rats!"

"Now, you'll admit yourself, Figg, that that's all *hooh*!"

"I'm willing to put it in the vote," said Tom Merry blithely.

"Nothing could be fairer than that."

The New House juniors sniffed. As there were eight School House fellows present to three of the New House, it was easy to forecast how the voting would go. Figgins & Co. were not having that. Figgins & Co. were to decide it to Kerr to decide, as it's his idea," suggested Fatty Wynn.

"Rubbish!"

"Hooh!"

"Nothing could be fairer than that!" grinned Figgins.

"Well, I don't know that it makes much difference," said Tom Merry, laughing. "and as Figgins is the tallest fellow present—"

"He hasn't much *starch* of me," said Blaize.

"Ahhh! He's bit taller," said Tom Merry pacifically, "and as we shall be pretty small for a grown-up team, we want as big a skipper as we can get. I yield it to Figgins, and I think that ought to settle it."

"I'm agreeable," said Figgins cheerfully.

Blaize snorted.

"I dare say you are," he remarked;

"but—"

"That's settled, then," said Tom Merry. "Figg is going to be the Rajah of Jel. By the way, as you know all about the team, Kerr, do you know whether the niggers speak English?"

Kerr shook his head.

"Some of them speak a few words, and some of them none at all," he said. "The Rajah of Jel does, and so does a

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

"Good! Gassy 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 Gassy gagged?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should vitally welcome to be gagged, Kerr."

"Well, mind you don't give us away, that's all," said Merry Loutcher. "We'll squash you, if you do."

"I should welcome to be squashed—"

"Let's run down to Rydecombe and see about the disguises," 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 jabs 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!

**T**HIR proceedings of Tom Merry & Co. for the rest of that evening afforded considerable interest and mystification 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 Rydecombe 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 Augustus had posted a letter to Lord Conway in the village, containing the telegrams 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 followers were taking great pleasure. 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 Augustus was off so 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 followers 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 of rage:

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

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

Bernard Glynn had been let into the secret, as he was to be one of the dusty strangers to arrive on the morrow. But the juniors wisely decided to let the secret go no further. There was too much danger of its leaking out if it were talked about, and that would render the scheme a failure.

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

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

"Faith, and I'm going to have a rousing!" exclaimed Reilly, kicking at the door. "Hullo, is there, ye scallywags, ye scoundrels! Open the door!"

"Reilly!" 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, didn't he a silly garrison! What are you putting off the match for, you silly scallywags?" roared Reilly.

"Can't be helped."

"Faith, and I—"

"Reset the door in?" said Hancock. "Bang, bang, bang! Thump! Bull! Bang!"

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

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

It stopped at once. Mr. Hardill was a sour-tempored gentleman and not to be argued with. The juniors melted away. In Figgins' study Tom Merry & Co. were left undisturbed.

#### CHAPTER 5.

##### All Settle!

**T**HIS 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 prayers to evening prep. That was calculated to make them cheerful.

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

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

Tom Merry & Co. were glad enough to see them so occupied. It kept them off the scene, and presented 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 players, by this time, had not the slightest doubt of success.

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

And the chums 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 Kilbarr, sir."

THE GEM LECTURE.—No. 1,428.

#### HIS ANNUAL SHOP!



Professor: " Didn't I tell my last half-crown 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, Joiner, Carlton Avenue, Benthall-on-Sea.

"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 postponing 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 come-down after the match he had anticipated.

"Hello, 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.

"Hurrah!" he exclaimed.

"Good news!"

"Yes, they're coming!"

"Brave!"

"Lucky!"

Kildare read out the message:

"Kildare, School House, St. James, Sussex.—Previous telegram cancelled. Team arriving Rydecombe ton-night."

"Good!" exclaimed Darrell. "I suppose they've got over it, or he's managed to kink in some substitutes. 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 bit excited, perhaps. But it's clear enough."

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

Rushden and Monteith and Baker strolled up.

"Where are we playing?" asked Monteith.

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

"The Indians?"

"Yes. The rajah thinks he can come."

"Good!" said Baker.

"Jolly uncertain sort of bopper, 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 Jai would be likely to wire to me that the team was arriving at Rydecombe 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 beggars, 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 grizzled.

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

"Anyways, 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 Rydecombe 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 hopefully.

"Going out for the day, Kildare?" asked Baker affably.

Kildare smiled.

"No," he said.

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

"It's on again now."

"The Indians coming, after all?"

"Yes. I've just had a wire to say they're all right, and coming, after all, and they'll be at Rydecombe 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.

"Yaa, waaah!"

"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 Harris.

Kildare looked a little mystified.

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

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

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

"Yaa, waaah!"

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

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

"For us," said Kerr.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

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

## CHAPTER 8.

Quite a Change!

**H**ERE we are!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

The juniors stopped. The bright morning sunlight was falling through the foliage in a deep glade of Rydecombe 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 contents and digests 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.



Here's a school yarn with a real punch! Everyone knows Horace Coker of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, and what a born bluffer he is. But Coker is a remarkably bold fellow with a punch like a steel-hammer. The great Horace sets out to take Sir Hilton Pepper, head and master of Pepper Court, down a peg or two, and 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!

Of all Magazines,  
Every Saturday.

2d

# The MAGNET

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

The juniors discarded their coats, which were folded up carefully and placed in the bags. They donned the Indian costumes. Indian costumes chiefly used for local fancy-dress 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 each 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 Jai.

"It's rapping!" said Tom Merry. "Your mother wouldn't know you, Figgins."

"Well, not! I say, shall I look anything like that, dear boy?"

"Yes, Gassy."

"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."

"Toss, toss."

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

"Yours, but—Cough!"

"What's the matter?"

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

"Well, you shouldn't talk while you're being operated on," said Kerr. "I can't do a bit of dodging round now, mate while you're gassing. Bang off!"

"Weally, Kerr—Cough!"

"There you go again!"

"You what me! Oh!"

"You'd better shut up, Gassy!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "You'll get 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. Jox'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 passed 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 and! Stop it!"

"Weally, Kerr—"

"What's rubbing the brown off?"

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

"You champion and! Put it away at once. It will give us away if that's seen. Do you think Indians come over here to play cricket with windows-pans in their silly eyes?"

"Weally, dear boy!"

"Put it away, Gassy."

"In the circus!"

"Put it away!" roared the juniors.

"I was about to say that, in the circus—"

"Put it away, or you'll get it smashed like the other one!" roared Tom Merry.

"I expect that, in the circus, I am quite willing to bow to the voice of the majority and put it away, dash boy!" said D'Arcy gruffly.

And D'Arcy slipped the eyepiece 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 chirpy 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 disguise, left the glade in Ryelands Wood.

Their hearts were beating a little



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

"Have you ever earned a dollar in your life?" he asked.

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

Hat-in-crown has been awarded to G. Jones, Et, Grange Head, Barnetts.

faster as they entered the footpath leading into Wayland Town.

Although their disguises were excellently done, 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 their new complexions and attire.

The sight of Indians, 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 Jai 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 walking regally as their head; there was a short

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.

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

The juniors could not help grinning. Figgins frowned.

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

"Yours, what?"

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

"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 Hindoo word, and it might mean anything," said Figgins. "If you're simply driven for a word and must say something else, say 'Boggley.' That sounds jolly good Hindooish to me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And, remember, nothing but 'Bang-bang' and 'Boggley,' I'm the only chap here who speaks English," said Figgins.

"Perhaps it would be a good idea to speak in French, as lots of Hindoos know that language, you know. Suppose I say 'Je ne comprends pas.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or I could say: 'Hannen mihi, 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 noisy crowd followed the Indian team right up to the railway station. But 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 Jai. "We expected you by the train from London, your Highness."

"Bang-bang!" said Figgins. The stationmaster looked puzzled.

"Yes, your Highness."

"Boggley!"

"I am very sorry, your Highness; I don't speak Hindooish," 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 up the platform.

They were in good time for the local to Ryelands.

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-bye, gentlemen!"

"Bang-bang!"

"Ahem!"

"Boggley!"

And the train ran out of Wayland Station.

## CHAPTER 9.

The Indians Arrive!

**K**ILDARE and Darrall came into Ryelands Station, and with rods in the old porter they walked upon the platform. They were quite sure that the programme was all right, and they were there to meet the Indians.

The motor-coach was waiting outside.

The Game Luncheon.—No. 1479.

the station to convey the team to St. Jim's. But if by any chance it should turn out to be a jape, there was no harm done—though there would probably be some harm done to the reputation of Kildare if Kildare discovered them afterwards.

"The rajah's signalled," said Kildare. "We shall see the Indians in a minute."

"Yes; it's all right," said Darrell.

The train came in sight.

Kildare raised his hand to point, with an expression of satisfaction.

"Look!"

Several dusky faces were looking from the windows of the train.

"The Indians!" said Darrell.

"Yes, rather!"

The train was in and stopped. Kildare and Darrell stepped forward to open the carriage doors for their distinguished guests.

A crowd of dusky cricketers peered out upon the platform.

The St. Jim's seniors could not help staring a little.

They had expected to see small men, but they had supposed that the Jai cricketers were larger in size than the juniors of St. Jim's.

There was only one of the party who was anything like as tall as a man, and that was the dusky youth with the big diamond in his turban.

Kildare guessed that he was the skipper, and he advanced to him with outstretched hand.

"The Rajah of Jai!" he exclaimed.

"Bang-bang!"

And the rajah shook Kildare's hand heartily.

"I am very glad to see your Highness."

"Boggy!"

"We were very disappointed to get your telegram yesterday; but it's turned out all right," said Kildare. "You speak English—do you not?"

"Bang-bang! I speak poor English as well," said the rajah. "It is not with difficulty that I speak here. Bang—"

"That's a blessed Hindostani word, I suppose!" reassured Kildare. "Blessed if I like the look of this lot! They're a shabby crew, anyway."

But he did not say that aloud.

"We've got a coach outside," he went on. "Will you come with me?"

"With great and reverable pleasure."

And Kildare led the way from the station.

The Indians piled into the coach, amid loud and enthusiastic comments from the interested youths of Etonians by village.

Kildare and Darrell mounted with them, and they drove away on the road to St. Jim's. The two seniors of St. Jim's tried to enter into talk with the cricketers as usual, but it was useless.

The Rajah of Jai was the only one who spoke English, and his English did not seem very good either, and he did not appear inclined to use very much of it.

He had introduced Chandra Singh and Kumar Lal, two of his followers, to Kildare. But the two Indians had only bowed and saluted respectfully, without speaking. If Kildare had heard Chandra Singh speak, he might have been struck by a resemblance to the voice of Tom Merry of the Shell, while Kumar Lal's tones would have recalled those of Jack Blake.

Darrell addressed a few polite words to Chandra Singh as St. Jim's name in sight. The old grey tower rose over the green trees.

"That's St. Jim's," he remarked.

The Gas Lanner.—No. 1,473.

Chandra Singh nodded.

"We shall arrive in a few minutes now."

"Bang-bang!"

"You do not speak any English, sir?"

"Boggy!"

"I have read about the Jai team in the papers," Darrell said, with a perplexed look. "I understood that most of them spoke some English, some of them quite fluently. But perhaps some of you fellows are substitutes for those on sick leave."

"Cham-cham-torah-hyehah-bang!"

That was quite a long sentence, but Darrell could make nothing of it. He knew no Hindostani, but if he had known every word of it in the language it would hardly have helped him in this instance.

The motor coach drew up to St. Jim's. A crowd of fellows had gathered round the gates to see whether the Indians really arrived. There was a loud cheer as the coach was seen with its crowd of dusky passengers.

"Hurray!"

"Here they come!"

"Here's the giddy rajah!"

"Bravo!"

The coach rolled in amid cheers. Crowds of juniors waved their caps and shouted a welcome to the Indians.

Tom Merry & Co. bowed on all sides as the coach drove slowly in.

They had never received such an ovation in their own proper persons, and it was very hard for them to keep grave. But they managed it.

At the door of the School House the Head himself stood to greet them.

Dr. Holmes welcomed the Jai team in a few well-chosen words, and it was up to Figgins to reply.

The jaded rajah did his duty well.

He salamed three times before the reverend Head of St. Jim's, and all his followers followed his example.

"It is great happiness for us to meet and play the Honourable St. Jim's cricketers," said the rajah, in a deep voice.

And the Indians all chimed in in a sort of chorus:

"Bang-bang!"

"We appreciate with deep and reverent feeling the welcome you have so generously extended to us."

"Bang-bang! Boggy!"

"And the play of the honourable cricket will be the great and reverable pleasure to our worthy selves."

"Bang! Boggy! Wallah!"

The Head looked a little puzzled. He knew a little Hindostani himself, but it was not of the kind used by the visitors.

"Some local dialect of the Province of Jai undoubtedly," the Head said afterwards to Mr. Railton. "Bang, I know, is a common Hindoo expression for a certain drug, and 'wallah' means a man or a person. But the words are evidently not used in their customary sense by the Jai people. 'Boggy' is quite beyond me, and I am very curious as to what it may mean."

But the Head was not likely to have his curiosity gratified. The visitors from Jai did not know any more than he did.

The Indians were taken to the pavilion where they changed from their rich and rare costumes into ordinary cricketing uniforms.

When they came out with their dusky skins shining in the sun there was another cheer to greet them.

They subsisted in silence, and said "Bang-bang!" with cheerful accents.

Kildare tested with the rajah for

choices of innings, and the rajah was and elected to go in first.

"Chandra Singh and Kumar Lal," said the rajah.

And Tom Merry and Jack Blake were in to open the innings for Jai.

## CHAPTER 10.

### The First Innings :

KILDARE placed his men to field. He had heard that the Jai men were very hard hitters, and the seniors fielded deeply.

Round the ground a great crowd collected, and the junior ground, where Redfern and Reilly and their merry men were playing, was deserted by all but the two junior teams.

Seniors and juniors crowded round to see the Indians play. Clifton Dane, Skimpole and Macdonald stood in a group to look on. There was a curious expression upon Dane's face. Dane was study-mate in the Shell to Kangaroo and Bernard Olyn, and Dane was gifted with very sharp vision. But if Clifton Dane saw anything unusual about the Indians, no one else did. They were taken at face value, as to speak, by the whole of St. Jim's.

"I guess they're a small size for grown-ups," said Lumley-Lumley remarked to Clifton Dane.

Dane nodded. "Yes, they might be a set of boys," he said. "But I hear that the rajah is playing some substitutes to-day, though."

"The rajah looks full size," said Lumley-Lumley. "The others are jolly small. They really can't have much chance against Kildare's lot."

"I don't know; they're beaten University team."

"I guess it's strange, then."

And that opinion was very common on the ground. It was very strange that the little Jai men had beaten Varsity players. All except the rajah were overpowered by the seniors of St. Jim's.

But the Jai batsmen showed that they could bat at all events.

Montana, the New House prefect, was put on to bowl the first over against the dusky youth known as Chandra Singh.

Montana was a good bowler, and very nearly the best in St. Jim's First Eleven, but he did not trouble Chandra Singh.

Chandra Singh knocked his bowling over the field, and the ever-gave the dusky batsmen eight runs to begin their score.

It was evident that, in spite of their diminutive size in comparison with the St. Jim's team, the Jai men knew how to play cricket.

Chandra Singh had scored twenty runs on his own when he was finally dismissed by a catch in the slips.

A fat Indian came in to take his place. There were smiling comments from the spectators as the fat cricketer rolled up to the wicket.

"My bat!" said Lumley-Lumley. "That chap's as fat as Fatty Wynn!"

"By Jove, he is!" said Clifton Dane.

"By the way, speaking of Fatty Wynn, where are Figgins & Co.? They're not here."

"Curious they should miss this match."

"And Tom Merry, too. Where is he?"

"He's not here."

"And Blakie and Gussy!"

"They all went out this morning," said Lumley-Lumley. "I remember now, they took a lot of bags with them, and I imagine they're going to make a day of it."

"It's very odd," said Clifton Dane.

"Well, yes."

"That fat chap can bat, though," said Gore, as Fatty Wyne drove the ball to the boundary from Kildare's bowling.

"He can! Bravo!"

The St. Jim's fellows were all sportsmen, and they showed every trace of the dusty visitors. And they had plenty to cheer. The St. Jim's bowling and fielding were both good, but the visitors scored quite freely.

Kumar Lal was not at last, and he joined the group of dusty batsmen outside the pavilion. Lal were sit down 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, bogoley, and wogley continually recurring. But when there were no Sainis within hearing, they continued to talk in English.

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

"Yaa, waaah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And with 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 Kildare's lot."

"Yes, rather!"

"It will be rather an eye-opener for them!" grinned Tom Merry. "Of course, the real Lal 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!"

"Yaa, waaah!"

"Hush!"

Some Sainis were shouting by, and Figgins, without a change of countenance, went on in an unknown tongue, as unknown to himself as to everybody else.

"Bogoley bang wallah can sing chang buckback!"

"Oh, buckaback—buckabuck!" said Tom Merry grizzled.

"Sim ting ghaunt gennay long!"

"Ran bang!"

"Blamed if I can make out a word of it!" Gore remarked, as he strolled on. "Blamed if it seems possible that they understand it themselves!"

"It's runny!" said Clifton Dane.

"You're getting on famously," said Lunley-Lunley, addressing the Rajah of Lal.

"Gomney khong bang?" said the rajah gallantly.

"Eh?"

"Lunney, erikay, chuck-chuck!"

"My hat!"

"Gomney long!"

"Oo, I give it up!" said Gore.

"What's the name of that fat chap who's batting?" asked Lunley-Lunley.

"Panar Aasi is the name on the list," said Gore.

"Bravo, Panar Aasi!" shouted Clifton Dane, as the fat batsmen sent the ball to the boundary again.

"Hurrah!"

And there was a ripple of hand-clapping.

Panar Aasi was going strong. But he was clean bowled by Kildare in the

next over, and he came off the field perspiring. The Rajah of Lal looked at him, and an expression of alarm came over his Highness' face.

"Great Scott!" he whispered. "Get into the dressing-room quick!"

"What's the matter?" muttered Panar Aasi.

"Your complexion's running."

"My hat!"

"And you'd better run, too!" grinned Monty Lovelace.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Fatty Wyne bolted into the pavilion. Kerr followed him; his artistic touch was required. Kerr, under the name of Bolax Ranji, was wanted next, but the rajah himself went in, to give Kerr time to restore Fatty Wyne's complexion.

## CHAPTER 11.

### Bowled Out!

**T**HREE was a cheer as the Rajah of Lal 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 graciously to the cheering, and took his place at the wicket. Kildare tossed up the ball to Darrell.

"You'll have all your work cut out to shift that chap, from what I hear," he remarked.

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



"Yaa—pwough!" gasped Arthur Angustin. "You've dashed that horrid stuff in my mouth!" "You shouldn't talk while you're being operated on," said Kerr. "I can't work round your mouth while you're vagging." Ring off!

were to do so. But when he hit, he hit hard, and the Indians were given plenty of leather-hitting. He took seven for the score, finishing with the odd run, which gave him still the best-in-the-next.

Monsmith was put on against him, but could not trouble him. The rajah piled up runs for his side, inwardly wondering what the protest would think when he discovered that he had been bowled in vain against a junior of his own Home.

The rajah piled up thirty runs, and he was hardly cheered, and his dark eyes glared as hot as anybody in their own peculiar dusky language. At every big hit they clapped their dusky hands and cheered:

"Bang-bang!"

"I suppose that's a sort of Indian cheer?" Lamley-Lamley remarked. "Something like the Japanese ha-ha-ha, I guess."

"I suppose so," said Gare. "What are you looking so grim about, Dan?"

Clifton Dane marred.

"Was I?" he explained.

"Well, thoughtful, then. What are you musing about?"

"I was just thinking."

"About the rajah?"

"Yes," said the Canadian junior with a grin, "about the rajah."

He strolled away with his hands in his pockets, without saying anything further. Gare and Lamley-Lamley looked after him in surprise. But they soon turned their attention to the match again.

The rajah was out at last, caught by Kildare, and as he joined the dark team outside the pavilion they cheered him loudly.

"Bang, bang, bang!"

"What does that mean, in English?" Lamley-Lamley asked one of the Jai men.

"Bogoley, dash boy."

"Bog!"

"I'm a n-a-n-been!—bang-bogged—cluck-cluck-cluck!"

"My hat!"

"Bang bang chang tooth bank!"

"I believe that Lamley can speak English, if he likes," Gare concluded to Lamley-Lamley. "Did you notice how he dropped into English, and stopped himself?"

Lamley-Lamley had a very curious expression upon his face.

"I guess I did," he said.

He strolled away to join Clifton Dane, and the two juniors were deep in discussion for some time afterwards. The Jai manager was drawing to its close now. The last wicket fell with the score at 180, and the field cleared.

The Jai men crowded to the dressing-rooms.

They did not admit anybody else with them, and the rajah was careful to close the doors. Then the Indians permitted themselves a long chuckle:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bal Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "It's wipin'!" The bouldards haven't a single English, you know."

"Not the slightest," said Blake.

"It's gorgeous!"

"There never was a jape of this sort or size before," chuckled Tom Merry. "Of course, they couldn't possibly need a reason."

"I really put my foot in it once, dash boys!" chuckled D'Arcy.

"Oh, trust you to do that!"

"Weally, Lewish—"

"If you give us away we'll squash you!"

"I should vitably refuse to be squashed."

The Gem Leader.—No. 1476.

"What have you done?" asked Tom Merry.

"Oh, it was really nothing. I used a few words of English when Lamley-Lamley was asking me a question. But it's all right."

"Is it?" said Tom Merry anxiously.

"Lamley-Lamley's jolly sharp."

"Sharp as a needle!" said Digby.

"But he wouldn't give us away if he guessed," said Kangaroo. "He would play the game, you know."

"Yeah, whatshat?"

There was a knock at the door, and the discussion suddenly ceased. It occurred to the Jai cricketers that the partition in the cricket pavilion was somewhat thin.

"Hush!" murmured the Jai.

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Shut up, you jem!"

"I consider—"

Blake passed his hand over Arthur Augustus' mouth and further consideration of the well of St. Jim's were quite lost. Figgins opened the door.

Clifton Dane and Jervis Kildare were standing there, with serious smiles upon their faces.

"Bang-bang!" said Figgins.

To which Lamley-Lamley replied, in the same language:

"Chuck a luck, and ting a ring. Sam ching."

And Clifton Dane added:

"Saucy parry garay bang."

The Jai men stared blankly at him. The two juniors looked very grave and serious, and evidently expected answers in the same tongue.

"Bang bogley wallah pakah krooh," said Figgins, at last.

"Hankie parky, silly parky, chack it!" said Lamley-Lamley.

"Eh? I mean, mang song pink?"

"Finger wiggly, Motty perry, Blakey shakay, Gingy werry," said Lamley-Lamley.

"Monty, Marney, Diggy, Henry, Fatty Wynn," said Clifton Dane.

And then the cricketers knew!

"Come in!" and Figgins hustled.

Lamley-Lamley and Clifton Dane grinned, and came in, and Figgins closed the door. The dusky heroes glared at the two juniors who had found them out.

"How did you know?" gasped Tom Merry.

"They chinked,"

"It was Gingy's beautiful accent that put me on to it," said Lamley-Lamley.

"Dane seems to have suspected something from the start. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Canadian.

"Hush!"

"You're bowled out, I grant," chinked Lamley-Lamley. "What a jape! So the rest Indians are not coming at all?"

"No," retorted Figgins.

"You sent a second telegram?"

"We had it sent."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hush!" said the rajah. "Does anybody else know besides you two?"

Clifton Dane shook his head.

"Not a soul," he said. "I shouldn't have known, only old Kangy seemed rather familiar. You see, I have the differ in my study every day. And then what Lamley told me made me quite certain about it."

"Nobody else knows!"

"So far as I know, nobody."

"I guess not!" grinned Lamley-Lamley.

"You haven't said anything!"

"Not a word, of course."

Figgins drew a breath of relief.

"That's all right, then," he said.

"We don't mind you fellow knowing. Keep it dark—deadly dark—that's all.

If any other chap suspects, get hold of him and make him shut up. The Indians are not likely to complain."

"I guess not!" chuckled Lamley-Lamley. "They're far too high and mighty to dream that the juniores would jape them like this. My hat! It's the biggest thing I've ever heard off! Think of it!"

"And we're going to beat them!" grinned Figgins. A hundred and twenty for the first innings—oh! and wait till Fatty Wynn gets to work on their wickets!"

"Oh good!"

"Only keep it dark!"

"You bet!"

"We'll back you up," said Clifton Dane, "only we couldn't help letting you know we know. It's tipping I tell ya, ha, ha!"

"Time we got out, I think," said the rajah. "Tumble up!"

And the dusky cricketers left the dressing-rooms, leaving Clifton Dane and Jervis Kildare Lamley-Lamley there, still laughing.

## CHAPTER 12.

### The Hat-trick!

KILDARE opened the innings for the St. Jim's first with Bradburn.

The Rajah of Jai placed his man in to field, and sent on Pumar Asuni to bowl. The fat Indian rolled down to the wicket opposite Kildare, his dusky face shining in the sun.

Kildare looked at him with a painted expression. It happened that he had seen a photograph once of the Indian team. He did not remember them clearly, of course, but he had some idea that Pumar Asuni was a skin fellow. But that impression was evidently a mistaken one, for Pumar Asuni in the flesh was fat—as fat as Fatty Wynn of the Fourth Form. But Kildare had not much time to think about that. Pumar Asuni was preparing to bowl.

The ground looked on with amazement. They did not judge by the Indian's aspect that he would shape very handsomely as a bowler. If they had known that he was more Welsh than Indian, and was, in fact, Fatty Wynn of the New House, their expectations would have been very different. For Fatty Wynn was famous as a bowler, and all the juniors of the New House reckoned him to be the best bowler. Many times it had been said that, if stingshot had performed a Fourth Former to be enrolled in the first eleven, Fatty Wynn would have shown forth as the champion bowler of St. Jim's.

And Fatty was feeling in specially good form just now, and in a mood to conquer worlds. He was determined to make the most of the only chance he had ever had of bowling against the Sixth, and he was hoping especially for great efforts. If he could perform the hat-trick against Sixth Form batsmen, it would be a feather in his cap when the truth was known, and St. Jim's would never leave off talking about it.

Kildare faced the bowling, prepared for anything—except what he received. Kildare was a first-rate batsman, and yet he was beaten by the leg-spinner that Fatty Wynn sent down.

The ball looked simple enough as it came down, but it broke in with a spin that was quite unexpected, and before Kildare quite knew what was happening, his leg stump was knocked back and the ball went flying.

There was a murmur of amusement from the crowd.

Kildare was out!

Bowled first ball!

It was astounding! Even in country matches—when the county sent a team to play St. Jim's fire—that had never happened.

The Baints could not believe their eyes. They stared at the wrecked wicket, and Kildare stared at it, too. Was it true?

There was a yell from the Indian Soldiers:

"Well bowled!"

And the crowd gasped again.

The dusky heroes who could not talk English seemed to have acquired the gift of tongues all of a sudden under the influence of that lucky ball.

"My hat!" gasped Kildare. "Do you hear that?"

But the Indians recollect ed themselves in a moment. They clapped their hands in their places in the field, and shouted:

"Bang-bang! Boggley!"

Kildare looked at his wicket twice to make sure that it was no dream. Then the captain of St. Jim's tucked his bat under his arm, and walked off towards the pavilion.

"Hard chance, old chap!" said Darrell, as Kildare joined him.

The St. Jim's captain nodded.

"Routly hard!" he said.

"Bad for us!" said Montooth, rather slyly.

Kildare gave him a quiet look.

"You had to do," he said.

"Was it a fake, do you think?" Baker asked.

"No," Kildare was quite frank about it. "I don't think it was. That chap is a bowler that country batsmen might have difficulty in playing."

"I hope he won't make no hop!" said Montooth, rather sarcastically, as he dove on his gloves.

He was next man in, but he had not expected to be wanted for some time yet. Kildare generally stayed a good while at the wicket.

"I hope he won't, for the sake of the side," said Kildare, very quietly.

There was a suspicion of snark about the New House prefect's manner as he went in to take the captain's place. The two seniors were usually on very good terms; but, as heads of the two Houses of St. Jim's, they were to some extent rivals, and the time had been when the rivalry was very bitter. That time was past now, but Montooth felt an inward satisfaction at the idea of making a high score where the captain of the school had been dismissed for a duck egg.

Montooth took his place at the wicket to face the bowling. Nobody expected him to shape the fate of Kildare, himself least of all. The general impression was that the fall of the wicket had been a hopeless fake—a very lucky fake for the visitors, but one that would not be repeated.

But there were surprises in store for the St. Jim's crowd that day.

Fatty Wynn had never felt better, never more fit to conquer. The second ball was very different from the first, but it was equally deadly. Montooth gave a mighty swipe at the place where the ball ought to have been, but wasn't. The off stump was tilting back at an angle the next moment, and the bats lying on the ground. Montooth uttered a savage exclamation. He was not as patient and good-tempered as Kildare.

"Good ball!" exclaimed the Rajah of Jai.

The crowd gasped:

"My hat!"

"Great Scott!"

"Kildare's down, and Montooth, too—two duck's eggs!"

## JUST MY FUN

### Monty Lowther Calling!



Hallo, Everybody! I hear a cork-screw telephone has been invented. The name goes round and around.

A German, I tell you 8 inches tall, is keen on fishing. No doubt he could tell some "tall" stories.

Story goes that six hard-up fags walked into Dame Taggie's workshop and ordered one hundred and six chairs.

Of course, you know you should never lend a combinatorial monkey. He's sure to wriggle out of paying back.

How's this? Said the Englishman: "I sent Smith a dinner set for twelve people."

Said the Irishman:

"I sent him a teaset for twenty-four people."

Said the Scot:

"I sent him a pair of sugar tongs for a hundred people!"

New rhyme: Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November, and the tramp who broke into Dame Taggie's workshop and robbed the till.

As the M.P. remarked: "When I was a boy, my headmaster told me I should come to a bad end." Well, there he is!

Crazy one: "Money or your life?" roared the bandit.

"Take my life," said the traveller. "I'm saving my money for old age!"

"Yes," said the famous chef. "I've been cooking mafilles de matin now for over thirty years."

"Aren't they a bit overdone by now?" piped up a small voice.

We all have our ups and downs.

"Phew!"

There was no doubt about it. The crowd rubbed their eyes and looked, but they could not hook the balls back into their places. Montooth was out—the second duck's egg of the innings. The dusky Soldiers yelled.

"Bang-bang!"

"My only hat!" muttered Kildare. "That bowler is a demon!"

"Harrish!" shouted the crowd, recovering a little from their astonishment. "Harrish! Well bowled, sir!"

"Bravo!"

"Bang-bang! Boggley!"

Montooth came out, pale with anger. He threw down his bat, and peeled off his gloves, with his thin lips tightly set.

"ough! ouch!" said Baker.

"Ooh, bang it!" growled the prefect.

"Was it a fake?"

"Blamed if I know! I know I'm out! It looks as if we shall have a clipping soon to set against their 125!"

"It's untrue!"

"Routly!"

"Do your best, Baker," said Kildare, as the New House senior went in, and Baker nodded, but not very hopefully.

don't we? Especially the chap with an end and tail at the chinna!

"An author must use his imagination," says an instructor. Quite! First he has to imagine that somebody will read his stories!

Summer holiday weather doesn't agree with many people. Especially with the official forecasters.

Once the rich man said: "Home, James." Soon he'll be saying: "Dame, James." In this "dry" rag, of course!

Shimpole says he always thought it must be very wet at the R.R.C., with the place always full of water.

Reflection: The difference between a strong-minded boy and a pig-headed one depends on whether it's yourself or the other fellow.

Shimpole contemplates a new work to be called "The Life of a Cat." In nine volumes, we presume?

Story: An old nigger who had never seen a train trudged hundreds of miles to see one. Unfortunately, he got there just after a bad gale. "Did you see it?" his friends asked.

"No," responded the old nigger, "but I saw the tracks it made."

"Many young men treat their jobs as a joke," says an employer. Finding humour in every situation.

A good joke is like a bell, they say. It is "died" a lot of times.

Then there was the desperate criminal who turned and struck the bloodhound on the nose. Knocked him sometime!

I hear young Gibson went to sleep in the Third Form room. A case of "kidnapping."

Special Note: Never criticize your Form-master without reason. A Form-master without reason is deserving of sympathy.

Try this: "What are you going to be?" the visitor asked Wally O'Arcy.

"Well, after I've been the Cabinet Minister my pater wants me to be, and the doctor the mother wants me to be, I'm going to be the sirname I want to be!"

Chin, chin, chaps!

He stood up to the bowler, very much on his gravel, but perhaps he was a little too much on his gravel. The ball that came down was like a shell for speed, and it whipped under Baker's bat and tore out his middle stump like a dash of lightning.

Then St. Jim's yelled.

"Out!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

And the Soldiers shrieked:

"Bang-bang!"

Kildare's face was a study as Baker came disconsolately out. The Jai bowler had performed the bat-trick at the beginning of the first over. How soon that innings to end, when it had commenced so!

The Baints were looking very serious and grim. They had been very keen to play the Indians, and they had expected a stiff match, but their expectations had not been quite up to this.

Where was the "rot" to stop?

Leference of the Fifth went in after Baker, and Leference tried overstepping. He succeeded in stopping the next ball.

The Gas Lamp.—No. 1429.

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 so deadly a description.

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

Patty Wynn had bowled wonderfully well, but Fortune had favoured him. He could not expect to repeat the hat-trick.

But later, in the innings he bowled Darrell with only 7 runs to his credit, and after Kildare and Montooth, 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 seniors would have been licking. 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 Levinson!

LUNCH was a merry meal to the Indian cricketers, though it was not quite so cheerful as usual to Kildare 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.

Punar Aami, the bowler, came in for a great deal of attention, and all his wants were well looked after—and his wants 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 blazed with enjoyment.

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

Figgies was afraid that Patty Wynn would overlook the lunch, and spoil his form for the afternoon innings, and his fears were well grounded. Whenever Patty Wynn found himself at a really plentiful spread, he was liable to forget everything else.

On any other occasion Figgies would have spoken to him in the plainest of plain English, but just now English of any sort was banned, and it was useless to shout out "Bang-bang!" or "Boggley!" to Patty 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 bouncer off the pastures as much as you can," the rajah whispered to Tom Merry.

"Bei Jere! I'll go and speak to him!" said D'Arcy.

"Show up!"

"Wally, Figgies—"

"Charlotte chung bang wallop!" said Figgies loudly.

"Wally—"

Blake pounced D'Arcy, and the rest of St. Jim's remembered himself, and was quite silent. Tom Merry crossed over to Patty Wynn and tapped him on the side.

Tom Gave Lassance.—No. 1,478.

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

Tom Merry pointed to the partition, and shook his head, and Patty Wynn understood.

"All right," he said suddenly. "I'll mean, boggley—boggley!"

Gore looked at him very curiously.

"So you speak English, Mr. Punar Aami?" he said.

"Yes—yes, I mean—"

Tom Merry pinched him frantically and Patty Wynn broke off. The Shell fellow dragged him from the table. Gore stared after them curiously enough.

"Those chaps are playing some blessed game with us!" 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 Levinson of the Fourth, his suspicious eyes gleaming. "You notice how they shouted out 'Well bowled!' once on the field!"

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

"Yes, but—"

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

He joined Clifton D'Arcy and Lamley-Lamley, who were chatting with the Rajah of Jai. He looked at the rajah with a peculiar penetrating expression, and the rajah strolled away. Levinson grinned.

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

"Do they?" said Lamley-Lamley.

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

"How did you know that?"

"I happened to see you!"

"You happen to see a lot of things, don't you?" said D'Arcy 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 were an odd lot."

"Do they?"

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

Clifton D'Arcy and his companion strolled away. Levinson's eyes glinted. 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. Levinson nodded to him cheerfully, scanning his face the while.

"Good match, eh?" he asked.



"Where did you girls go those Indians?" asked a dark-skinned boy. "A dusky fat shot out promptly, caught her."

"Ya-hem! Bang bang bang chuk wallah!"

"Wore to-day for cricket, thought?"

"Sam, song toonal chump!"

"That's Blundstone, I suppose?" said Levinson.

"Chang-bang."

"Can't you speak any English?"

"Ching ching punkah wallah."

"Well," said Levinson, feeling quite secure in talking as plainly as he liked it. "The Indians could not understand English, of all the nags, silly, black-clad dandies I ever saw. I think you take the giddy biscuits! Where did you pick up those features? Where did you discover that nose—you call it a nose, I suppose?"

"You Indian woman?" shouted the supposed Indian.

Levinson staggered back in blank astonishment.

Biff!

A dusky fat shot out and it caught Levinson on the point of the chin. The end of the Fourth sat down in the grass with a bump and a groan.

### CHAPTER 14.

#### Looking After Levinson!

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

Levinson 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 Levinson.

"You foolish wotnah!"



"You which wotish?" exclaimed the supposed Indian, in part of the tribe, and sent him staggering backwards.

"D'Arcy!"

"You grottin' beast! I— Bai Jee!" The rest of St. Jim's remembered himself a little too late. "Bai Jee—I mean, bang bang bang clang!"

Lovison grizzled unpleasently as he rubbed his chin. He picked himself up slowly.

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

"Pashal wotish to papp?" exclaimed D'Arcy.

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

"Bogger bang wallop!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Lovison impatiently. "I know you're D'Arcy of my Firm, and I can guess 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 bit 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 unpleasently.

"After your deth me in that way?" he asked.

"You deserved it, you uttah wotish!"

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

Arthur Augustus looked very much alarmed.

"You ain't say a word!" he remarked. "Play the game, you wotish?"

"I'm certainly going to tell Kildare."

"Bai Jee! If you do, I will give you a 'fakihil shwa shahin'" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Clifton Dunes and Lumley-Lumley know, and they are not saying a word. I rely on you, Lovison, to keep them. Otherwise, we shall all combine to wag you, when the game is given away, and I warn you that you will have a woff time!"

Lovison hesitated.

He was the most unpopular fellow in the Lower School, and if Tom Merry & Co. chose to run 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 game of that kind.

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

The rest of St. Jim's looked at him with incomprehensible scorn.

"So you're going to blackmail 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 seven locks eat, you will get such a waggin' that you will think life not worth living!"

"Oh, hold on! Somebody else may tumble, 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. "Peway 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 Dunes and Lumley-Lumley, who were chatting near the front of the pavilion. It was nearly time for the Jai second innings. The two juniors looked at D'Arcy in astonishment as he walked up with Lovison, who was looking sulky and weary.

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

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

"Well, Dunes—"

"I guess you are a prime champ!" remarked Lumley-Lumley.

"Well, dash 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 fakihil baba, you know, you can't trust him!"

"We'll stick to him all the afternoon," grizzled Lumley-Lumley. "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 discoveries," said Lumley-Lumley.

"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 certain words—excepting Hirschstein!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

Lumley-Lumley and Clifton Dunes 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 resist.

"It's going all wrong," Tom Merry remarked, with a chuckle. "Nobody but Dunes and Lumley-Lumley has any idea—"

"And Lovison," said D'Arcy.

"Lovison! Does he suspect?" asked Monty Lovisher.

"He knows."

"How does he know?"

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

Figgins gave a snort.

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

"Wait! I—"

"An!" said the whole Indian team together, speaking in English. "Pat-head! Champ! Duffer! Benighted bairns! Fankies an!"

"Weakly, dash boys!"

"It's all the Indians' fault—"

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

"The messe rotter, to take it!"

"Vaaa, I was much more inclined to give him a fakihil thorashun, dash boys; but it was necessary to be very diplomatic," explained Arthur Augustus. "Of course, you can always rely upon me to—"

"To give the show away?"

"No, Lovisher; certainly not! You can always rely upon me to use tact and judgment when they are suspicious. I have shot Lovison up, and Dunes and Lumley-Lumley have agreed to look after him and see that he doesn't jive."

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

"Weakly, Tom Merry—"

"No; it's really a harmless bantie, when you come to know him!" Merry Lovisher remarked.

"Lovisher, you are—"

Kildare came over towards the Indians. Tom Merry wedged the end of St. Jim's behind.

"Hush!"

"Weakly, you are—"

"Hush! Care!"

"Oh, all right!"

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

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

The Gas Llamas.—No. 1,029.

alone. "We attend the honourable pleasure of your worthy abode?"

And his followers chimed in gravely: "Bang-bang!"

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

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

"Punkah wanjhi wallah booch booch?" he asked.

"Punkah wallah booch," replied Blake.

"Kaith kaith!" said Tom Merry, with a nod.

And the rajah, as it 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.

#### CHAPTER 15.

#### Going Strong!

**F**LOGGINS put down the name of Punter Ammi-alien Faity Wyne as last man in. The fat Fourth Former had batted 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 Faity Wyne in English. Figgins opened the innings himself this time, with Karr for his partner. The crowd cheered the Rajah of Jai as he came on, remembering how he had shaped in the first innings.

Figgins saluted gracefully in response to the cheer.

The Saints looked as if they were determined to make a tremendous effort to get level. They were 30 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 batted well, and so did Jack Blake, but Monteith took Digby's and Higgins' 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 Punter Ammi.

In half an hour Jai were five down for 24, 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 Cornish proceeded to make the fair fly.

Both of them were good bowlers, and both as keen as mustard. They made hay of the bowling, though Kildare changed Monteith, 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!"

Ten One Limerick.—No. 1433.

"Hooray!"

And the group of dusky batters 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-banging.

Oldies Daws and Lumley-Lumley specially cheered and clapped. They knew whom they were cheering and clapping. Levenson, too, but he did not cheer. He sat on the grass between the two juniors, looking sulky.

Once or twice he made an effort to get away, but he did not succeed. And he received a solemn warning that if he wandered off, he would be followed, and soundly kicked 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 Lowther at the other end—Tom Merry, emboldened 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 loyalty backed him up. Then the ball came in, straight as a die, for the batsman's wicket.

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

The whole field hung breathless upon his movements.

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

Crash!

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

The ampies 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 Lowther's wicket fell in the next over. The bating was pattering yet; Faity Wyne came in last to join Tom Merry. But the over-abundant bush was still telling upon the fat Fourth Former, and his movements were heavy and slow.

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

Faity Wyne nodded.

"I'm all right."

"Chang chang!" said Tom Merry hastily, as the wicket-keeper looked at him.

"Oh, bang, fuzzy wuzzy pop!" said Faity Wyne.

And he went to his wicket.

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

But Faity overtook him at last.

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

And the Saints cheered in great relief:

"How's that?"

Faity Wyne was out, and Tom Merry had finished his big innings not out. The total of runs was exactly 100. It was a good score, making 220 with the score of the first innings.

"And they've got 90 towards it," grinned Figgins to his comrades. They won't reach it very easily, especially if Faity bowls as well as before."

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

"No; especially as the fathead has

(Continued on page 18.)

#### BOHO ANSWERS "WHO IS IT?



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

"Hooper!" exclaimed the sergeant. "Who's that thundering fellow lifting both legs?"

Hallucinations have been ascribed to T. Henson, 7, Whitfield Road, Southgate, St. Barnet.

that, he had reason to rue his keenness. For Levenson 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 Indian score had leaped up to 75, and the two formidable batsmen were still going strong.

Kildare tossed the ball to Monteith.

"Be gone them out!" he exclaimed rudely.

Monteith grinned rather disconsolately.

"I never saw a pair of boundaries to well out!" he said.

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

"Ha, well held!" exclaimed Kildare.

"Bravo, Monteith!"

Kangaroo carried out his bat.

Manners came on to join Tom Merry,



*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.*

**H**ALLO, 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 "grouch," they have invariably ended up by paying a tribute to the old paper, and shown their 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 Sutton, where they run a GEM club. The go-ahead secretary, with the kind assistance of his headmaster, organised 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 these 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 are faithfully portraited 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.



A free 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 name, together with the coupon on this page, to the address given above.

Daniel Sifton, 48, Clifford Avenue, East Sheen, London S.W.14; age 16-17; Jubilee stamps.

Charles Hyman, Marconi Drive, Prestatyn, North Wales; age 14-16; dance bands, golf, football, tennis.

#### "GREEN AS GRASS!"

Of all the new boys who have made their advent at St. Jim's, there never was such a simpleton arrive as Algerian Blenkinsop, Algy, whom you will meet in next week's humorous story, comes from Huckleberry Heath, Tom Merry's home-town, and really he is as verdant as his native health! His whole appearance shows that he was born for the special purpose of having his leg pulled, and needless to say, it is pulled—heartily! In consequence, Algy adds considerably to the fun and frolics of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's, and the result is a sparkling long story 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 toolbox—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 next gripping chapter of our great story of the early adventures of the Gipsy chums, we find Harry Wharton & Co. on the trail of the gipsy kidnappers, grimly determined to recover the property stolen from Marjorie Haselden. Here they track down the gipsies, and how they deal with a dangerous situation when it comes to a showdown 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

PEP PALS COUPON  
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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 townfolk. Regularly, as clockwork it goes, 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! It puts one in a comfortable frame of mind to tackle 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 Adam, attacked by a fierce leopard, coolly grabbed hold of its tongue, and held on to it tightly, thus saving himself from being badly mauled. But not fortunate, though just as cool and courageous, was the act 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. Not, though badly injured by the lion's claws, the keeper didn't lose his head in that terrifying moment.

With one of the lion's paws passing 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, paddled 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."

#### THE EDITOR.

Jimmy Murphy, 277, Gottingen Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; age 10-14; sports.

Miss C. R. Harcourt, Avenfield, Market Road, Minchenden, Surrey; girl member of the Princess Louise Club.

Giles Bassett, 15, Abbey Road, Wimborne, Birmingham; stamps.

Andrew Blaikie, 2228, Outremont Avenue, Montreal, Canada; age 16-18; stamps.

Victor Satchell, 18, Sydenham Road, Sydenham, London, S.E. 16; age 16-18; overcoat; camping.

Miss Peggy Johnston, 1, West Way, Merton, Wallasey, Cheshire; girl correspondent; age 12-16; sports, drama, music.

(Continued on page 21)

been feeling too much," said Figgins. "All of you keep an eye on him during tea, and punch 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—"

"Scot!"

"I really think, Figgins—"

"Scot!"

And Fatty Wynn digested and gave it up. There was evidently no convincing Figgins on that subject. Tea was served under the sun-trees before the Indians 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 Victors!

KILDARE opened the second innings, with Minotaur at the other end. He hoped to give the Indians 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 piled 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 elicited cheer after cheer from the onlookers.

The St. Jim's second innings was, all through, a brave and continuous 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 82 runs—Kildare's wicket among them—the Indians 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 feed was to be a piping one, and mental pictures of it danced 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 Rutherford and Lettovre one after the other, the first for two, and the second for a duck's egg.

Kildare looked blue as they came out. Eight down for 82, out of 130 that were wanted. Then Darrell went in, with Baker at the other end, and Darrell, who was a mighty batter, reviewed matters a little.

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

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' eyes began to gleam.

The first eleven wanted ten more to tie—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 oceans had been looking if their dusky complexions had allowed them to look anything but brown.

Figgins turned the ball to Fatty Wynn again.

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

"I'm hungry."

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

Fatty Wynn grunted.

"Yes, I'm thinking of that," he said. "Do your best, Fatty, old man."

"Right-in, Fatty!"

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 was 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 tie, 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 last ball was aimed for three, and the score stood at 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 wicket now, not boundary batters. And their life was to be brief. Fatty Wynn sent down a ball that was his best, and it whizzed 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 Minotaur juniors knew, by the juniors of St. Jim's—the juniors of their own school!

The dusky cricketers yelled.

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

And St. Jim's gaily gave them a cheer. 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 Jai, with a pleasant smile on his handsome, sunburnt face.

"You're 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 finish."

"It was an honourable and splendid match, my young friend," said Figgins, finally shaking as his own ardor 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 chaps," 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 chattered loud and long.

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

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## CHAPTER 17.

### Fatty Wynn Changes Colour!

**I**T 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. Balliton 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-rooms 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. Balliton, with a nod; "but you very nearly pulled it off. That is a good bowler of theirs. I was watching him."

"Oh, he's splendid, sir!" said Kildare heartily. "Parson Amis, 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 as well," the Headmaster 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. Balliton said, with a pointed smile. "They perplex me somewhat. I must admit that stout little boxer is unconsciously like Wynn of the Fourth. I have noticed Wynn's bowling many times, and he has the same delivery, and the same unexpectedness about the results."

"Oh, he beats Wynn hollow, sir!" said Montforth. "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-rooms with Kildare and the rest, where a really handsome collation was prepared.

Parson Amis' eyes gleamed as he surveyed the well-spread 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-panelled walls was gaily lighted and decorated with flowers.

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

And Tom Merry chuckled.

"It's ripping!"

Kerr leaned over to him,

"I say, what about calling-over?" he said.

"Phew!"

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 turn up in evening call-over, after a day's absence, the matter would become serious. And they certainly could not turn up. Mr. Railton was already taking call-over in the Great Hall.

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

Lamley-Lamley and Clifton Dane consulted on the subject. But they could think of nothing. They might have answered "Adams" 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 senior room at supper."

Lamley-Lamley chuckled.

"I reckon not!" he said. "They're all here as long as they keep close."

"Merry?"



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

"There 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 Holly.

"Ah, yes, they are probably together," mused Mr. Railton, ranging his eyes over the juniores. 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. Know, will you send them to me when they return?"

"Certainly, sir," said the prefect.

And the school dispersed.

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

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

The dusky faces of the Indians glinted 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 peculiar language, excepting when they sang, and then they showed curious knowledge of English, and even English slang.

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

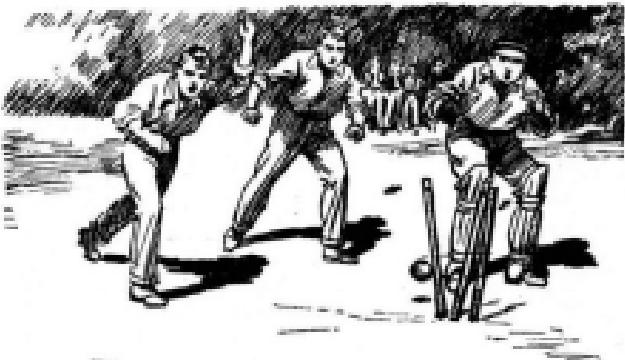
"You asked Railton to pass the pie."

"Spencer spooner stop hang vallop!" Montague looked very much puzzled.

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

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

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



The batsman buried himself forward and hit the end of his bat on the crease. Crash! The next moment the wicket was knocked to pieces as the ball was hung in with unerring aim!

Kerr pitched him again, and Fatty squealed.

"Hit the—"

"Bang chick bang!"

"Oh, yes! Wady halfa khalifa both ooh."

"Here you are!" exclaimed Larsson, hurrying up with a riper of soda-water.

Some of the fags had been given leave to sit at the table, at a great honour, and Larsson had offered his services. He had given Dane and Lamley-Lamley the slip at calling-over.

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

He hurried up to Fatty Wynd with the riper 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 distract and turn the jet of fizzing liquid upon Fatty Wynd's face.

There was a roar from the fat Fourth Formers.

"Yanooop! Owl! Yeh!"

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" exclaimed Larsson blushing.

"Yow! Oh!"

Fatty Wynd jumped up, clutched and blinded, kicking his chair over back.

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The St. Jim's fellows who noticed it were surprised. It was only natural that the Indians, touring 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 Seniors had to believe their own ears.

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

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

Kerr pitched him.

"Bang-bang!" he whispered.

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

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

"Bang-kash," replied Fatty Wynd.

"Don't you understand me?"

"Muckey chackey walker."

wounds. He put both hands to his face, wiping the foaming soda-water from his eyes and nose and mouth. His face was discoloured, 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. Whitch streaks appeared all over the dusky complexion of Puran Ausi, and a great deal of his complexion had been transferred to his service.

"Great Scott!"

"My hat!"

Kerr clutched Wynd by the shoulder. There was a sharp hiss.

"Brah!" he whispered fiercely.

"Right!" muttered the unfortunate Fury.

He covered his face with his hands and bolted.

## CHAPTER 18.

### "Aman!"

FATTY WYNNS had rushed out of the room before the masters 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 squirted 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, hoping sharply that he had done sufficient mischief. Certainly, he had observed the change in Fatty Wynd's complexion, but the fat Fourth Farmer's flight 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 disguised, but he had not succeeded in that.

The Rajah of Jal looked perturbed. "I hope Puran Ausi 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 boat. Will you follow him, Kumar Lal, and see whether he is damaged. Kong bang pashy tap sunny bang."

"Osh goch!" replied Kumar Lal.

And he followed the footsteps of Puran Ausi.

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, that they had seen a change in Puran Ausi's complexion when he wiped the soda-water off.

"He's not a nigger at all, that's what I say!" said Levers of the Faith. "It's a little game!"

"I'm sure of it!" said Montooth. "I've suspected something all along. I couldn't quite make out what. I remember, now, that some of the Jal team were cracked; 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 my belief."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Hudson. "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 Montooth. "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."

"You, rather!"

"No good saying anything now," said Baker hastily. "The result would have been the same, anyway, and we don't want to appear to be sargeing 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," grunted Levers.

Montooth grinned.

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

Baker led Fatty Wynd back to his seat.

Kildare called across to the fat bather:

"I'm sorry for that accident, Puran Ausi. I hope you weren't hurt?"

"Not a bit—ahem—ram sing park hang kouch!"

"It's all right, then?"

"Bang-bang!"

"Good!"

"Oh, boggley, boggley! Wallah!" said Puran Ausi.

And the supper went on cheerfully enough.

Mr. Railton came into the room and spoke quickly 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.

"Who are they, sir?"

"Nine School House boys and three

New House boys are missing," said the Headmaster, 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. Kisko 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 Figgis 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. Railton. "I have inquired in several quarters, and it appears that not one of these 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 Figgis 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. Railton. "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 one eye. The thing had to be seen through now, and it could not be helped. Exactly how it was to end they 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 bedtime, and then give in at the last moment. But they were reckoning without the care of the gods.

Lordon met Mr. Railton as he left the senior room. He stopped in his path, and Mr. Railton 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 could not have spoken, sir, only I think you are feeling that there may have been some accident."

"Do you know anything about the master?"

"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 17.)

Miss Gwen Ballard, 97, Carlton Road, Albany Estate, Alberton, Westbury, Middlesex; girl correspondents; age 14-17; likes books; overseas.

Miss Irene Sheppard, 1814, Fifth Street, East Calgary, Alberta, Canada; girl correspondents; age 15-17; stamps; sports, Quilts.

J. E. Belcherham, Commercial Inn, British, Devon; stamps.

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Geoffrey Follett, St. Buryens, Abersychan, N.W., Australia; age 13-15; stamps; correspondence; age 12-13; overseas; sports, autographs.

Jade Marie, 69, Fontham Hall Drive, Fontham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; age 13-15; stamps, overseas.

Peter Furse, 28, Sherwell Road, Bristol, Bristol, England; age 14-15; rabbit.

Vasco Alfonso Alves, Portuguese Consulate, Corrodon, Tolo, Hong Lafayette, Shanghai, China; inventions.

Nevy C. Martin, 4825, Wellington Street, Verdun, P.Q., Quebec, Canada; wants members for the International Camera and Snapshot Club; age 14-25.

Miss Doreen Hardwick, 18, Hart Hill

Drive, Salford, Lancashire; girl correspondents; age 12-13; overseas; stamps; sports, autographs.

Miss Mabel Russell, Sunnyside, Tyneham Avenue, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire; girl correspondents; age 15-17.

Miss G. Hopkinson, 22, Albany Road, Heading; girl correspondents; old Oxus and copies of "Nelson Leo Library."

C. E. George wants members for the Invicta Correspondence Club, Gloucestershire, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England; age 17 up.

Ernest Quigley, 1623, Narcissus Street, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada; stamps; age 14-16.

W. D. Alexander, 7227, Wisconsin Avenue, Montreal, Canada; stamps; age 13-16.

"In the school?"  
Mr. Railton gave a start.  
"In the school, Lovison."  
"Yes, sir."  
"Where?"

"In the seniors' room, sir. I—I can't say more, sir; it would be misleading; and they would rag me afterwards, said Lovison, hesitating. "I don't want to give them away, sir, but—but I thought I ought to speak, as you seemed anxious, sir."

Mr. Railton compressed his lips.

"I hope that was your motive, Lovison," 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 are playing a joke in telling me this, Lovison, 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 masters, white and brown, gay with flowers, and there was a crowd of boys waiting on the cricket-stumps, but not a sign could the Headmaster see of Tom Merry & Co.

But he was relieved to test the master. Lovison's manner had been convincing, though his statement was so peculiar.

The Headmaster 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 Headmaster called.

"Merry!"

Chandra Singh rose in his place at the table instinctively.

"Admit!"

And there was a general gasp.

## CHAPTER 18.

### Something Like a Triumph!

**M**R. 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 am!" murmured Figgins. "Oh, you Indians am! You've given the show away now, and no mistake!"

"Rajah! Yaaa, wathah!"

"The game's up," said Kerr calmly. "Never mind. It was a jolly good game."

Montooth sprang to his feet.

"I understand," he exclaimed. "Tom Merry!"

Tom Merry sighed deeply.

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 sickly 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 his ears 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 companion.

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 booridans!"

"The specimen?"

"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 Headmaster looked at Tom Merry, who was crimson under his paint, although his bluskin did not show.

"Now, Merry, kindly explain."

"Make the rajah explain," said Montooth sourly. "He's the leader."



**Speed Cap:** "You were doing forty miles an hour?"  
**Masterot:** "Well! Make it fifty—then trying to sell the car to my passengers!"

**Hall-capsule has been awarded to J. Tappett, 10, Mayflower Street, Margravine Road, Bermondsey.**

"Yaaa, wathah! Though, weakly, I should have great pleasure in explaining, and perhaps you fellows had better leave the talkin' to me. In the circus, what is worshipped 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 cheeky young rascal!" said Kildare; while some of the Sixth exploded, 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 Indians. So as the Indians weren't coming, we worked it to come down as the Indians, sir."

"Blast my soul!"

"Of course, it was only a jape, 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-tempered captain of St. Jim's.

"Yes, it was a good match," he said. "But your chaps in playing such a jape on us—"

"Well, 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 far as 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 Montooth angrily. "You will punish them, sir?"

"Oh, stuff!" Kildare exclaimed quickly. "It was cheeky of them, but it was only a jape. 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 jape, you know. We oughtn't to have been taken in."

"Yeah; 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 speeded Sixth Formers looked grimly at the disguised juniors. The Rajah of Jal and his team had drawn close together, Fatty Wynn with a jape bark in either hand. They were rather expecting to leave the Common-room as they had left Kildare's study the previous day. Montooth 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 complexioners cleaned off, and get into some civilian clothes," he said. "And if you ever dare to jape the Sixth again—"

"Weakly, Kildare—"

"Get out!"

The Rajah of Jal and his team got out. Outside Juniors crowded round them in waves 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 gaudily over the way they had had the laugh of the first eleven.

(Next Wednesday: "GREEN AS GRASS!" He was the biggest simpleton ever—just prove it for the Juniors! You must read Alice Bannister, the next boy who came to St. Jim's pushing a velocipede! Make sure you don't miss this sparkling story—it's another corker!)

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## 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, Hazelden dashed to his chum's aid, and wrestled the dagger away. Bob Cherry leapt frantically with Balstrode, while Hazelden sprang up the steps of the caravan, to see if his sister was a prisoner inside.

**Why Wharton Was Late!**

"**T**HAT'S my letter! Give it to me!"

"Rats!"

"You can't give me my letter at once!"

Harry Wharton of the Remove Form at Greyfriars heard the alarm 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—there—among them the bally Balstrode, the bally 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 Hand-dome furiously.

The Remove bally laughed.

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

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

Had the letter belonged to anyone but Hazelden, Balstrode would have found opinion very much against him, but no one 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 loud laugh. "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!"

The Chums Library.—No. 1,439.

# HARRY WHARTON'S CHALLENGE!

*By Frank Richards.*

\*\*\*\*\*

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

The bally of the Remove snarled.

"Most I'll," he said. "Then look here!"

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

"Give me that letter!" exclaimed Hazelden.

"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 shan't be, you cad!"

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

But, unheeding the warning, Hand-dome made a spring for the letter. Balstrode gripped him by the shoulder with his left hand, and, exerting his strength, easily held him back at arm's length.

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

"Oh, shut up!" said Trevor.

"Shut up yourself, Trevor! 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 group 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 war-like, and his fist was 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 dared to tackle Harry Wharton when he looked as warlike as he did now. Harry passed the letter to Hazelden. Balstrode made a grab at it, but Wharton pushed him back.

"No, you don't, Balstrode!"

The bally of the Remove glared at him.

"What business is it of yours?" he said ferociously.

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, check it!" said Trevor.

"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 Balaustines, leaving the quarrel, where it was, hurried away, the bell announcing them to first lesson. But Balaustre was too infatuated to care for the bell or anything else.

"You're not fit," 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 bump. King hurriedly put his arm through Balaustre's and drew him away.

"Come on, Balaustre! We shall be late, and you know what old Quiggin is like when a fellow is late for class."

"But—"

"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 Balaustre. And he hurried away with his friend towards the Balaustine class-room, into which the juniors were crowding.

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet. The sudden blow had dazed 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 hurried away to change his collar, and finally descended the stairs to make his way to the Form-room.

———

Detailed!

**W**HARTON!"

Harry Wharton glanced at Mr. Quiggin 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. Quiggin grimly. "I suppose this is another example of your inordinate hauteur, 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 sullenly.

"Very well. I am afraid I cannot allow the lesson to be interrupted, and the discipline of the Form to be put at risk, 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 sullenly to his place,

"Do you hear me, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall expect to see the work before tea," said Mr. Quiggin. "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.

Balaustre grinned at him along the desk. The bully of the Remove was pleased. Harry's chum, 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 conversing at the other end of the Form, and Mr. Quiggin's attention was drawn in that direction.

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

Mr. Quiggin 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. Quiggin.

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When *Hansdene's* sister was kidnapped on her way to Greyfriars, her kidnappers didn't bargain for the stoutness and pluck of these cheery chums of the Remove—

Harry Wharton & Co.!

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Harry dropped his eyes to his book. He was set in to the Head master, a flogging, as he knew. But Mr. Quiggin did not want to be severe. He allowed the incident to pass with that warning, and the lesson fortunately terminated 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. Quiggin, 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, so you hadn't," chimed in Bob Cherry. "What did you want to row with Balaustre for, Wharton?"

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

Bob Cherry gave Nugent a significant grin.

"More instructions," he remarked. "I think Wharton might take the trouble to control his heated 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 Quiggin's back up, and he would be reported to the Head."

"Cherry! Nugent!"

Hansdene came towards the chums of the Remove, a letter in his hand. Hansdene'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 follow come down to the village with me this afternoon?"

"If you want to stand on a feed at the workshop 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."

Hansdene 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 Hansdene'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 Balaustre had taken the pocket containing Marjorie Hansdene'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 Hansdene, "the letter that rascal Balaustre tried to take, you know, and Wharton wouldn't let him."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's that? I haven't heard," Hansdene explained.

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

"Quar' taste, and no mistake!" said Nugent.

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

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

Hansdene laughed. "Well, she's a girl, you know, as 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 workshop."

"Jolly good idea!"

"Marjorie's coming down to see the school," explained Hansdene. "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 Hansdene, colouring again, "don't call me Vaseline, please, before her! She will wonder!"

"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 Hansdene. "It will take about half an hour to walk it. See you?"

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

"There's some good in that chug," 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 Quiché bird. Wharton always hit me by the way he answered in the Form-room, and Quiché won't release him from detention. See you at dinner."

Nugent nodded and went slowly upstairs and along the passage open which the Remove studies opened. Study No. 1 was shared by Nugent, Wharton, Balstrode, and Billy Bunter.

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. Vaselin's sister is coming down to Greyfriars this afternoon."

"Is she?" said Harry Wharton differently.

"Yes, and Vaselin 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 Quiché 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'm 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!

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

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

Handlards 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!"

Handlards gave the troublesome necklace the required shove. Bob Cherry was always careless in his attire, but for all that there was no more likable or a more popular fellow at Greyfriars.

"Hello, 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 inquisitively.

"Are you coming with us, Wharton?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What about the detention?"

"Never mind that now."

"There'll be a row!"

"Let them be!"

"Oh, very well, it's your funeral!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Come along!" And the four juniors quitted the

The Gas Lamp—No. 1439.

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

"I say, you fellows!"

Bob Cherry stopped. Billy Bunter of the Remove came towards them, thinking through his spectacles, which had earned him the nickname of the Owl. Bunter 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, Bunter?"

"If you're going down to the truck-shops I'll come with you, if you like," said Billy Bunter generously. "They have a fresh lot of junk tins in on Wednesday, you know. I should like to stand you all a treat."

"Hello, have you come late 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 treat in return when my postal order comes!"

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

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

Billy Bunter 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 hedge sprouting 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.

"Hello, 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 humanity. The dark faces were sullen and heavy, and their black eyes glinted hungrily under dark brows.

The juniors stopped out of the road to let the caravans pass. They went lumbering by, with a clangor 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 intently after the gipsy van. "Listen!"

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

"There's something wrong there!" he muttered. "Whichever is in 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 as sodden," 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 Handlards. "I— But where are you going, Wharton?"

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

The two gipsies who were walking with the horses were still looking back. They scurried 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 us?" asked the man who had fallen behind the van, evidently with the purpose of preventing any attempt to enter it.

Harry Wharton looked him full in the eyes. The man was a short 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 impatiently.

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.

"So it is, Basangro," said Melchior mirthfully. "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 added, with a savage sneer.

"Yes," said Harry steadily. "I don't believe you! Let us go 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 struck shelfaneously.

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 undesirable 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 hooligans 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 van lumbered on and disappeared round a bend in the lane. The cry had not been heard again. It was quite possible that the master 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 these steps now to make up for lost time.

### Mixing!

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

The five juniors had almost reached the station.

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

Hansdóens looked worried.

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

"I suppose so," said Hansdóens slowly.

"Let's go to the ticketshop," said Billy Bunter. "It will be an hour before the next train comes in, and we're as well waiting here."

Hansdóens 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 in all the four o'clock trains. She will have to go home by the six o'clock."

"Perhaps she's on the platform——"

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

Wharton slipped, stepwise into his coat, and the juniors went on to the platform.

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

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

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

"Indeed, perhaps, she's lost her way."

"Look her way on a straight road."

"Well, Hansdóens says that she has never been to Greyliaison before, and you know how easy it is to go astray in a strange place."

Hansdóens 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 Greyliaison.

"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 Hansdóens had arrived at the station and set out for Greyliaison.

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—but what was certain

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

Harry Wharton struck his head.

"The lane runs on to Greyliaison," he said. "There are two turnings, but at each there is a signpost plainly directing you to the school. I thought that at first, Hansdóens, but now I've

thought it over, I can't believe she has wandered from the road."

Hansdóens 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 suspect 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 Hansdóens'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 Hansdóens's in the hands of the gipsies——"

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry.

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

At Close Quarters!

**H**ARRY WHARTON and Bob Cherry were two of the best runners at Greyliaison, but they were hard put to it to keep pace now with Hansdóens.

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

Hansdóens made the pace, and the others kept to it. The school came in sight, with the long road stretching away past the great bronze gates. They did not halt at Greyliaison. The gipsy van had evidently passed the school, and the fact that he had gone so far proved that the gipsies had increased their speed after the meeting with the juniors.

Hansdóens 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 at the breathless juniores came out on top of the hill past the school.

Hansdóens turned upon him with a furious face.

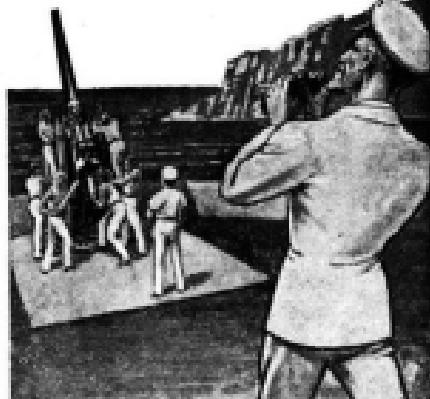
"What is it? What are you stopping me for?"

"We're 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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from the top the Juniors could see miles of the winding road beyond; but on the bare road was no trace of the gipsy caravan.

Harry Wharton's hand rose to point. "Look for yourself!"

"Where are they, then?" Haseldene asked.

"What am I to do?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Of course, they turned off by the road to the left at the foot of the hill—that's it."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"I should say so. Anyway, they never went over the hill or we should see them there. I should say that they turned off to get towards Bryn Common. You know lots of gipsies staying there."

"Let's turn back."

"Wait a bit. If we could climb one of those big trees, we could see—"

"That's soon done!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, and he swung himself into a big branch, and was soon scrambling like a monkey from branch to branch.

The Juniors watched him anxiously from below. Higher he went, till he disappeared among the foliage, and then they saw his curly head come out from the branches at the top of the tree. Holding on to a branch which swayed under his grasp, Bob Cherry swept the surrounding country-side.

His claws below heard him give an excited shout.

"I've spotted them!"

Then he came scrambling down the tree and bounded out of the branches and dropped lightly to the ground, considerably soiled all over, but excited and cheery as ever.

"You have seen them?"

"Yes!" panted Bob.

"Where are they?" asked Haseldene, grasping his arm anxiously.

"On the lower road. They turned off at the foot of the hill, and they're making for Bryn Common."

"Good!" exclaimed Haseldene, and he started running down the hill.

"Stop!" shouted Nugent.

"Why? Don't waste time!"

"I want to save it—keep cool. We can cut across here through the wood, and get ahead of them in Bryn Lane. If we follow them by road we shall probably miss them."

"Good!" said Harry Wharton. "You know the country. Nugent, lead the way."

"Follow your leader, then."

Nugent ploughed through the hedge, and the Juniors followed. Billy Bunter came panting up in the rear. During the dash on the hilltop, he had gained lost ground and was now close behind.

"I say, you fellows," he gasped, "I—I'm out of breath, you know. And this running makes me fearfully hungry. Have you got a sandwich in your pockets, any of you?"

But Billy Bunter's question was not even heard.

The Juniors, following the lead of Nugent, who knew the country well, were dashing at full speed through a woodland path. The woods were thick and green on either hand, the flowers of spring glistening among the fern, and the song of the resounding life of the woods in the air. But the Juniors had no time for all that. They were thinking only of overtaking the second-classers who whose hands they believed Marjorie Haseldene had fallen.

Out of the green woods at last, and into the lane, swept by the breeze. Away on the right lay the green, rolling

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stretches of Bryn Common, on the left the winding, ratty lane, and in the lane was heard the clatter of hoofs, of rickety wheels, and of hanging gates swinging under clumsy vehicles.

The Juniors were ahead of the gipsies!

They had only barely done it. As they halted in the lane, panting, the van came in sight. Melchior and Barretro were waiting ahead of the leading horse, talking together, as when the boys had met them an hour or more ago.

Melchior caught sight of the Grey Juniors standing in the lane, and a change came over his dark face.

Harry Wharton ran towards him, followed by the others.

"Stop!" shouted Harry. "Keep back, you young fool!" yelled the gipsy, swinging his cudgel aloft.

"Stop, I say!" Harry Wharton dragged at the horse, and the animal, nothing loath to stop, came to a standstill, and the second van mechanically halted. Melchior made a savage blow at the boy, but Bob Cherry shoved him back in time.

The vans were halted. For a moment the two parties stood glaring at one another.

It was Melchior who spoke first. His swarthy hand was grasping his cudgel ominously.

"What do you want?" he hissed, showing his yellow teeth in a snarl.

"I want my sister!" said Haseldene firmly. "Open the door of that van. You found her in there!"

Melchior grunted.

"You young fool! Why should you fancy that your sister is in that van?"

"You kidnapped her. We know it!"

Although the Juniors' suspicions were by no means certainly yet, there was something in Melchior's face that moment which convinced them that they had not made any mistake.

Whether Marjorie Haseldene was in the gipsy van or not, Melchior knew what had become of her.

"Open that door!" shouted Haseldene furiously.

"I will not!"

"Then I will open it!"

Haseldene sprang towards the van. The two gipsies jumped into its way.

"Stand back!" barked Melchior.

"Come on!" shouted Harry Wharton.

He dashed forward. The cudgels in the gipsies' hands looked dangerous enough, and the boys were unarmed, but they were not afraid.

The odds, at least, were on their side. Harry Wharton dodged the savage blows. Melchior aimed at his side and missed with the gipsy. They struggled furiously, and Harry, boy as he was against a powerful man, gave a good account of himself. Nugent dashed to his aid, and wrenched the gipsy's weapon away just as the scullion was about to bring it down on Wharton's head, and then clutched him round the neck.

Meanwhile, Bob Cherry was fighting furiously with Barretro. Haseldene sprang up the steps and dragged at the door of the van. It creaked flying open, and a hideous crew appeared in the doorway. Her savage face glared out at Haseldene.

She did not speak, but she dashed a foul nap against the junior's chest and sent him flying down the steps. Haseldene fell with a bump into the road.

"Help!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Barretro was too much for him. Bunter was still lagging behind, too far away to render aid. Harry and Nugent were too busily engaged with Melchior to give assistance. Crash went Bob Cherry into the hedge, hauled there by the gipsy's powerful arms.

Then Barretro turned to aid his companion.

Harry and Nugent had no chance against the two men. They were dragged to the earth and left gasping there, dead under savage blows.

Melchior looked at them with a savage grin. He picked up his cudgel and seemed inclined to use it on the Grey Juniors, but his companion, who seemed the more cautious of the two, pulled him by the arm. Melchior nodded, and the gipsies went on their way.

### On the Track of the Kidnappers!

**HARRY WHARTON** staggered to his feet.

He was still dazed by the savage blows of the gipsies, and his face was cut and his lip bleeding. Bob Cherry scrambled out of the hedge, torn and scratched. Nugent was still gasping in the road.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "This is a go!"

"They're gone!" said Haseldene, with a gasp. "I'm certain Marjorie is there. Why should they be so determined to keep us from seeing into the van?"

Harry Wharton nodded.

"There's no doubt about it now," he said. "Your sister has been kidnapped by the gipsies, and—"

"We must rescue her!"

Wharton caught him by the arm.

"No, good now; let's think it out. Look!"

He pointed after the van. Melchior and Barretro were mounted on the van now and whipping up the horses. The gipsy vehicles were lumbering on at a pace now which the boys could not hope to keep up with. The hard run, and the fight on top of it, had tired them out.

Haseldene realised it, and he stopped.

"What's to be done?"

Harry Wharton stooped and helped up Nugent, who had suffered most of all. Billy Bunter came panting up.

"I say, you fellows, has there been a row?"

"Yes," said Harry shortly.

"Really? I say, have you found her? I thought very likely you were mistaken all along, you know, and the best thing we can do is to get back to the village and have a feed at the tuck-shop. Running always makes me hungry."

"Hold your silly tongue!"

"I don't hold my tongue. Wharton! I'm fearfully hungry, and you are as good as promised to stand treat—"

Billy Bunter grasped him and shook him.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I wish you wouldn't shake me like that, Cherry. My glasses might fall off, and if they broke I should be stranded, because I haven't a second pair, and one of you would have to lead me home."

"Oh, leave off talking!" said Nugent. "Can't you see the master'surious?"

"It would be serious enough if my glasses got broken. I think you are all very inconsiderate. Here I've been running—"

Billy Bunter shook him again, and this time his glasses fell off, and Billy Bunter groped about in the dust for them.

Harry Wharton's brows had been wrinkled in thought. Harry was not popular in the Service at Greyfriars, and even with his chums he sometimes had little difficulty. But they unconsciously realised that he was the strongest character there, and in a moment of doubt and difficulty, they

instinctively turned to him as the leader.

"I think Bunter had better go back to the village," said Harry, speaking at last. "He's not much use in a fight." Bunter looked up from his groping in the jars.

"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 where to hit. But when a fellow can't see—"

"Dry up, Bunter!" said Nugent.

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

"There they are, just by your hand." "Be they are! That's better!" said Bunter, 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 tuckshop. I shall have to pay for all I have, so one or two had better fork out the bill."

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

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

"Bunter had better go back to the police station in the village," said Harry impatiently, "and explain to them there about Miss Haxdene and the gypsies. 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 tuckshop, or go and hang himself, for all I care! You understand, Bunter? You're to go to the police station and explain about this—"

"I understand, but—"

"And here's a two bob bit; you can get a food bar for that at the tuckshop," said Harry Wharton. "I suppose you're hungry?"

"Humper's not the word for it," said Billy Bunter, slipping the two-shilling piece into his pocket; "I've finished! I always get finished 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! Come off, and don't forget the message to the police station."

"Right ho!"

"Get off, then!" bawled Bob Cherry.

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

"Go, you utter ass!"

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

"We can't overtake the gypsies," 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 rented a job 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!"

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



Scaling a high perch in the tree, Bob Cherry scanned the country-side for the gypsies who had kidnapped Marjorie Haxdene. Suddenly his sharp eyes 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."

Haxdene nodded without speaking.

"Come on, then," said Harry.

#### Haxdene's Sister!

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

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

The juniors stuck to the chase doggedly. But although they were thinking of the gypsies, 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 shade of the bushes.

"Hello!" 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 bare feet were cut and bruised by the stony road.

The boy halted. The sight of a girl in tears naturally troubled them. Haxdene 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.

Haxdene gave a shout of astonishment.

"Marjorie!"

The girl gazed at him, amazed.

"Marjorie!" repeated Haxdene, 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 Haxdene.

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

"The gypsies!" 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 robbers 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 these scoundrels sit up for this!"

"We will," said Harry Wharton grimly.

"It's all right now, Marjorie," said Haxdene softly. "I say, these 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 gypsies, wasn't it?"

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

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

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