

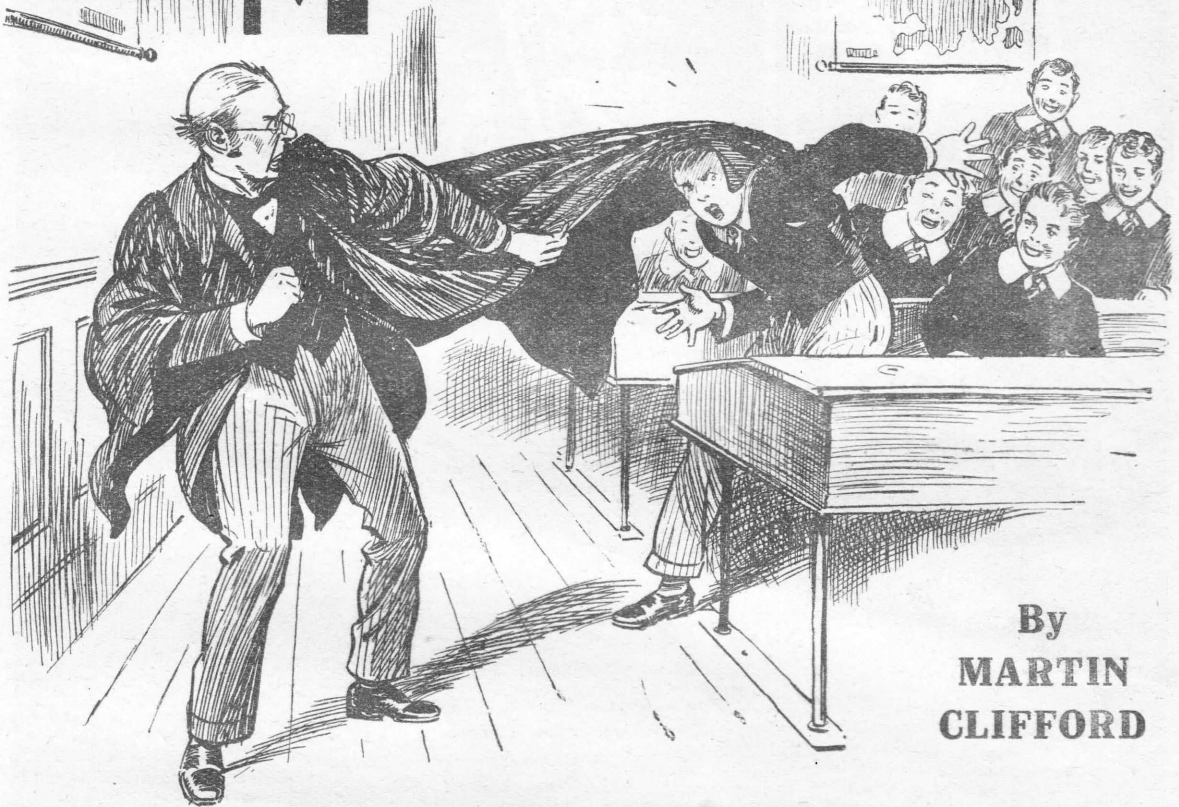
LONG STORIES OF ST. JIM'S AND GREYFRIARS—INSIDE.

The GEM 2d



ONE-TWO-THREE-HUP!

MICKY MAKES



By
**MARTIN
CLIFFORD**

Mr. Linton started to walk away. And then suddenly his gown tightened and Crooke's jacket was dragged over his head. "Crooke, let go my gown at once," stormed the irate Form-master. "I'm not holding it," yelled the unhappy Crooke, unaware that the new boy had been busy with a safety-pin.

CHAPTER 1. Simply Astounding !

EVERYBODY had noticed it. That is to say, everybody in the School House; Mulvaney of the Sixth being a School House fellow. For days past Mulvaney had been like a bear with a sore head. At all events, that was how Jack Blake described him. Blake of the Fourth had the honour of fagging for Mulvaney that term, and so when Mulvaney was specially bad tempered Blake knew it better than anybody else.

Old Mulvey, Blake confided to his chums in Study No. 6, wasn't a bad sort of a duffer, as a rule. But lately he had been very trying. Something was worrying him.

Mulvaney was popular in his way. He was a good footballer, and sometimes played in the first eleven. He was a leading light of the senior debating society. He would referee a junior match, which was really very kind of him. He was a prefect, and sometimes imposed lines and "whoppings." But Tom Merry said, from experience, that old Mulvey's whoppings were always laid on more lightly than any other prefect's whoppings. And he did not always remember to ask for the lines.

So, upon the whole, the juniors
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agreed that Mulvey was a good sort; and Jack Blake forgave him for unaccountable outbreaks of temper when his duties as a fag brought them in contact.

The fellows could not help wondering what was up with Mulvaney. Levison of the Fourth, who knew everything, declared that the senior's bad temper dated from the morning when he had received a letter from home. Levison declared that he had seen Mulvaney shy that letter across the Senior Common-room, and then kick over a chair.

Tom Merry, of the Shell, was the first to receive any definite information. Tom Merry, who was captain of the junior eleven at St. Jim's, wanted Mulvaney to referee in a match with Rylcombe Grammar School. But, in view of Mulvaney's irascibility of late, he felt a little doubtful about asking him, and he consulted on the subject with his chums, Manners and Lowther.

"Oh, ask him!" said Manners. "It can't do any harm."

"He can only kick you out of his study, anyway!" said Monty Lowther. Tom Merry laughed.

"Well, that isn't exactly what I want," he said. "Still, I think I'll tackle him. I want to have a Sixth Former refereeing the match, if we can work it."

And Tom Merry made his way, a little

doubtfully, to Mulvaney's study in the Sixth Form passage.

As he approached the study he heard a sound of irregular footsteps pacing to and fro in the room. Mulvaney was not at ease. Tom hesitated a few moments, and then made up his mind and knocked at the door.

There was no reply from within. Mulvaney apparently did not hear the knock.

Tom Merry knocked again, and then opened the door.

Mulvaney was walking up and down his study, with his hands thrust deep into his pockets and his brows corrugated in a deep furrow. He stopped, and stared at the junior, not at all amiably.

"Why didn't you knock?" he demanded crossly.

"I did," said Tom mildly. "Twice!"

"Well, what do you want?"

"Ahem! If you're busy, I'll see you another time," said Tom Merry diplomatically.

The prefect did not seem to be quite in a humour for favours to be asked of him.

"Well, get out!" said Mulvaney.

"Certainly!"

Tom drew back, and was pulling the door shut after him, when Mulvaney rapped out:

"No; come in! I want to speak to you."

—THIS RIPPING LONG YARN OF THE CHUMS OF ST. JIM'S.

THINGS HUM!

Tom came into the study, and waited. Mulvaney took another turn or two up and down the room without speaking, and Tom Merry waited in silence, wondering what was coming. It was very evident that old Mulvey was very much perturbed.

He stopped at last, and stared at Tom Merry again.

"I want to speak to you, Merry," he said abruptly.

"Yes?"

"It's about—" Mulvaney paused.

"Yes?" said Tom Merry again.

"It's a rotten bother!"

"Is it?" said Tom, not knowing what else to say. If Mulvaney had been a junior, he would have said: "Get it off your chest, Mulvey, old chap!" But he could not say that to a prefect.

"Beastly!" said Mulvaney.

"I'm sorry!" said Tom politely.

"They don't understand at home," Mulvaney added, as if in explanation.

"Don't they?" said Tom.

"No. Of course, they wouldn't."

"No; I suppose they wouldn't," agreed Tom Merry. He did not understand in the least what Mulvaney was talking about; but it was only polite to agree with him.

"Of course, I shall have to stand it!" said Mulvaney gruffly.

"Will you really?"

"I can't do anything else, can I?" growled Mulvaney.

Tom Merry thought it best not to answer that question. As he hadn't the faintest idea what Mulvaney was worrying about, he was not really in a position to give an opinion. Besides, Mulvaney did not want an answer. He ran on:

"Of course, I can't do anything else. I can't dictate to the pater, and he wouldn't take any notice if I did. He thinks St. Jim's is the right place for him."

Tom opened his eyes.

"So he's coming!" growled Mulvaney.

"Your pater?" ejaculated Tom Merry. Was it possible that Mulvaney had been bothered for days because his pater was coming to see him?

"My pater?" snapped Mulvaney.

"Who's talking about my pater?"

"Oh, I thought you were!"

"I said my pater thinks St. Jim's is the right place for him."

"Oh!"

"That's why he's coming."

"Oh!"

"And the dickens of a trouble he will be to me here!" said Mulvaney.

"Is—is—is he going to stay?" asked Tom Merry.

"Stay! Of course he's going to stay! What do you think he's coming for?" grunted Mulvaney. "I wouldn't mind if it was only for a visit. But he's going to stay, of course; he's going to be in the Shell—your Form."

Tom Merry almost staggered. This was news—with a vengeance. He wondered for a moment whether old Mulvey had gone "potty." But Mulvaney did not look potty. He looked worried and harassed and morose, but not at all potty. But, really, to hear a Sixth Former state that his father was coming to St. Jim's, to enter a junior

Form, was so astonishing that Tom Merry could scarcely believe his ears.

"Well, what are you blinking at?" snapped Mulvaney.

Tom Merry recovered himself.

"Was I—I blinking? I didn't mean to. I was—was surprised."

"Nothing surprising in it, is there?" growled Mulvaney.

"I—I mean—about his coming into the Shell."

"He's been prepared for the Shell," explained Mulvaney. "He's had a tutor. He's too old for a fag Form."

"I should jolly well think he is," said Tom Merry.

Mulvaney stared at him.

"What do you know about it? You don't know how old he is—you've never seen him, have you?"

"N-no! But he must be—well, older than most chaps—ahem!"

"I don't think St. Jim's is the right place for him," said Mulvaney. "It's no good my saying so; and it would sound unfeeling if I said I didn't want him here. But it will be simply rotten for me!"

"Rotten!" said Tom Merry vaguely.

"Of course it will. The little beast is a frightful trouble. He'll make things hum here, I know!"

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**St. Jim's is in an uproar! Gore has two black eyes, Levison a swollen nose, and nearly every junior is displaying signs of battle. And the reason—Mulvaney's young brother has arrived!**

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"The—the what?"

"The little beast!" said Mulvaney, who showed a trace of excitement.

"Oh, come!" said Tom Merry, quite shocked. Whatever might be the faults of Mulvaney's pater, Tom felt that it was not right to allude to him as a little beast. It was undutiful, to say the least of it. "Don't call him names, Mulvey. It's all right!"

"I've called him every name I can think of!" growled Mulvaney.

"And does he stand it?" exclaimed Tom, in astonishment.

"Stand it! Of course he does! I'd jolly well whop him if he didn't!"

"Whop him!" exclaimed Tom Merry, wide-eyed. "Oh, I say!"

"Yes, rather! You don't know him!" growled Mulvaney. "He's what you'd call a practical joker. He was born one, I think. Always up to some blessed monkey-tricks. He's old enough to know better."

"I—I suppose he is," admitted Tom Merry, thinking that Mulvaney's pater was probably fifty, at least.

"And I've whopped him lots of times, and it doesn't make any difference," said Mulvaney.

"You—you've whopped him?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Nothing surprising in that, is there?" demanded Mulvaney, staring at the Shell fellow.

Tom Merry gasped. He had never heard of a fellow, even a Sixth Former, whopping his pater before. He thought that the Mulvaney household must be run upon somewhat peculiar lines.

"You're looking a bit strange," said Mulvaney. "Is it getting stuffy in here?"

"Yes, I suppose it must be," replied Tom Merry. "That is—I mean—No, it isn't. I'm quite all right, really."

The junior was certainly looking a little flabbergasted. Mulvaney's astounding news had completely taken the wind out of his sails.

"And now he's coming here!" went on Mulvaney, returning to his subject. "I've got to put up with it. I—I was going to ask you a favour, Merry."

"Certainly," said Tom Merry. He had come there to ask a favour, but he was quite prepared to confer one instead.

"You're the captain of the Shell, ain't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, will you see that the little blighter isn't—isn't ragged to death the first day or two?" said Mulvaney hesitatingly. "I can't always be chipping in, you know. I don't want him here, as a matter of fact, but—I don't want him hammered to a jelly his first week. If you'd keep an eye on him—"

"With pleasure," said Tom Merry. "I'll jolly well see that he's not ragged at first, Mulvaney. Rely on me."

"That's all," said Mulvaney. "He's coming this afternoon!"

"Right! By the way—"

"Oh, you came to ask me something, didn't you?" said Mulvaney. "What was it?"

"Will you referee for us on Saturday? We're playing the Grammar School!"

Mulvaney nodded.

"Yes; one good turn deserves another. That's all right!"

"Thanks!"

And Tom Merry quitted the Sixth Former's study in a state of great astonishment, and with really startling news for his chums.

CHAPTER 2.

The "New Boy"

"WELL?" said Manners and Lowther, as Tom Merry joined them at the end of the passage.

Tom Merry was still looking and feeling astonished. The amazing communication Mulvaney of the Sixth had made was enough to astonish anybody. Tom Merry had been wondering whether he mightn't have misunderstood the prefect. "But there seemed no room for any misunderstanding. Mulvaney had said plainly: "I can't dictate to the pater. He thinks St. Jim's is the right place for him." Unless old Mulvey had really gone off his rocker, there it was!

"What's up?" asked Lowther, as he caught Tom Merry's expression. "Mulvey told you what's been worrying him the last three or four days?"

"Yes. And it's simply amazing!"

"What's the trouble?"

"His pater—his giddy pater is coming to St. Jim's—coming into the Shell as a schoolboy—as one of us!" Tom Merry gasped breathlessly.

Manners and Lowther gave a simultaneous yell.

"Gammon!"

"Well, Mulvaney said so—honest

Injun," said Tom Merry. "He's coming this afternoon!"

"But—but it's impossible," said Manners, bewildered. "He was pulling your leg."

"He was quite serious, and in an awful wax about it."

"Well, I should think he was in a wax about it, if it's true. I suppose it isn't quite impossible, but it's jolly unusual. Hasn't his pater been to school in his young days?"

"Blessed if I know."

"Might be a giddy merchant prince, you know, risen from being an office-boy, and never had time for school," Manners remarked thoughtfully. "I know old Mulvaney is something in the City, and he's jolly rich. Might be something of that kind. But I can't understand his coming to school in a junior Form. That's too thick!"

"Mulvaney said so."

"Honest Injun?"

"Yes, ass; and he was simply wild. He called him a little beast."

"Oh!"

"And he says he's a young terror, and will always be in hot water, and wants me to keep a fatherly eye on him," said Tom Merry, a little ruefully.

"Oh!"

"And I've said I will. I suppose it's up to us. Mulvaney senior will feel a bit like a fish out of water, I suppose. We've got nothing special to do this afternoon, and we'll look after him—what?"

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Lowther. "It will be fun, anyway."

"No larks, you know."

"Oh, of course not!" said Lowther, with a chuckle.

The astounding news from Mulvaney's study was soon known throughout the Shell.

The fellows simply gasped when they heard it.

If it had not been Tom Merry, who was known as the soul of truthfulness, who gave the information, many of them would have refused to credit it.

But there was no doubting Tom Merry's word.

It was amazing, but true.

No wonder old Mulvey had been worried ever since he heard the news from home, if that were the news.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked. "It's enough to wowwy any fellow! A patah's pvopah place is in the home, I considah."

"Yes, rather," grinned Blake. "Not in the Shell, anyway. But I can't quite believe it. There must be some mistake."

Quite a crowd was gathered at the gates of St. Jim's that afternoon to look for the stranger when he came. They knew the time the train arrived at Rylcombe, and timed the arrival at St. Jim's, and were ready. There was a shout from some of the fellows as the village hack was seen trundling down the road.

"Here he comes!"

All eyes were upon the hack as it rolled in at the gates. There had been a lingering doubt in Tom Merry's mind, a feeling that, after all, he might have misunderstood Mulvey. But that doubt vanished as he saw the occupant of the hack. It was a short, stout, middle-aged gentleman, with whiskers and spectacles, and a pleasant, good-natured face. He was the only person in the hack. He looked out of the window and gave the crowd of fellows an agreeable smile.

"This is St. Jim's?" he asked.

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"Yes, sir," said Tom Merry. "Are you Mr. Mulvaney?"

"Yes."

"We've been expecting you, sir," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah, sir," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Welcome to St. Jim's, sir."

Mr. Mulvaney stepped from the hack.

"You are very kind," he said, evidently a little surprised by the warmth of his welcome from the boys. "Let me see. Where is the School House?"

"You're coming into the School House, sir?" asked Kangaroo.

"Yes, certainly!" said Mr. Mulvaney. "My son is in the School House."

"Oh, yes! You want to be with him?"

Mr. Mulvaney looked puzzled. "I want to see him," he said. "Perhaps one of you will show me to his study."

"This way, sir!" said Tom Merry.

Mr. Mulvaney followed Tom Merry into the School House. The crowd of fellows were left in a buzz of excitement. There was no doubt about it now.

Tom Merry tapped at Mulvaney's door and opened it. The study was empty! Mulvey was not there.

"Mulvey's out, sir," said Tom Merry. "If you'll sit down here, I'll look for him and send him in!"

"Thank you very much, my boy!"

"Not at all, Mr. Mulvaney!" said Tom politely.

And leaving the stout gentleman in Mulvey's armchair, Tom Merry hastened away to find the prefect.

CHAPTER 3.

Something Like a Rag!

TOM MERRY had been gone about a minute and a half when the study door reopened. Mr.

Mulvaney looked up, expecting to see his son Mulvey of the Sixth. But it was George Gore of the Shell who looked into the study, and Crooke was just behind him. The two rascals had waited just long enough for Tom Merry to clear off.

"Hallo!" said Gore.

Mr. Mulvaney stared at him, apparently surprised by so familiar an address from a junior. He gazed at Gore with all the dignity of fifty years old. But Gore was not abashed. If the gentleman was coming into the Shell, he was a Shell chap, and he had to take the Shell as he found it. He couldn't expect any unusual consideration because he happened to be old enough to be the father of other chaps in the Shell.

"Waiting for Mulvey?" asked Gore.

"I'm waiting for my son," said Mr. Mulvaney stiffly.

"He's sent me for you," said Gore. "Will you follow me?"

"Oh, certainly!"

Mr. Mulvaney rose.

"Why cannot my son come to me?" he asked.

"I dare say he'll tell you," said Gore. "Hop along!"

"What!"

"Buck up; can't wait all day!"

He walked away, and Mr. Mulvaney, in a state of great astonishment, followed him. He had never visited St. Jim's before, but certainly he had not expected it to be quite like this on his first visit. The familiarity displayed by these juniors towards a gentleman of his years was surprising and disconcerting. However, he followed Gore, as he was anxious to see his son.

Gore led him upstairs, and as Mr. Mulvaney did not know anything about the interior arrangements of the School House at St. Jim's, of course, he did

not know that he was being led to the Shell dormitory. Gore opened a big door, and stood aside for Mr. Mulvaney to enter, and followed him in with Crooke.

There was a shout of laughter as Mr. Mulvaney came in. Nearly a dozen fellows were gathered in the Shell dormitory, most of them friends of George Gore's, and ready to back him up in a rag. It tickled them to see Mulvaney walk cheerfully into the trap.

Mr. Mulvaney looked round him at the row of white beds, and the grinning juniors. There was no sign of Mulvaney of the Sixth. Gore closed the door, and Crooke put his back to it. That made Mr. Mulvaney feel vaguely alarmed.

"What does this mean?" he asked. "Where is my son?"

"Oh, never mind that!" said Gore. "I don't know where he is, as a matter of fact. We've brought you here to talk to you."

Mr. Mulvaney jumped.

"What!" he ejaculated.

"We belong to the Shell, most of us!" explained Crooke. "We're going to make you welcome!"

"But, I don't understand——"

"We'll make you understand, Mulvaney!"

"Boy, you are insolent! You should address me as Mr. Mulvaney!"

"Catch me!" said Gore, with a chuckle. "Now you're here, my pippin, you'll find that you are just the same as any other chap!"

"What!"

"The fact that you're an old josser instead of a young josser won't make any difference, you know," remarked Levison of the Fourth.

Mr. Mulvaney stared at Levison.

"What—what—what did you call me?"

"Josser!" exclaimed Levison calmly.

"You—you insolent young rascal!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Levison.

"Do you want to be bumped?"

"Bumped!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney.

"Yes, rather! I suppose you know you can be bumped as well as any other chap. What did you come here for? You've got to take your chance."

"What! I—I——"

"You're starting a little late in life!" chuckled Mellish of the Fourth. "But we'll teach you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I begin to think that I am in a lunatic asylum!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney. "Stand aside, boy!" He marched towards the door.

Crooke did not stand aside. He only chuckled, and two or three fellows joined him, putting their backs to the door.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Mr. Mulvaney. "How dare you treat me like this? Do you wish me to complain to your Housemaster of your extraordinary conduct?"

"You'd better not! That's what we call sneaking," said Gore.

"What!"

"And if you sneak, you'll be given a Form licking."

"Wh-a-at!"

"Now," said Gore, "keep back, you old duffer, you can't get out!"

"You—you young rascal! I shall proceed instantly to your headmaster, and report this insolence to him!" exclaimed Mr. Mulvaney, who seemed hardly to know whether he was on his head or on his heels. "Stand aside!"

He rushed at the door. But the Shell fellows promptly collared him, and he was rushed back and bumped on a bed. He gasped and panted, in a state of

bewilderment that almost amounted to idiocy by this time.

"Now, sit there!" said Gore threateningly. "Get that pillow, Levison. If he gets off the bed, swipe him!"

"What-ho!" said Levison. Mr. Mulvaney scrambled off the bed as soon as the juniors released him. Levison promptly swiped with the pillow, and he rolled back, gasping. There was a roar of laughter.

"Oh, oh! Groogh! Help!" "Shut up!" roared Gore. "Upon my word! Help!" "Shove a cake of soap into his mouth if he doesn't shut up!" growled Gore. "We shall have the blessed prefects here soon!"

Kerruish of the Fourth grinned and brought a cake of soap. Mr. Mulvaney ceased to shout. He understood that the raggers meant business.

"Now," said Gore, wagging his forefinger at Mr. Mulvaney—"now, then, you're new here, and you've got to give an account of yourself. Understand that!"

"You—you young ruffians—" "Swipe him, Levison!"

Swipe! The pillow came down, and Mr. Mulvaney roared.

"Oh! Ow! Bless my soul! Oh dear! I—I think I must be dreaming!"

"Now, speak up!" said Gore. "How old are you?"

"I—I—I—"

"Do you want another swipe?" Mr. Mulvaney glanced uneasily at Levison, who grinned and lifted the pillow. He looked towards the door; but there was no chance whatever of escape. He was in the toils, and he had to submit to his fate.

"Now, then," said Gore, "how old are you?"

"Fif-fif-fifty-two!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney.

"Been to school before?"

"Ye-es, of course!"

"I don't see where the of course comes in, as you've come here," said Gore.

"Now, are you going to stand a feed to the whole Form?"

"The—the what?"

"Got any money?"

"Money? Yes."

"Lots?"

"I—I have plenty of money!"

"Good! Then you can stand a feed to the whole Shell."

"I—I—I shall do nothing of the sort."

"I—"

"Won't you?" roared Gore. "Look here! I'm head cock-and-bottlewasher in the Shell. I'm going to keep you in order—see?"

"Bless my soul!"

"You'll have to learn that you've got to toe the line here!" said Gore truculently. "We don't stand any nonsense at St. Jim's, I can tell you!"

"Now are you going to stand a spread for the whole Form?"

"Certainly not! I—"

"Good! Then you're going through it!" said Gore. "Get a blanket, you chaps!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A blanket was whipped off a bed.

Eight juniors seized it, one at each corner, and one at either side. Then Mr. Mulvaney was whirled off the bed, and tossed into the blanket. His weight made it sag, and he bumped down on the floor, and roared.

"Up with him!" shouted Gore.

Mr. Mulvaney was in a dazed and dizzy state by this time. That the juniors could really intend to toss him in a blanket—him, Mr. Mulvaney,

chairman of companies, head of great enterprises in the City—seemed incredible. And yet they evidently did intend it, for up he went.

Earth and the whole universe seemed floating away from Mr. Mulvaney as he went whirling up towards the dormitory ceiling.

Swoop!

Down he came again into the blanket.

"Gerrooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Up again!" yelled Gore.

"Oh, help—mercy!"

Up went Mr. Mulvaney, higher than before, and it seemed to his terrifying eyes that the ceiling was rushing down to meet him. It seemed like a century that he was in the air, and then he swooped down into the blanket again.

"Oh dear—help! Please, my dear boys, stop it! Don't— Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Up he goes!"

But at that moment the dormitory door was thrown open, and the Terrible Three rushed in. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther did not speak. They rushed into the raggers, hitting out right and left, and Gore and Crooke and several more of the Shell fellows went sprawling on the floor. Before the raggers could recover from the surprise, the Terrible Three grasped Mr. Mulvaney, whirled him up, and rushed him headlong out of the dormitory.

Gore staggered to his feet.

"Ow! The rotters! They've rescued him! Oh, my eye! After them! They're not going to get him away. After the rotters!"

"Come on!" yelled Levison.

And the raggers rushed into the passage in hot pursuit.

CHAPTER 4.

Not the New Boy!

MR. MULVANEY did not know whether he was on his hands or his heels. He was whirled blindly along by the three Shell fellows as far as the end of the passage, and there they were overtaken. The Terrible Three dropped Mr. Mulvaney, and turned at bay.

"Hands off!" roared Tom Merry.

"I tell you—"

"Rats! We haven't finished with him!"

"You're not going to—"

"Hand him over!"

"Collar him!" shouted Levison.

"There's only three of the rotters! Kick them downstairs, and collar the old jossler!"

"Rush 'em!" shouted Crooke.

And the raggers came on with a rush, confident in their numbers. Mr. Mulvaney rolled blindly on the floor in the midst of the struggling juniors. The Terrible Three were great fighting men, and they gave a good account of themselves, but the odds were too great. They were rushed back, and the raggers fastened upon Mr. Mulvaney again.

"Rescue!" shouted Tom Merry breathlessly.

Gore and Crooke and Levison had hold of Mulvaney. The Terrible Three dashed to the rescue and caught hold of him, too. Then there was a tug-of-war, Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther holding on to Mr. Mulvaney's arms and shoulders, and Gore & Co. dragging at his legs.

"Yank him away!"

"Hold on!"

"All together!"

Mr. Mulvaney gasped and panted, yelled and roared as the rival juniors



Crooke, Gore and Levison seized Mr. Mulvaney's legs; the Terrible Three grasped his arms. "Rescue!" shouted Tom Merry breathlessly. "Yank him away!" In the moment, the enraged and bewildered visitor found himself being used for an impromptu tug-of-war.

dragged him to and fro in the struggle for possession.

Unless Mr. Mulvaney had come into halves, Gore & Co. would have been successful, for the odds were too great for the Terrible Three. But rescue was at hand. Blake and Herries, and Digby and D'Arcy and Kangaroo came dashing up the stairs to their aid. They rushed into the conflict at once, and Gore & Co. were driven, defeated, along the passage, pursued right to the door of the dormitory, and driven in ignominiously.

Mr. Mulvaney sat on the floor in the passage, surrounded by the victorious juniors.

"Bai Jove, we've wescued him!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Feel wathah out of bweath, Mulvaney, old chap?"

"Ow—ow!"

"Must be wathah wuff on you at your time of life, old boy!"

"Ow—ow!"

"Never mind, we've rescued him," grinned Kangaroo. "As a matter of fact, he's a bit too old for these games. He oughtn't to have come in the Shell."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me help you up, Mulvaney," said Tom Merry.

Mr. Mulvaney staggered up, with Tom's assistance. He was gasping terrifically. He took his spectacles, which Blake found for him in the passage, and put them on, and blinked in utter bewilderment at the juniors.

"Oh dear—oh dear! I never—never knew anything like this! Take me to the headmaster, please! They shall all be flogged!"

Tom Merry shook his head.

"That won't do," he said.

"What—what?"

"You can't sneak, you know."

"Sn-sneak!" stuttered Mr. Mulvaney.

"It's not the thing. After all, it was only a rag. You must expect something of the sort, as you're new here," said Monty Lowther.

"What! Expect to be tossed in a blanket at my time of life!" roared Mr. Mulvaney.

"Well, you knew how old you were before you came here, I suppose," said Lowther. "Tain't Gore's fault you're an old chap, you know, Mulvaney."

"How dare you call me Mulvaney! Have you no manners?"

"Yes; here's Manners," said Lowther, with a grin, indicating his chum. "That's all we have."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," said Tom Merry, "you can't expect to be called Mr. Mulvaney in the Shell, you know. If you come here as you've done, you must expect to be treated simply as a junior. It can't be helped that you're an old chap."

"Old chap! Boy, you—you—"

"And you can't sneak to the Head, or you'll be ragged again and worse, and we shan't jolly well raise a finger to save you," said Manners.

"Wathah not, deah boy."

Mulvey is waiting for you in his study," said Tom Merry. "You'd better come!"

"This way, Mulvaney."

"You—you— Oh, good heavens! I—I feel as if this were all a dream!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney. "This school must be very carelessly governed when visitors are liable to be ragged by junior boys. I shall certainly explain the whole matter to the Head, and if you address me as Mulvaney again I shall report you also."

"Report and be blowed!" said Tom Merry.

Merry. "We're doing the best we can for you, and you're a jolly lot of trouble, I can tell you. I've got a swollen nose on your account. You might be decently grateful."

"Yaas, wathah! You are a wegulah ungwateful wottah, Mulvaney."

"Take me to my son's study!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney. "Perhaps he can explain why this place seems to have gone entirely mad."

"Bai Jove!"

"Oh, come on," said Lowther. "we'll hand you over to Mulvey, and be jolly glad to get rid of you!"

"Upon my word!"

Mr. Mulvaney followed the Terrible Three downstairs. He was still gasping for breath, and seemed likely to go on gasping for some time. They came into the Sixth Form passage, and met Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's. Kildare stared blankly at the dishevelled-looking gentleman. Mr. Mulvaney's collar was torn out, and his hair was ruffled, and his clothes were decidedly untidy and dusty.

"What on earth—" began Kildare.

"It's all right," said Tom Merry. "Mulvaney's been ragged, and we're taking him home to Mulvey. No harm done."

"What!" shouted Kildare. "Do you mean to tell me that Mr. Mulvaney has been ragged? Mulvaney's father ragged! By George, there will be floggings for this! Mr. Mulvaney, I had no idea! How on earth did it happen?"

"I was taken up to a dormitory by a trick!" gasped Mr. Mulvaney. "There I was seized and swiped with a pillow, and tossed in a blanket!"

"Great Scott!"

"I have never heard of such a thing!" panted Mr. Mulvaney, mopping his perspiring brow. "I should not have believed such a thing possible. It is incredible. But—"

"Somebody will be sacked over this!" said Kildare sternly.

"Oh, rot!" exclaimed Tom Merry warmly. "Mulvaney must take his chance with the rest. He knows what to expect, I suppose, when he comes here."

"What!" exclaimed Kildare. "Are you mad, Tom Merry?"

"No, I'm not. We rescued Mulvaney—"

"Call him Mr. Mulvaney, you disrespectful young rascal!"

"Well, I don't see why I should. But anything for a quiet life. Mr. Mulvaney will have to take his chance in the Shell with the other fellows. It's not our fault that he's older than us."

"What do you mean? In the Shell?"

"Yes. Didn't you know? Mulvaney's pater is coming into the Shell as a Shell chap!" said Tom Merry.

The captain of St. Jim's almost fell down.

"You—you young ass! What put that idea into your silly head?" he shouted.

"Mulvaney of the Sixth said so."

"What!"

"He told me so this morning. He said that his pater was coming into the Shell, and that he was a mischievous chap, a practical joker, and would get into trouble, and asked me to keep an eye on him. And I said I would. That's why we rescued him."

"You must be insane. Such a thing is impossible."

"Mulvaney said so."

"Impossible!"

"What utter nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Mulvaney. "My son could not possibly have said anything of the sort!"

Tom Merry flushed.

"He said so!" he exclaimed angrily.

"I thought it jolly odd. Isn't it true?"

"Of course it isn't! Are you foolish enough to imagine that a man of my age could enter a junior Form in a school?" exclaimed Mr. Mulvaney testily.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Monty Lowther. "You've put your foot in it this time, Tommy, my son, and no giddy mistake!"

"But—but Mulvaney said so!" yelled Tom Merry. "He said so quite plainly."

Kildare grinned. He could not help it.

"You've made some idiotic mistake!" he said. "Here's Mulvaney! Mulvey, old man, here's your pater."

Mulvaney of the Sixth had looked out of his study. He came out into the passage, uttering an exclamation at the sight of his dishevelled and dusty pater.

"Great Scott, dad! What's happened?"

"Look here, Mulvaney," exclaimed Tom Merry, "didn't you tell me your pater was coming into the Shell?"

Mulvaney of the Sixth stared at him blankly.

"My pater—the Shell—certainly not, you young ass!"

"Then I—I—I'm dreaming!" gasped Tom Merry. "Didn't you say, 'I can't dictate to my pater. He thinks St. Jim's is the right place for him'?"

Mulvaney turned pink.

"Yes, I did!"

"Well, then—" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"I was speaking of my minor."

"Your minor!" howled Tom Merry.

"Yes."

"You never mentioned your minor. I didn't know you had a minor. I've never heard of your blessed silly minor!" shouted Tom Merry.

"What! I told you he was coming this afternoon—"

"You only mentioned your pater—"

"You young ass—"

"You awful duffer—"

"How could you think I said my father was coming into a junior Form, you silly young ass?" shouted Mulvaney.

"How could I think you were speaking of a minor, and I didn't even know you had a minor?" shouted back Tom Merry.

"You—you silly gossoon—"

"You blessed blundering Irishman, I—"

"Look here—"

"Well, look here—"

"Never mind, never mind!" exclaimed Mr. Mulvaney. His face had broken into a smile as he listened to the altercation and understood the absurd mistake that had been made, and the smile broadened into a laugh.

"Never mind. It's all right. It was a mistake. Sure, you always were making mistakes, Patrick! I thought the boys had gone mad, but now I understand. They thought I was a new boy. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nobody would have checked you, sir, if they hadn't thought that," said Tom Merry, much relieved to see Mulvaney's pater take it good-humouredly.

"Ha, ha, ha! A new boy at my age!" shouted Mr. Mulvaney, with tears of merriment in his eyes. "Ha, ha, ha! Bless my soul!"

"But where is Micky?" exclaimed Mulvaney of the Sixth. "Didn't he come with you, pater?"

Mr. Mulvaney wiped his eyes.

"Yes. He brought his bicycle with him, and wished to ride it to the school, so I came alone in the hack," he said. "He ought to be here by now. But

perhaps the young rascal has gone for a spin."

"Oh!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "If there'd been a kid with you, sir, we might have guessed that there'd been a mistake. But as you came alone—"

Mr. Mulvaney laughed again. "Ha, ha, ha! Never mind. It was all my son's fault! Patrick, if you can get me a clothes-brush in your study—"

"Come in, dad!" Mr. Mulvaney followed his son, and they disappeared into the prefect's study. Kildare walked away, laughing. The Terrible Three looked at one another.

"Thank goodness he's taken it so good-temperedly!" said Manners. "Gore will be in a blue funk when he finds out the facts!"

There was the sound of a bicycle bell ringing outside the House.

"Bet you that's Mulvaney minor!" exclaimed Lowther. "Come on!"

And the Terrible Three hurried out of the House, very eager to see the youth whose coming to St. Jim's had caused so much perturbation to his major.

CHAPTER 5.

Major and Minor!

"**B**AI Jove, that chap looks like old Mulvaney, doesn't he?"

"Another edition, I suppose," said Jack Blake.

"Hallo, kid! What's your name?"

A lad a few months older than Blake had jumped off a bicycle outside the School House, apparently in blissful ignorance of the fact that cycles were not allowed in the quad. He was a thick-set, muscular-looking youth, with a round face, a mouth of unusual size, and bright, dancing blue eyes. His hair, which was nearer red than brown, grew thickly, and seemed to push his hat back on his head.

He was entirely self-possessed. If he was a new boy at St. Jim's, he had none of the average new boy's bashfulness.

He looked coolly at the juniors on the steps of the School House.

"Mulvaney," he said. "What's yours?"

Blake did not reply to that question. It was no business of a new boy to ask the name of an old hand. It was a new boy's business to answer questions and be civil.

"Any relation to the collection of Mulvaney's we've got here now?" asked Blake.

"Pat Mulvaney is my brother."

"Oh! Are you coming to this school?"

"I've come."

"What Form?"

"Shell."

"My hat! The same Form as your pater!" exclaimed Blake.

"Extwaordinawy!"

"Great Scott!"

Micky Mulvaney stared at the juniors. Evidently he did not know what they were driving at.

Gore and Crooke of the Shell came out of the House, and they exchanged glances as they heard the exclamations of the Fourth Formers.

"Another Mulvaney?" exclaimed Gore.

"Yes; minimus this time!" grinned Blake.

"My word, it's raining Mulvaney's! And is that bullet-headed kid going into the same Form as his pater?"

"So he says."

"Here he is!" exclaimed Tom Merry,



as he came out with Manners and Lowther. "I say, you chaps, there's been a mistake! Mulvaney has blundered, as usual—"

"Somebody's blundered, anyway!" chuckled Lowther.

"Oh, ring off, Monty! Old Mulvaney—I mean, Mr. Mulvaney—isn't coming to the school at all. It was a mistake. He's only come here to bring this kid—this specimen. I suppose you're Mulvaney minor—what?"

"Sure, and I am!" said the new boy. Gore's jaw dropped.

"Old Mulvaney not coming!" he stammered.

"No. It was a mistake."

"You took me in!" roared Gore furiously.

"Well, I didn't mean to. It was Mulvaney major's mistake, not mine."

"You—you idiot! Of course, it wasn't likely at all, but I took your word for it. Now I've been ragging a prefect's pater! Oh, my hat! He'll go to the Head!" gasped Gore. "I shall be sacked!"

"It's all right—"

"All right!" yelled Gore. "I don't call it all right. What will Mr. Mulvaney say? What will the Head say? What—"

"I tell you—"

"I'll jolly well explain to the Head that you did it all, when I'm called up!"

"You told us all—"

"Well, I told you not to rag him," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, rats! You told us he was coming into the Shell. You knew he wasn't. You were only gammoning. Now—"

"I told you what I had from Mulvaney of the Sixth. I couldn't help it if he was blundering. But it's all right. Mr. Mulvaney is going to overlook it, and won't speak to the Head about what's happened."

"Oh!" said Gore, greatly relieved.

"Did he say so?"

"Yes."

"Good egg! That's all right, then. It was all your fault. So you're the Mulvaney that's coming into the Shell?" added Gore, turning to the new boy.

"Sure." "Don't you know you're not allowed to lean bikes up against the House here?" said Gore. "You'd better take it away."

"How should I know, when I've only just got here?" said Mulvaney minor. "Where's my pater? I suppose he's got here?"

"Yes, rather! He's in your major's study," said Tom Merry. "I'll take you there if you like."

"Thanks!" Mulvaney minor followed Tom Merry into the House.

He left his machine leaning against the balustrade of the School House steps. Tom Merry came out in a few minutes.

"So that's the new Mulvaney," he remarked. "He looks rather fresh. His major says he's a tartar."

"I'll tartar him!" growled Gore. "He's too jolly cool for a new kid. He wants putting into his place and keeping there!"

"You'd better let him alone," said Tom dryly. "He looks as if he's better able to take care of himself than his pater is."

Gore snorted.

"I'll jolly soon show you about that!" he said, and he swung away down the steps. He jerked Mulvaney's bike away from its resting-place.

"Going to put it in the bike-shed?" asked Crooke.

"No fear. I'm going to give him a hint not to leave bikes about," said Gore. He opened a penknife and jabbed it through the tyres, one after the other. With a loud hiss the air escaped from the punctured tyres.

Tom Merry uttered an angry exclamation.

"That's a rotten thing to do, Gore!" "Against the rules to leave bikes about in the quad," said Gore calmly. "That will be a valuable tip to the cheeky young rotter!"

It was an ill-natured trick to play on the new boy, but George Gore was quite in his element in that line.

Tom Merry's brow contracted. He was greatly inclined to "go for" George Gore on the spot, but he restrained himself. He picked up the machine and wheeled it away to the bicycle-shed, and put it on a vacant stand.

Meanwhile, Micky Mulvaney had gone into his major's study.

Mulvaney of the Sixth met him with a frown. He might have affectionate feelings towards his younger brother, but it was evident that he did not want him at St. Jim's.

"Here I am, Paddy," said Mick Mulvaney cheerfully.

"And I wish you were anywhere else!" growled Mulvaney major.

Micky chuckled.

"My dear Paddy, I'm going to do you credit in the school. Looks a cheery place to me. I shall have a good time here."

"If you play any of your tricks—"

"Paddy, old man—"

"Now, now!" said Mr. Mulvaney, raising his hand. "Don't you two begin to row as usual. I won't have it. You're to live in peace and quietness here."

"Bedad!" said Micky, and his major snorted. Evidently he did not anticipate much peace and quietness in the neighbourhood of Mulvaney minor.

"Micky, you're to do everything your brother tells you. You're to obey him, and—and follow his example in everything," said Mr. Mulvaney severely.

"Bedad!" said Mick again.

"And you're not to get into any rows with the other boys."

"Oh, pater!"

"Especially you are not to fight," said Mr. Mulvaney sternly.

"Oh, pater!"

"That especially. You will probably be trouble enough to Patrick without that."

"Yes, I shouldn't wonder," said Micky.

Patrick Mulvaney groaned.

Mr. Mulvaney raised his hand sternly.

"Micky!"

"Yes, pater?"

"Give me your solemn promise that you will not fight anybody to-day. If you get over the first day without a fight, you may keep clear of it afterwards. I want your promise."

"Oh, pater, draw it mild!"

"You hear me, Micky?"

"Bedad, I hear you!"

"Now, Micky, do as I tell you," said Mr. Mulvaney, in a helpless sort of way. "You young rascal! I shall feel much easier in my mind going home."

Micky Mulvaney's truculent face melted at once.

"Oh, that's all right, pater! I promise!"

"Good! You won't be sorry for it, Micky. Now I must go and see the Head. Give Micky a talking to, Patrick, and tell him about his new school."

Mr. Mulvaney quitted the study.

CHAPTER 6.

Trouble!

"GOOD-BYE, Micky!"

"Good-bye, dad!"

"Remember your promise."

"That's all right, dad!"

"And don't get into mischief."

"Oh, pater!"

And the station hack drove away with Mr. Mulvaney in it, and Micky waved his cap from the gate as it went down the road.

Then he turned back into the quadrangle.

He was alone now. His father had gone. His elder brother in the Sixth had not welcomed him with effusive affection. He was planted in a new and strange school to fight his own way, like a young bear with all his troubles before him.

But that prospect did not seem to dismay him in the least. With his hands in his trousers pockets, and his cap on the side of his head, he sauntered across the quadrangle.

Three juniors whom he had not seen before bore down upon him. They were Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, the famous Co. of the New House at St. Jim's. The cool and independent manner of the new boy struck them at once.

"Hallo!" said Figgins.

"Hallo!" said Mulvaney minor affably.

"Who might you happen to be?" asked Figgins, not overpleased with the extremely cool manner in which the new kid replied to his greeting.

"I might happen to be anybody," said Mulvaney minor. "Say Hitler!"

"What?"

"Or Lloyd George!"

"Eh?"

"Or Winston Churchill!"

"Look here, you cheeky young beggar—"

"But I don't happen to be any of them!" said the new boy airily. "If you'd asked me who I am, I could have told you. I'm Mulvaney minor."

"Oh, you're Mulvaney minor, are you?" said Figgins darkly. "School House kid, I suppose?"

"School House is my House, certainly. I believe there's another House here, ain't there?" said Mulvaney minor, looking round.

"There's the New House—our House," said Figgins. "That's the Cock House at St. Jim's."

"Oh, rats!" said Mulvaney minor coolly.

"Wha-a-at!"

"Deaf?" said the new junior pleasantly. "I said rats—RATS—rats! Rodents, if you like it that way better. In other words, gammon!"

Figgins & Co. exchanged glances. This new youth was so exceedingly "fresh" that they felt it their bounden duty to bump him. They felt that it would do him good to take some of the freshness out of him. And also it would relieve their own feelings. They gathered more closely round him.

"Do you know what we do with cheeky new kids here?" asked Fatty Wynn.

Mulvaney minor looked him over.

"Swallow 'em?" he asked. "I shouldn't wonder—to judge by your size."

Fatty Wynn turned quite red.

"You—you cheeky rat!" he ejaculated. "I'll—I'll—"

Mulvaney minor shook a warning finger at him.

"Don't you get excited," he said. "It ain't safe for fat people. You might have apoplexy. Sure, and you look as if you were going to have a fit now!"

"I'll—I'll squash him!" roared Fatty Wynn indignantly.

"You would if you fell on me, sure!" agreed Mulvaney minor. "Now, then, hands off, Tubby! Don't roll on me!"

Fatty Wynn did not roll on him, but he rushed on him. Mulvaney minor closed with him quite cheerfully, and they wrestled furiously. Then all of a sudden Mulvaney minor let go and jumped back. Fatty Wynn gasped and dashed on, and Mulvaney minor dodged round Figgins and Kerr.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed. "I'm not going to fight you. I can't!"

"Lemme get at him—"

Mulvaney minor eluded the grasp of Figgins and Kerr, and broke into a run for the School House. His promise to his father had come back into his mind. He had given his word not to fight anybody that day. Mulvaney minor was evidently the kind of fellow who would get into a good many "scraps." But his word was sacred to him; for that day he was peaceable—he would have peace at any price.

He bolted across the quad, with Figgins & Co. in hot pursuit.

"Stop him!" roared Fatty Wynn.

"After him!"

"Collar the School House cad!"

But Mulvaney minor was a good sprinter. He crossed the quad at a wonderful speed, and came panting up to the door of the School House. Half a dozen juniors there watched the chase with indignant exclamations. They did not like to see a School House fellow running from the New House—even if he was only a cheeky new kid.

Mulvaney minor came leaping up the steps. The School House juniors crowded down the steps, quite ready to tackle Figgins & Co.

"Yah! Funk!" roared Fatty Wynn.

"Kick those New House bounders out!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "What are they doing on the respectable side of the quad? Kick them out!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Figgins & Co., assailed by a crowd of School House fellows, fled in their turn, hotly pursued across the quadrangle almost to their own House. Mulvaney minor stood on the steps and watched the chase with a grin. The School House juniors, panting a little, came back from the chase, and they glared at Mulvaney minor in an extremely unfriendly way.

"So you're a rotten funk, are you?" exclaimed Gore contemptuously.

Mulvaney minor flushed crimson.

"Sure, I'll fight any chap that calls me a funk!" he exclaimed.

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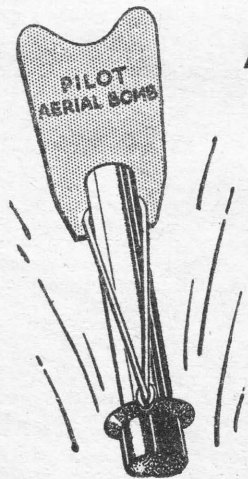
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"You'll fight me, then!" snorted Gore. "I call you a funk. Rotten funk! Yah!"

Mulvaney minor clenched his hands and then unclenched them again. The eyes of all the School House juniors were upon him, and his flush deepened. His promise to his father was proving more irksome than he had anticipated. But he never thought of breaking it.

"Oh, you call me a funk, you spalpeen, do you?" he said.

"Yes, I do! Now come into the gym, and I'll lick you into the bargain!"

"Sure, and I'm sorry I can't oblige you."

And Mulvaney minor turned and walked into the House.

There was a buzz among the juniors. Their faces were expressive of surprise and wonder and contempt. That he was a funk was not at all the impression Mulvaney minor had made upon them at first. George Gore burst into a loud and scornful laugh.

"Well, of all the rotten cowards," he exclaimed, "I think that chap takes the cake! Bah!"

"Beastly funk!" said Crooke. "We'll give him a lesson in the dorm to-night—what?"

"Yes, rather!"

There was an exciting time in store for Mulvaney minor on his first day at St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 7.

Mulvaney's Study Mates!

MULVANEY MINOR had his tea in Hall. There were very few Shell fellows at the table, most of them having tea in their studies at the time that suited them best. Skimpole of the Shell was next to Mulvaney. Skimpole was a brainy youth in large spectacles, with a benevolent countenance. He gave the new boy a welcoming blink when he sat down at the tea-table in Hall.

"Ah, you are Muldoon?" he asked.

"Mulvaney, please!"

"Yes, I knew it was some name like that!" said Skimpole. "The new boy?"

"Yes."

"You're coming into my study," said Skimpole.

"Oh!" said Mulvaney minor.

"Yes. Mr. Railton mentioned it to Gore, and Gore was saying some very angry things about it. We thought we were going to be only two in the study after Talbot went away," explained Skimpole. "However, I shall be glad to welcome you in our study."

"Thanks!" said Mulvaney. "Who's Gore?"

"Gore? That is the big fellow who was bullying you."

Mulvaney minor grinned.

"Oh, that's Gore? I'm going to share his study! Where is it?"

"I'll show you the way, with pleasure, and help you carry your books there," said Skimpole hospitably.

"Thanks!"

Skimpole and Mulvaney conveyed the latter's books and other personal belongings to the study, and Skimpole was helping his new friend to put them away, when Gore came in. Gore had been to tea with Crooke, up the passage, and Crooke came back with him to smoke a cigarette in his study—that being one of his little ways. They both stared at the sight of the Irish junior in the study.

"Hallo!" said Crooke. "What's that bounder doing here?"

Gore pointed to the door.

"Get out!" he said.

"Sure, and this is my study!" said Mulvaney pleasantly.

"Yes, Gore; you are already aware that Mr. Railton has assigned Muldoon to this study," said Skimpole, blinking at the bully of the Shell. "Please do not make any disturbance. I am helping Muldoon to put his things tidy."

"I wouldn't have a rotten funk planted on me," observed Crooke. "Kick him out, Gore. Or, better still," he chuckled, "make Skimmy kick him out!"

Gore laughed.

The idea of making the peaceful and benevolent Skimpole engage in a fight with the new boy quite appealed to George Gore's peculiar sense of humour.

"Good egg!" he exclaimed. "Skimpole, take your jacket off!"

"My dear Gore—"

"You are going to fight the new kid," explained Gore. "It will be fun. You needn't be afraid; he's a holy funk."

"But I have no quarrel with the new boy, Gore," said Skimpole, in distress. "On the contrary, I feel very friendly

Crooke had dragged Skimpole's jacket off.

"Now pile in," said Gore. "I'll keep time. Are you ready?"

"My dear Gore—" said Skimpole feebly.

"Are you going to begin?" roared the bully of the Shell.

"Certainly not. I—"

"Then we'll jolly well bump you for a start!"

"My dear— Oh! Hands off, please! Oh dear! Yah!"

Gore and Crooke seized upon the genius of the Shell, and he was swept off his feet and brought down with a heavy bump upon the floor. His spectacles slid down his nose, and he blinked over them in dismay.

"Ow, ow! Oh— Oh dear!"

Gore jerked his glasses off and threw them on the table.

"You don't want your gig-lamps on," he said. "Now get up and pile in. If you don't begin, I'll start on you with a cricket stump!"

He jerked Skimpole to his feet. Skimpole, who was extremely short-sighted without his glasses, blinked at Mulvaney in a very uncertain sort of way.

"Do—do—do you mind if I fight you, Muldoon?" he asked nervously. "Gore is so very obstinate. I will not hurt you."

"If you don't hurt him, I'll hurt you!" said Gore threateningly. "Now pile in!"

Skimpole put up his hands and advanced upon Mulvaney. There was no help for it, for Gore had taken up a cricket stump and held it ready for business. Mulvaney backed away. He could not fight that day without breaking his promise. And he certainly did not want to fight the harmless and benevolent Skimpole.

"Oh, pater!" he muttered. "Sure you didn't know what you were letting me in for!"

"Do you mind putting up your hands, Muldoon?" asked Skimpole.

Mulvaney put up his hands.

"Go for him!" shouted Gore. "Mind, I've got the stump ready. I'm going to larrup you if you don't hit hard."

"My dear Gore, you know—"

"Shut up and pile in!"

Skimpole piled in feebly. Mulvaney stood up to him, grinning, and brushed his feeble drives aside.

"Go for him!" shouted Gore angrily. "That isn't fighting. Pile in!"

"I—I cannot, Gore! He pushed my hands away, you see," said Skimpole. "As you are aware, I do not know very much about boxing. Yaroooh!"

The cricket stump came behind Skimpole with a loud whack, and he jumped and roared.

"Stop that!" shouted Mulvaney.

Gore glared at him.

"Eh! What's the matter with you? I'll give you some, too, if I have any of your chin!" he exclaimed savagely.

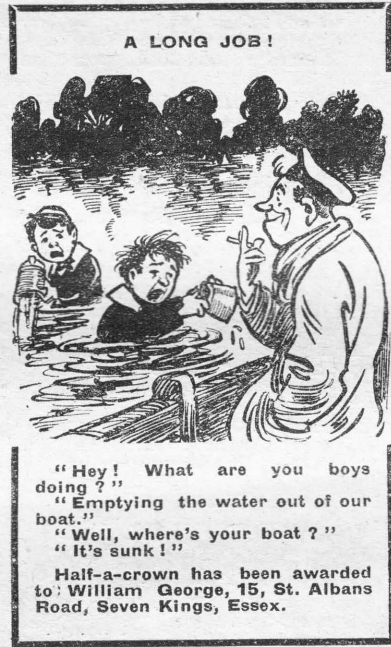
Mulvaney made a step towards the grate, and caught hold of the poker. The poker had been thrust into the fire, and it was red-hot at one end. Mulvaney drew it out. He turned round towards Gore, grinning over the red-hot poker.

"I'll give you three seconds to get out of this study—you and the other rotter!" he said.

"What! Put that poker down!" roared Gore.

"Are you going?"

"Going! Why, I'll smash you! I'll



disposed towards him. I am going to lend him some of my books on Determinism, and—"

"You're going to lick him!" said Gore.

He closed the study door. Crooke put his back to it. The two young rascals were greatly pleased with their scheme. A fight between Skimpole and the new boy would be distinctly amusing.

"Now, go it, Skimpole," said Gore. "You've got to fight the new kid, or fight me. You can take your choice."

"I refuse, Gore. I consider—"

"Take your jacket off!" roared Gore.

"My dear Gore—"

"Take your jacket off, Mulvaney."

"Rats!"

"My hat! I'll jolly soon have it off you!" said Gore.

And he laid violent hands upon the new boy and dragged his Eton jacket off.

Mulvaney's eyes blazed and he clenched his fists, but he did not hit Gore. His promise to his father was fresh in his mind.

—I'll— Yah! Get away! Keep that poker away from me! Do you hear? You— you villain! I'll—I'll—I'll— Yaroooh!"

Mulvaney minor advanced upon him with the poker extended. Gore crashed the cricket stump upon it to knock it aside, and there was a smell of scorched wood. Then he gave a wild howl as the red tip of the poker touched his arm, and dropped the stump and leaped back wildly.

"Ow, ow! Yah! Oh, I'm burned! Oh!"

"Sure, and didn't I warn you?" said Mulvaney minor cheerfully. "And you'll get burnt some more if you don't get out!"

"Yes, please go, Gore," said Skimpole. "In the circumstances, I consider that Muldoon is completely justified in adopting somewhat violent measures."

"Gerrooogh, gerroff!"

Gore dodged wildly round the table. Mulvaney pursued him, lunging at him with the poker.

Crooke made a jump to tackle Mulvaney from behind, but the new boy swung round, and Crooke's hand dabbled on the poker. He gave a fiendish yell, and tore out of the study. Gore backed away to the door, panting.

"I'll—I'll smash you for this Mulvaney! I'll—"

"Get out!"

"I'll pulverise you! I'll—"

"Bunk!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" yelled Gore, as the poker touched his jacket. "Yaroooh! You—you young villain! Yarooop! Oh!"

And Gore leaped through the doorway.

Mulvaney closed the door after him and locked it, and then burst into a roar of laughter as he threw the poker into the grate.

"Ha, ha, ha! That settles Gore for a bit!"

Skimpole adjusted his spectacles and blinked approvingly at Mulvaney.

"Really, you know, I should never have thought of that," he said. "I trust I did not hurt you, Muldoon, when I was fighting you—"

"Ha, ha, ha! You couldn't hurt a mouse!"

"I am relieved, my dear Muldoon. I'm afraid that Gore will be very violent this evening—or to-morrow—after what you have done."

"To-morrow!" Mulvaney chuckled. "He can be as violent as he likes to-morrow. The more the merrier! Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 8.

Very Wet!

GEORGE GORE was looking very grim when the Shell fellows went up to their dormitory that night.

During the evening Mulvaney had succeeded in avoiding him.

For a long time he was locked in the study, and after that he visited his major in the Sixth Form quarters, where Gore could not follow him.

And on the occasions when Gore had a chance of getting to close quarters, Mulvaney fairly ran for it.

Such an exhibition of utter "funk" brought upon him derision and scorn from all the fellows in the School House. But Mulvaney did not seem to mind. He would have explained his motive if anyone had asked him, but

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no one did. They took it for granted that he was the bluest of funks, and despised him accordingly. But he knew that his character would be redeemed when his promise no longer bound him. And so he took it all with undiminished cheerfulness.

He wondered, however, what was going to happen in the dormitory that night. In the dorm, after lights-out, he would not be able to get away from Gore if Gore chose to make himself unpleasant. And it was pretty certain that he would choose.

Micky Mulvaney did not like the prospect.

Some of the fellows grinned as he came into the dormitory. There was evidently a general anticipation of fun after lights-out.

Kildare of the Sixth came to see the juniors in, and he turned out the light and quitted the dormitory. Then there was a buzz of voices, almost before the prefect's footsteps had died away.

"Have that funk out!"

"Anybody got a candle?"

"Get a light!"

"Hold on!" said Crooke. "No row till the prefect's gone down. We don't want Kildare coming back here and spoiling the fun."

"Wait ten minutes," said Gore. "The cad can enjoy the pleasures of anticipation, you know. Mulvaney, you rotter!"

"Same to you and many of 'em!" replied Micky.

"You're going to have a high old time!"

"Thanks!"

"Oh, don't be a beastly bully, Gore!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Why can't you let the kid alone? It's cowardly to go for a chap who funks, anyway!"

"Mind your own business," retorted Gore, "and don't jolly well interfere! We're going to have some fun with the cad!"

"Yes, rather!" said Crooke.

And a good many voices chimed in. Most of the Shell fellows were looking forward to some fun with the new boy after lights-out that night.

"Well, I suppose you can have your fun, but you're not going to hurt him," said Tom Merry. "If you begin any rotten bullying, Gore, you'll have a fight on your hands!"

"Oh rats!" said Gore.

He jumped out of bed and lighted a candle. Nearly all the Shell fellows turned out. The Terrible Three sat up in bed to look on. They did not intend to take part in the ragging, unless it became too rough, and then Tom Merry intended to chip in promptly. He would not see the new boy ill-used simply because he hadn't the resolution to stand up for himself.

The glimmer of candle-light illuminated the long, lofty dormitory. The ragers gathered in an eager crowd round Mulvaney's bed. Micky sat up.

"Get up!" said Gore.

"Now, look here," said Mulvaney minor, "play the game! I can't fight yet to-day, Gore, because—"

"Because you're a funk!" sneered Gore.

"I promised my pater—"

"Rats!"

"Come off!"

"Chuck it!"

"Sure, and it's the truth," said Micky Mulvaney; "and I'll fight ye to-morrow with all the pleasure in the world! I promised my pater that I wouldn't fight on my first day here!"

"Liar!" said Gore.

Mulvaney flushed.

"You—you rotter! Hands off, I tell ye!"

Gore was grasping at his bedclothes. He dragged them off, and then two or three fellows shoved the new boy out of bed, and he rolled on the floor.

Mulvaney jumped up, amid a roar of laughter. Gore made a run at him, and Mulvaney jumped to his washstand and caught up the jug. Before Gore could get out of the way, Mulvaney had swung the jug upon him, and the water came in a drenching flood over Gore. He gave a gasping yell, and staggered back, soaked to the skin. His pyjamas hung round his limbs in wet folds.

"Groo-hoogh! Hoooh— Yow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Monty Lowther.

"Is that wet, Gore?"

"Grooogh!"

Gore made a frantic spring at Mulvaney. The new boy lunged at him with the empty jug, and caught him on the chest with a crack. Gore jumped back again.

"Put that jug down!" he roared.

"No fear! I'm keeping it at present! Sure, and it's curious I am to see whether it's harder than your head!" said Mulvaney.

"You—you—you—"

"Come on!" said Mulvaney, brandishing the jug recklessly. "You were spoiling for fun just now, Crooke. Come on!"

But Crooke did not come on. He did not like the look of that recklessly brandished jug; and the other ragers hung back.

Gore, furious, dragged away his wet pyjamas, and towelled himself down, breathing wrath and vengeance. There was a lull in the proceedings. Gore had to find fresh pyjamas from his box, and it took him some time. When he had finished, Micky Mulvaney had taken another jug of water from another washstand.

"Sure, and I'm ready now!" he remarked.

"Put that jug down!" said Gore, in a voice of concentrated fury.

"Not this evening," said Micky cheerfully.

"I—I'll smash you—"

"Come on, then! You'll get wet again!"

Gore paused, quite baffled. He did not want to get drenched again, and he did not want the heavy jug broken on his head. The new boy faced him calmly and coolly. He would not fight, but he certainly did not look a funk as he faced the ragers. The Terrible Three looked on, grinning. They were beginning to enjoy the scene. It was not going at all according to Gore's programme. Gore seemed to be destined to be the ragged instead of the ragger.

"Sure, I'm sorry to spoil the fun," said Mulvaney politely. "If I hadn't promised my father, sure, I'd fight ye with pleasure, Gore. I'm not a funk, and I'll prove it to you to-morrow!"

"Liar!" said Gore.

Mulvaney made a threatening movement with the water-jug, and Gore jumped back in alarm. There was a laugh.

"Go it, Gore!" said Manners. "We shall be going to sleep soon, if the circus doesn't begin. What are you waiting for?"

"Not afraid of a funk, are you?" chuckled Clifton Dane.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I'll smash the cad!" said Gore. "You must wait till to-morrow, you rotter!"

"I'll wait till five minutes past

twelve to-night, if you like," said Mulvaney calmly. "I promised not to fight to-day, but sure to-day ends at twelve o'clock midnight. Now, Gore darling, I'm tired of standing here. Go back to bed!"

"Deaf, is it? Go back to bed, or I'll swamp you with water!"

"Why, you—you—" gasped Gore, quite taken aback.

This was turning the tables with a vengeance.

"Are you going?" asked Mulvaney, advancing with the water-jug uplifted.

Gore backed away. There was no help for it. He did not want to be drenched with icy water again. Amid loud chuckles from all the Shell fellows, Gore was driven back to bed, and he turned in, gnashing his teeth with rage.

"Gentlemen, the show is over," said Monty Lowther. "I can't call the performance a success. Gore is no good. I'm going to sleep."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
And the Shell fellows all turned in. Mulvaney waited till they were all in bed, and the candles blown out, and then he set down the water-jug and turned in. But he did not go to sleep. He knew that he was not done with Gore yet, and he intended to remain awake, and keep a wary eye open for the bully of the Shell.

CHAPTER 9.

Making Things Hum!

MULVANEY intended to keep awake, and for some time he did keep awake.

But sleep was heavy on his eyes; he was tired after his day's experiences. In spite of himself, he nodded off.

He heard eleven strike from the old clock-tower of St. Jim's, and it was the last sound he heard.

He was dozing, and he slid from his doze into a deep sleep.

He slept soundly, and he did not hear a movement in the dormitory. He did not hear a fellow creeping softly out of bed.

Gore was less sleepy. Perhaps his sudden cold bath had made him more wakeful; and he wanted vengeance, and he wanted it badly. He waited till eleven o'clock had struck to make sure that the new boy was asleep; then he crept out of bed and took the jug from his washstand, and stole softly towards Mulvaney's bed.

There was a sound of deep breathing from Mulvaney, and Gore chuckled silently. The new boy was fast asleep. He was to have a sudden and startling awakening.

In the dim starlight that struggled through the high windows of the dormitory, Gore could just make out the form of the sleeper.

He raised the jug, and tilted it over the bed.

Swoosh!

The water came out in a flood. There was a gasp, and a wild yell from Mulvaney, and he jumped up in bed like a jack-in-the-box.

"Yaroooh! Ooosh! Grooogh!"
"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gore.
"Yaroooh! Oh!"

Gore put the jug down, and retreated, roaring with laughter.

Fellows sat up in bed on all sides, exclaiming and calling out in alarm.

"What's the matter?"
"What the dickens—"
"Ow! Sure, and it's drenched I am

entirely!" yelled Mulvaney, his accent growing with his excitement. "Drenched to the skin! And me bed's drinched! Oh, you baste! You thafe of the wurrd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Mulvaney jumped furiously out of bed, and rushed at Gore. He caught the bully of the Shell round the body, and they struggled. Then suddenly Mulvaney remembered, and let his enemy go.

"Oh, you baste! Oh, you rotter!" he gasped, as he released Gore.

"Come on, you funk!"

But Mulvaney did not come on. He retreated to his washstand and took the towel, and began to rub himself dry.

"What on earth's the row?" demanded Tom Merry.

"You can't sleep in that blessed swamp!"

"Thanks! It's a good sort ye are!"

"Put some dry things on, though," said Tom, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mulvaney changed into dry pyjamas, and turned into Tom Merry's bed. But this time he did not go to sleep. He was waiting for twelve o'clock to strike.

At midnight he would be free from that unfortunate promise to his pater, which had placed him at the mercy of the bully of the Shell. And he did not intend to wait until the morning.

The Shell fellows were soon asleep again, but they were not destined to remain asleep long.

Midnight tolled out from the clock tower.

Then Mulvaney minor sat up in bed.



The Sixth Form prefect hadn't a chance of stopping in time. He stumbled over the prostrate form of his minor, and blundered right into the arms of Mr. Lathom. "G-g-goodness g-gracious!" gasped the astonished Form-master, as he found himself falling backwards. "What is the meaning of this?"

"Oh, a bath for Mulvaney!" chuckled Gore.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Crooke.

"What a rotten trick!" said Tom Merry indignantly.

"Faith, and I'll make ye sorry for it entirely!" gasped Mulvaney. "What time is that striking, Tom Merry?"

"Half-past eleven."

"Groogh! You-wait a little bit, you thafe of the wurrd! Oh crumbs! Me bed's drenched in wather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gore went back to bed, laughing like a hyena. Mulvaney struck a match, and looked at his bed. It was simply swimming in water. The new boy regarded it with dismay. It was certainly impossible to go to bed again in that bed.

"Oh, the baste!"

"You can turn in with me, if you like," said Tom Merry good-naturedly.

Tom Merry opened his eyes drowsily.

"Warrer marrer? 'Tain't rising-bell!" he murmured.

"I'm getting up!" replied Mulvaney.

Tom Merry's eyes opened wider.

"Shurrup! Lemme go to sleep, fat-head!"

"It's to-morrow morning now," Mulvaney explained.

"What?"

"To-day was only up to twelve o'clock to-night, and now it is to-morrow," Mulvaney said lucidly, as he jumped out of bed. "As it's to-morrow now, it's no good waiting till to-morrow, is it?"

"Yes—no—what are you talking about?" asked Tom Merry in bewilderment.

"I'm going to talk to Gore."

"Oh, cheese it!" said Tom, sitting up sleepily. "Nuff rags for to-night!"

"Yes; but it isn't to-night now. It's to-morrow!"

And Mulvaney stepped to Gore's bed. Gore was sleeping the sleep of the just—and the unjust. Mulvaney grasped his bedclothes and yanked them off, and George Gore started up with a howl.

"Hallo! What the—"

"Get up!"

"Who's that?" roared Gore, blinking furiously into the darkness.

"Mulvaney—me!"

"You—you rotter! I'll—"

"You'll get up!" said Mulvaney, groping for Gore, and collaring him, and dragging him out of bed. The bully of the Shell descended on the floor with a bump.

"Now, then, get up!" said Mulvaney. "You're going to sleep in that bed you drenched. I'm going to have your bed!"

"What! Why, you—you—"

"Get up!"

Gore jumped up quickly enough. He made a wild rush at Mulvaney, and Mulvaney stepped aside, and the bully of the Shell rushed past him in the dark, and bumped heavily upon Bernard Glyn's bed. There was a roar from Glyn as Gore sprawled over him, and he reached out and shoved him off the bed. Gore found his way to the bed again.

"Clumsy!" said Mulvaney cheerfully. "Do get up! Anybody got a candle?"

Two or three fellows had turned out, and candles were lighted. Gore gained his feet again, fuming with rage. But some of the Shell fellows grasped him and held him back.

"Can't fight this time of night!" exclaimed Kangaroo. "Dash it all, everybody's in bed! There would be a fearful row if we woke up a prefect—"

"I'm going to smash him—"

"Get back to bed!" said Tom Merry. "You can fight in the gym to-morrow."

"I tell you—"

"Shut up!" said Monty Lowther. "I tell you you can't fight at this time of night! Now, chuck it, Gore, or we'll bump you!"

"Well, if I leave it till to-morrow—" began Gore.

"To-day," grinned Mulvaney. "After twelve o'clock it's to-day, you know. That's important. I promised my pater not to fight anybody yesterday, and you chaps have seen that I've kept my word. Now that's over, and I'm going to lick Gore. Sorry to spoil your fellows' beauty-sleep, but you can blame Gore for it. He's not going back to bed till I've licked him baldheaded!"

"Do you hear that?" roared Gore, in a rage.

"Now, look here, Mulvaney—"

"Faith, and I've no time. I'm going to lick Gore."

Gore broke away from the fellows who were holding him, and rushed at the new junior. Mulvaney's hands were up in a twinkling, and they went it hammer and tongs. Fortunately, their bare feet made very little sound on the floor.

"Well, if it's going to be a mill, we may as well have some more light," said Monty Lowther, taking a couple of candles from his box. "Are there any gloves here?"

"I don't want any gloves!" shouted Gore.

"You will before I've finished with you," chuckled Mulvaney.

Half the Shell fellows were out of bed now. The rest were sitting up in bed, keeping the blankets round them for warmth. Gore and Mulvaney were

fighting desperately. Gore was the bigger of the two, and he was very strong, and he had plenty of pluck. But the new junior was showing surprising qualities as a fighting man. He kept Gore at armslength, and suddenly, with a terrific right-hander, he sent him spinning along the dorm.

Gore made a clutch at a bed, and missed it, and rolled on the floor.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "Gore, old man, you've woke up the wrong passenger!"

"The wrong passenger's woke up Gore!" chuckled Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crooke picked his chum up. Gore was panting for breath.

Mulvaney was as cool as a cucumber. "Better have this thing in order," said Kangaroo. "I've got some boxing-gloves in my box—"

"I don't want gloves, I tell you!" howled Gore.

"Make a ring, and I'll keep time,"



went on the Cornstalk. "You'd better have rounds—"

"I don't mind," said Mulvaney. "Any old thing!"

"I'm going to smash him!" said Gore, panting. "I'm going to pulverise him! Blow rounds! I'll finish him this time!"

"Obstinate ass!" said Kangaroo, shrugging his shoulders.

Gore snorted, and rushed to the attack again. This time he succeeded in getting through Micky Mulvaney's guard, and Mulvaney staggered back from a tremendous left on the nose, followed up by a right under the chin. But as Gore rushed on to pursue his advantage, Mulvaney recovered as if by magic, and let out right and left, with two smashing blows that sent Gore thumping on the floor again.

"Well hit!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Bravo, Mulvaney!"

"My hat! And that's the chap we called a funk!" grinned Manners. "Gore will have had enough of the funk soon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gore was looking decidedly groggy as he scrambled up. By this time he was sorely repenting that he had rejected gloves and rounds. But Mulvaney gave him time to recover his breath.

The juniors, greatly excited now, and by no means displeased to see the bully of the Shell taken down a peg or two, crowded round in an eager ring.

For four or five minutes now the fight went on without a rest or pause, both the combatants receiving punishment.

"Go it, Mulvaney!"

"Stand up to him, Gore!"

"Good hit! Good man! Pile in!"

"Not so much blessed row!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "We shall have the giddy prefects here soon if you don't shut up!"

Bump!

George Gore dropped again like a sack of potatoes, and he did not rise. Crooke bent over him.

"Going on?" he asked doubtfully.

Gore groaned.

"Ow! I—I e-can't! The beast is too strong for me! Ow!"

"Licked, by George!" said Monty Lowther. "This is where our esteemed friend Gore gets it in the neck and shuts up! I don't think he will call Mulvaney a funk any more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gore staggered towards his bed. He was quite done, and he realised that he was no match for the new junior. He had indeed woke up the "wrong passenger" in tackling Micky Mulvaney.

"Hold on!" said Mulvaney. "That's my bed, Gore!"

"Go and eat coke!"

Mulvaney quietly but firmly pulled him away from the bed.

"You've drenched my bed, and I'm going to have yours," he said calmly.

"You—you rotter!" growled Gore! "I—I'll lick you some other time, you beast!"

Mulvaney grinned, and turned into Gore's bed. Gore did not get into the soaked bed, however. He turned in with Crooke. But it was a long time before he slept. That midnight battle had had a great effect upon him, and he lay meditating upon his sins for a long time before slumber visited his eyes.

And Mulvaney was not disturbed again that night. The new junior had proved, to the satisfaction—or, the dissatisfaction—of all, that he was not a funk, and incidentally that he was a very dangerous customer to tackle. And he slept the sleep of the just until the rising-bell clanged out in the morning.

CHAPTER 10.

Levison's Little Mistake!

CLANG, clang, clang!

Mulvaney minor turned out bright and fresh in the clear morning. He seemed as fresh as a lark, and not at all disturbed by the disturbance of his night's slumbers and the fight that had taken place in the small hours. George Gore was looking very different. Both his eyes were decidedly darkened, and he groaned as he turned out of bed. He felt an ache all-over.

He did not speak to the new boy. He was "fed-up" with Mulvaney minor, and did not want any further dealings with him. Micky had already begun to make things hum.

Mulvaney whistled cheerily as he went downstairs. He was taking a trot round the quadrangle, when a crowd of the Fourth Form came out.

Levison and Mellish at once spotted the new boy.

They knew nothing, so far, of the happenings in the Shell dormitory during the night, and still had the impression that the new boy was a funk of the first water. Under that impression, they

bore down upon him. Mulvaney met them with a cheery smile.

"Top of the morning to you!" he said amiably.

Levison jerked the new boy's cap off, and tossed it over the gate leading into the Head's private garden. In that garden juniors were never allowed, and it was rather a favourite amusement of Levison to toss caps belonging to very small fags there, and watch the trepidation with which they sneaked in to recover their headgear. He fancied that the same amusement would be quite safe with Mulvaney minor, though he was by no means a small fag, but a somewhat bigger fellow than Levison, and much more strongly built, and in decidedly better condition. Mulvaney looked after his cap calmly as it went flying, and saw it land in a bush at a considerable distance over the gate. Then he looked at Levison.

"What's that for?" he asked. "You can go and fetch it," said Levison, chuckling. "That's the Head's garden, you know. Juniors are not allowed there. If a prefect spots you in the garden you get lines or a licking. Savvy?"

"Then how am I to get my cap?" asked Mulvaney innocently.

"You'll have to risk it!" grinned Levison, and Mellish burst into a laugh.

Mulvaney shook his head. "Under the cires, I don't care about going into the Head's garden," he remarked. "As you chucked the cap there, Levison, you can fetch it."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Levison. "What are you cackling at?"

"Well, the idea of it!" said Levison. "I didn't chuck your cap there to fetch it myself. You'd better scoot over the gate and get it before a prefect comes along."

"No fear! You're going!"

"Fathead!"

"In fact, I insist upon your going," said Mulvaney. "I want my cap. You chucked it over the gate. You can go and fetch it."

Levison shrugged his shoulders contemptuously, and turned away. A grip like iron on his collar swung him back. He swung round in anger and amazement, and found himself looking into Micky Mulvaney's smiling, cheery face.

"Don't go yet," said Micky agreeably. "You haven't fetched my cap."

"Let go my collar, you silly ass!"

"Are you going to fetch my cap?"

"No, I'm not!" roared Levison. And he clenched his fists. "Let go my collar at once, or I'll knock you into the middle of next week!"

"Right-ho!" said Mulvaney, releasing Levison, and pushing back his cuffs. "Come on, and see how far you can knock me along the giddy calendar!"

Then Levison hesitated. He had expected Mulvaney to scuttle, as he had done the previous day from Gore. But there was no sign of scuttling off about Micky Mulvaney now. He seemed to be quite a new fellow, in another sense of the word, this morning.

Levison looked at him very doubtfully.

"Well, I don't want to hurt you," said Levison generously. "Clear off and don't bother, and I'll let you alone!"

"Will you fetch my cap?"

"No, you silly chump; I won't!"

"Then you won't clear off yet awhile!" chuckled Micky. "If you don't get over that gate at once, my pippin, I'll throw you over it!"

"What!" gasped Levison.

Several fellows were gathering round, and they were looking on in surprise and amusement. Certainly, just now Levison looked more like a funk than

JUST MY FUN

Monty Lowther
Calling!



Hallo, everybody!

It is a remarkable sight to watch the leaves falling in autumn, says a writer. It would be still more remarkable if they didn't.

A champion tap-dancer takes 547 steps in a special dance. After a severe caning, Mellish all but equalled this performance.

A Welsh skipper and a Scots engineer were always squabbling, so they changed places. Down in the engine-room, the Welsh skipper found it difficult to keep his engines going, and finally they stopped dead. "Mac," called out the Welshman, "I give you best. I cannot get the engines to go at all!" "I'm nae surprised at that," replied Mac from the bridge, "seeing that we've been ashore for the last half-hour!"

Headline: "World's Thinnest Actor in Napoleon Film." Playing the "Bony part"?

Just as the Chairman of the Governors was about to address the school, a gust of wind blew his notes into the fireplace. He was left "speechless."

Cowboys are excellent cooks, we read. Well, you would expect them to be at home on the range.

A man in Wayland was fined for travelling farther than he was entitled to on a bus. The magistrate told him where he got off.

Time was, they say, when a cavalry recruit would have six hours' riding practice daily. He soon got to know what was meant by a "raw" recruit.

Fatty Wynn says he often uses his avoirdupois to stop the ball. That word certainly wants some getting past.

Short story: A traveller, staying in an Irish hotel, was awakened early by a knock on his door. "What is it?" he asked. "A telegram, sir," came the reply. "Well, can't you shove it under the door?" demanded he. "Sure, it's impossible," came the reply, "because I have it on a tray."

I hear a New York policeman has served forty-four years without making an arrest. It is rumoured

Mulvaney did. He was looking, and feeling, decidedly uneasy, and wishing that he had let the new boy severely alone. To go after the cap he had thrown into the Head's garden, and fetch it back at the order of the new boy, would be too terribly humiliating; but the more he looked at Mulvaney, the less he felt inclined for a personal encounter with him.

"Sure, I'm waiting for yer!" said Mulvaney. "It will be time to go in to breakfast soon. Will you get over that gate?"

"No, you silly fool!"

"Faith, then I'll chuck yer!

the burglars' union are to present him with a clock in appreciation of his long and faithful service.

How's this: "They do say ye can tell character from me hand?" asked the yokel doubtfully. "Certainly," replied the palmist; "and for a start you're from the country!" "By gum!" exclaimed the yokel delightfully. "It be wunnerful!"

If you want to rise rapidly in the world, join the Air Force.

"Oh, Kildare," said Mr. Selby to the captain of St. Jim's, "if you are passing the Third Form Room, you might notice what D'Arcy minor is doing, and tell him not to do it."

I hear the man found sitting in the middle of the railway track at Wayland perusing a letter, explained that he had been told to read between the lines.

As the manager of the dynamite factory said to his slack assistant: "What you want is to put more fire into your work!" And make things go with a "bang"?

Skimpole wants to know the best way to study ants. Go for a picnic.

"Gibson," said Mr. Selby, "if you had two-and-six in your left pocket, and five shillings in your right, what would you have?" "Please, sir," replied the fag, "I should have somebody else's trousers on."

The self-important batsman was very annoyed when the umpire gave him out l.b.w. "You're wrong," he snapped. "I'm nowhere near the stumps!" "Oh, yes, you are," retorted the umpire, "just you keep that right leg of yours where it is and come up this end and see for yourself!"

I know a man who is talking of moving West. He says his business has gone that way.

"You can always get a book to help solve furnishing problems," says a writer. True. We have found an old encyclopedia very useful to prop up the damaged leg of our study table.

American story: A milk corporation hired a man to drive a car round the streets for seven days without sleep. The car displayed a notice: "This Daredevil Drinks Our Milk." A little later the rival company came out with a notice: "You Don't Have to be a Daredevil to Drink Our Milk."

"What you need," said the doctor, "is a breath of sea air. What is your job?" "I'm a lighthouse-keeper," replied the patient.

And that's that!

Mulvaney advanced upon Levison. Levison put up his hands desperately.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, arriving upon the scene, and putting up his eyeglass to survey it. "Bai Jove! What's the mattah with Mulvaney? I believe the young beggar has been takin' us in!"

"He licked Gore last night in the dorm," said Tom Merry, who had also joined the crowd with some more of the Shell fellows. The altercation was attracting a great many juniors to the spot.

Levison started.

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"That funk licked Gore?" he ejaculated.

Tom Merry laughed.

"Yes; and if you'd known that, you'd have left his cap alone, wouldn't you, Levison?"

Levison bit his lip. That was certainly the case. He had not the faintest idea that the new junior was such a "dark horse."

But he would not give in without a struggle. A licking was better than the chipping he would receive if he gave in like this, after attempting to bully the new boy. He put up his hands savagely as Mulvaney closed in upon him and hit out.

Mulvaney grinned, and knocked his hand aside with perfect ease, and gave him a tap on the chin that made him stagger. Then the new junior rushed in, and closed with him.

Levison struggled furiously.

But the arms of the Irish junior were like a band of iron round him, and Levison's struggles had no effect upon that firm grip. He felt himself swept off his feet and carried bodily towards the garden gate.

"Bai Jove!"

"Good old Mulvaney!"

Mulvaney swung Levison with perfect ease up on the gate, and rolled him over. The cad of the Fourth fell with a heavy bump on the inner side.

He rolled on the gravel path, and sat up on the gravel, blinking. There was a yell of laughter from the fellows on the other side of the gate.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 11.

Gore Mends the Punctures!

LEVISON sprang to his feet. He was on the forbidden side of the Head's gate, and if he were spotted there by anyone in authority, it would mean trouble for him.

The gate was locked, as usual, and he could not open it; but he clambered on to it in hot haste to get back into the quadrangle.

Mulvaney tapped him on the chest lightly.

"Get back, you spalpeen! You're not coming over without my cap!"

"Look here——"

"Gerroff!"

Mulvaney drew back his right arm as if for a heavy drive, and Levison jumped off the gate in a great hurry. The juniors chuckled again gleefully. Levison's attempt at bullying the new boy was ending disastrously for him.

"You'd better fetch the cap, Levison," said Tom Merry, laughing. "You know, you ought not to have chucked it there in the first place."

"I won't!" roared Levison.

"Sure, then, you'll stay in the garden all the morning!" said Mulvaney cheerfully.

"I will not! You rotter! I——"

"Bettah fetch the cap, Levison, deah boy!"

Levison made a rush at the gate to scramble over, but Mulvaney was ready. The cad of the Fourth was met with a sharp tap on the nose, and he fell off the gate again and bumped down in the gravel.

"Yow-ow! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Levison scrambled to his feet. His face was black with fury. He glanced over the gate, seeking Percy Mellish in the crowd to call to him for aid; but Mellish had wisely vanished from the scene. He did not want any trouble

with the new junior who had licked Gore, and was now engaged in licking Levison. Percy Mellish preferred to leave that tough customer severely alone.

Levison panted with fury. He knew by now that he was no match for the boy he had attempted to rag, and he knew that he could not get over the gate unless Mulvaney permitted him. There was nothing for it but surrender. He looked round for the cap. It had fallen into the rhododendrons at a considerable distance from the gate. To reach the rhododendrons it was necessary to cross the garden in full sight of several windows of the Head's house, and that was a risky proceeding.

But there was nothing else to be done. Levison ran across the garden in a hurry, reached the rhododendrons, and grasped at the cap. As he did so a voice was heard from the direction of the greenhouse down the garden.

"I see yer, a-tramplin' on the 'Ead's lawn! I'll report yer, Master Levison!"

It was the voice of Taggles, the porter, who was in the greenhouse.

Levison gritted his teeth. He grabbed the cap, and ran back towards the gate. He flung the cap at Mulvaney, who caught it neatly and placed it on his curly head.

"Thanks!" said Mulvaney minor.

"Hang you!" growled Levison.

And he clambered over the gate and dropped into the quad, and stamped away, with the comforting assurance in his mind that Taggles would not fail to report his trespass. Mulvaney minor strode away with his hands in his pockets.

Figgins & Co. had just come out of the New House for a stroll round the quad before "brekker." They grinned at one another as they spotted the new boy.

"There's that blessed funk!" said Figgins. "I think we ought to bump him for his own good!"

"Yes, rather!" agreed the Co.

And the three New House juniors bore down upon Mulvaney minor.

To their surprise, he did not seek to avoid them.

He halted, and stood with his hands in his pockets, waiting for them to come up.

"Top of the morning!" he said pleasantly.

"We're only at the bottom of the morning as yet," said Kerr.

Mulvaney laughed.

"Fat as ever!" he remarked, looking at Fatty Wynn. "Sure, and you should take dumb-bell exercises, and try bread and water for a week, and——"

Fatty Wynn turned purple.

"You—you—your cheeky rotter!" he gasped. "I was only going to bump you in a friendly way. But what you want is a hazing. I'll——"

He did not say any more, but rushed right at Mulvaney.

Figgins and Kerr expected the new



"Go for him!" yelled Gore, prodding Skimpole vigorously. The idea of making the harmless Skimpole fight the apparent funny.

junior to turn and run. But he didn't. He met Fatty Wynn with open arms, so to speak. Fatty found his fists knocked up, and the new boy's arms round him. He was swept off his feet and sat down on the ground with a bump that took his breath away.

Mulvaney minor walked off and left him sitting there, gasping for breath, and Figgins and Kerr looking at him in astonishment.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Figgins.

"My only chapeau!" murmured Kerr.

"Ow, ow, ow!" gasped Fatty Wynn.

"Why, the beast is as strong as a horse."

And it was full five minutes before the fat Fourth Former left off gasping.

When the breakfast-bell rang in the School House two Shell fellows failed to turn up in Hall. They were Gore and Mulvaney minor.

Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, was at the head of the table, and he frowned as he noted the two empty places.

"Where are Gore and Mulvaney?" he said crossly.

"They can't have heard the bell," said Tom Merry.

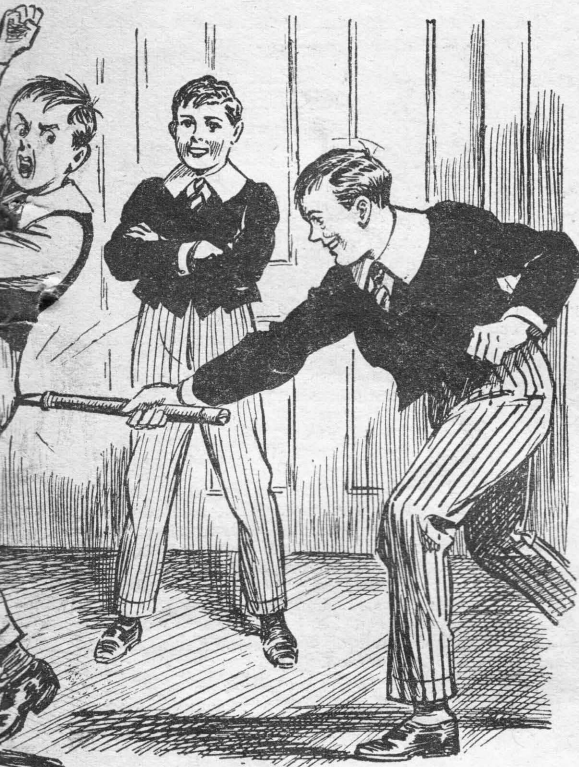
"Please go and look for them."

"Yes, sir."

Tom Merry quitted the Hall, wondering whether Gore and Mulvaney had come to fisticuffs again. He looked round the quad, but it was deserted; in the gym; and finally a sound of voices drew him to the bicycle-shed.

He looked into the bicycle-shed.

The two juniors were there. Gore was in his shirtsleeves, kneeling beside a bike. The tyre was off, and Gore was mending punctures. Mulvaney minor stood with his hands in his pockets, looking on. Gore's face, which had looked considerably damaged



...ly with the sharp end of a cricket stump. "Pile in!" ...tly funky new boy, seemed to Gore and Crooke screamingly

when he came down that morning, was now looking still more damaged, a proof that there had been further trouble.

Probably a great deal of persuasion had been required to make Gore consent to mend the punctures he had made the previous day in Mulvaney's tyres. But he was doing it.

Tom Merry gazed at the scene in astonishment.

"What on earth—" he began.

Mulvaney turned his head and grinned.

"Sure, and Gore's mending my tyres," he said. "He punctured them yesterday with a penknife when I left my bike outside the house. I found out it was Gore, and asked him to mend them for me, and sure he's so kind that he's doing it."

Tom Merry laughed. Gore was dabbing his nose savagely at intervals, to staunch a fresh stream of red. His kindness in repairing Mulvaney's tyres was evidently not voluntary.

"Brekker's on," said Tom Merry. "Linton's sent me to look for you."

Mulvaney nodded.

"Right-ho! You can finish them after brekker, Gore."

Gore grunted. Tom Merry returned to the breakfast-room, laughing.

"They're both coming, sir," he said. "Gore's been mending a puncture, and he's got to wash his hands, sir."

Gore and Mulvaney came in a few minutes later. Gore was looking in such a state of suppressed fury that the whole Shell saw at once that something was on. When breakfast was over, they discovered what it was.

"Time before chapel to finish those repairs, Gore," Mulvaney remarked, as they went out into the Hall. Gore gritted his teeth savagely.

"Hang the repairs! I—"

"They've got to be done, you know," said Mulvaney grimly. "It was a dirty trick to jab a knife into my tyres, and you know it. It would serve you right to make you buy new ones. But you're going to mend those punctures, or I'll hammer you till you can't stand!"

Gore clenched his hands for a moment, but he unclenched them again. There was no help for it, and he went quietly to the bike-shed to get on with the repairs.

A grinning crowd of juniors followed him there to watch him at work.

It was, as Jack Blake remarked, a very interesting sight to see Gore of the Shell doing something useful, and for somebody else. Gore would willingly have smashed the tyres and the bicycle into little pieces, but he was working under the eye of Mulvaney minor, and he worked on steadily till his task was finished. Then he rose to his feet, considerably soiled and crimson with rage.

"Sure, and it's only tit for tat, Gore darling," said Mulvaney good-humouredly. "You couldn't expect me to mend the punctures meself entirely!"

Gore snarled.

"I'll make you sorry for this!" he said thickly.

Then he swung savagely out of the shed. The chapel bell was ringing, and the juniors trooped off, chuckling. Mulvaney minor had succeeded in making an impression upon the School House fellows. There was no doubt that the new junior was hot stuff, remarkably hot stuff, and that he was extraordinarily able to take care of himself.

CHAPTER 12.

Rather Too Humorous!

"HALLO, Paddy!"

Mulvaney major swung round with a frown as his minor sauntered in to his study and addressed him in that cool and familiar manner. Micky Mulvaney nodded cheerily.

"How are you going on, Paddy?"

"I told you not to call me Paddy!"

"Sorry—I mean Freckles!"

Mulvaney major turned red with wrath.

"I know I shall have to lick you, you cheeky young imp!" he growled.

"Oh, Paddy—I mean, oh, Freckles!" said Mulvaney minor reproachfully.

"Look here! What's the good of having a major in the Sixth if you can't chip him? What are the Sixth for, anyway?"

"I'll show you what the Sixth are for, you young scoundrel!" said the prefect.

"The Sixth are for keeping cheeky young puppies in order, and licking them when they need it. And sure I'll begin on you!"

"Oh, Freckles—"

The prefect made a dash for his minor, and Micky Mulvaney fled down the passage. His major dashed after him.

Micky Mulvaney turned into the Form-

room passage with his major hot on his track. Mulvaney major had his ash in his hand, and he intended to let his minor feel the weight of it as a preliminary lesson on the subject of checking the Sixth. But Micky was not at the end of his resources. Just outside the Fourth Form Room he halted suddenly, and threw himself down, right at the feet of the prefect.

Mulvaney major could not stop himself in time.

Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, had just stepped out of the Form-room to see what the disturbance was about. He was blinking along the passage through his glasses when the Mulvaney's arrived on the spot. Mulvaney major stumbled on the form of his minor, and went flying forwards, his hands thrashing the air wildly. There was a terrible crash as he landed right upon Mr. Lathom.

"Oh!"

"G-goodness gracious!"

Mr. Lathom staggered back under the impact of the heavy Sixth Former, and sat down in the passage. Mulvaney major sprawled across his knees.

Mulvaney minor sprang to his feet and fled. Before either the prefect or the Form-master could speak a word he had vanished round the nearest corner.

Mr. Lathom groped for his glasses wildly.

"G-goodness gracious! What—what has happened? Is that you, Mulvaney? What do you mean by rushing into me in this manner? Bless my soul! Are you aware, sir, that you have knocked over a Form-master?" gasped Mr. Lathom. "Get up immediately, sir! How dare you sprawl over my feet in that manner?"

Mulvaney major scrambled up.

"I—I'm sorry, sir."

"I should hope you are, Mulvaney!" snorted Mr. Lathom, as he picked himself up, breathlessly. "I am surprised at you—shocked and surprised! A Sixth Form prefect playing in the passage in this absurd manner!"

"I—I—I wasn't—"

"I saw you!" said Mr. Lathom, raising an accusing forefinger. "I saw you, Mulvaney, and I was surprised and shocked. I may say disgusted. To see a senior boy chasing a junior along a passage, recklessly butting into a master—dear me! Mulvaney, it is simply disgraceful!"

"But, sir, I—I—I—" stammered Mulvaney major.

"That is enough. Remember my words, Mulvaney, and please do not let this occur again."

And Mr. Lathom went into the Form-room, and closed the door behind him with unnecessary vigour—in indeed, almost with a slam.

Mulvaney major walked away, breathing hard. The troublous times which he had felt that his minor would bring upon him had commenced. As soon as he was gone, Mulvaney minor came cheerfully back, and walked into the Shell-room looking quite serene. He was a little late, and Mr. Linton gave him a severe glance.

"Mulvaney!"

"Yes, sir," said Micky politely.

"You are late for class. As you are a new boy, I will excuse you. But do not let it occur again."

"Certainly not, sir," said Micky. "Sure, I'm awfully sorry, sir!"

"What made you late?"

"I was waiting for the coast to be clear, sir. I—I mean I was admiring

the scenery from the lower passage window, sir."

Mr. Linton looked at him very sharply.

"You may go to your place, Mulvaney," he said curtly.

"Thank you, sir."

Micky Mulvaney looked a little restless as the lessons proceeded. It was clear that his active nature and exuberant spirits found the Form-room irksome. Several times he addressed remarks to the other fellows, and drew down Mr. Linton's wrath for talking in class. At the fourth offence, Micky was given a taste of the "pointer," and for some time after that he was chiefly occupied in sucking his aching palm.

In the second lessons, Mr. Linton was devoting special attention to Skimpole, and to do so he came among the Form. Skimpole was a great genius—at all events, he firmly believed so—but his genius did not show itself in the classroom. He was, in fact, a far from promising pupil, and Mr. Linton was not satisfied with either the quality or quantity of his Latin. As Mr. Linton stood before Skimpole's desk, laboriously explaining some point which only a genius could have misunderstood, his gown was whisking against Mulvaney, who was in the row before Skimpole.

Next to Mulvaney sat Crooke. Mulvaney dropped his hand into his pocket, and then slid it gently behind Crooke without attracting that youth's attention.

He had a large, strong safety-pin in his hand. Tom Merry caught sight of him, and made an excited sign to him to chuck it.

But the spirit of mischief was upon Micky, and he declined to chuck it. He winked one eye at Tom Merry, and that was all.

With deft fingers, he fastened the end of Mr. Linton's gown to the tail of Crooke's jacket with the safety-pin which was quite strong enough to stand a very hard pull. Indeed, it was more likely that the gown or the jacket would give way, than that the safety-pin would, when a strain was put upon the connection.

Then Mulvaney minor sat with a good-as-gold expression upon his cheery face, and waited for results.

The results were not long in coming.

Mr. Linton, having succeeded in driving some dim conception of his meaning into Skimpole's mighty brain, turned from his task to move out before the class.

Crooke was at the end of a form. The Shell-master passed down the aisle between the Forms to get back before the class; but he did not get very far.

He took two paces, and his gown tautened out behind him, and at the third pace he was brought up with a sharp jerk.

The jerk on Crooke's jacket, too, pulled it round him, and up over his arm. Mr. Linton swung round, and saw his gown, apparently in Crooke's grasp. He simply jumped.

His idea was, of course, that Crooke had caught hold of his gown, and was jerking at it by way of a joke. Such a joke upon a Form-master in the sacred precincts of the Form-room was unheard-of, incredible, unparalleled. Mr. Linton could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses.

"Crooke!" he thundered.

"Ye-es, sir," stammered Crooke.

He was surprised and alarmed to find himself entangled in the Form-master's gown. He did not know in the least

what caused it, and as he struggled to release his arm from the folds of the gown, he seemed to Mr. Linton to be jerking at it.

"Crooke, let go my gown at once! How dare you!"

"I—I'm not holding it."

"This instant, sir!" thundered Mr. Linton.

"I—I—"

The master of the Shell pulled angrily at his gown. The result was to jerk up the tail of Crooke's jacket right over his head. There was a yell of laughter from the Shell. They could not help it at the ridiculous sight.

"Crooke, you insolent young rascal! How dare you!" shrieked Mr. Linton.

"I—I—"

He grasped Crooke by the shoulders, swung him out of his seat, and spun him into the room before the Form.

Crooke made a jump to get away, and there was a loud, rending sound, as a large patch was torn from Mr. Linton's gown.

The Shell fellows gasped.

"Crooke, you—you must be insane! You shall be flogged for this, boy! I



"When you've finished that game of cards there's a fire in the next village!"

"How do you know?"

"I've had a postcard!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Mervyn Kirker, c/o McGill, 98, Kilmarnock Road, Shawlands, Glasgow, S.1.

will take you in to the Head at once!" gasped Mr. Linton.

"I—I didn't do it!" howled Crooke.

"You got fastened to me, somehow, sir!"

"What nonsense!"

"Look here, sir! It's hanging on to my jacket!"

The torn fragment of Mr. Linton's gown was trailing behind Crooke. Mr. Linton grasped him by the shoulder and swung him round. Then he saw the safety-pin, and understood.

"Did you fasten that pin there, Crooke?" he demanded.

"Pin, sir? No, sir! I didn't know! It was a trick! I didn't—wasn't—"

"No; it is scarcely likely that you would fasten it to your own jacket! It was someone else—someone sitting near you!" Mr. Linton turned round to the class with a brow like thunder. "The boy who fastened my gown to Crooke's jacket will kindly rise to his feet!"

There was a murmur from the Shell. But no one rose to his feet. Micky

Mulvaney did not quite like Mr. Linton's looks, and he remained where he was.

CHAPTER 13.

Not Licked!

MR. LINTON was almost scarlet with rage.

Such a "jape" played upon him in his own Form-room roused all his ire. It really seemed as if the end of the universe must be coming, when such things happened to a Form-master in a Form-room.

"Do you hear me?" he thundered. "Some boy fastened Crooke's jacket to my gown by means of a safety-pin! I order that boy to come forward!"

Silence. "It was some boy sitting near to Crooke undoubtedly," said Mr. Linton. "I shall give the boy in question one minute to admit it."

All eyes turned to the Form-room clock.

The seconds ticked away in the midst of a painful silence. Half a dozen fellows had seen Micky Mulvaney's action, but they had no intention of giving him away. George Gore among others had seen him and he was strongly tempted to rise and denounce the practical joker. But he knew what the Shell would think of him if he did and the sneak refrained.

Micky Mulvaney kept a perfectly innocent face. If he was bowled out he was prepared to face the music; but he did not believe in looking for trouble.

The minute passed.

"Very well," said Mr. Linton, in a concentrated voice, "I am perfectly aware that a number of you—probably all of you—are aware who committed this disrespectful and outrageous action. Unless the boy instantly comes forward, I shall punish the whole Form."

"Oh!" murmured the Shell fellows. "All half-holidays this week and next will be taken away," said Mr. Linton, "and every member of the Form will write five hundred lines!"

"Oh, oh, oh!"

Micky Mulvaney looked dismayed.

He had not expected a drastic line like that to be taken by the master of the Shell; though, as a matter of fact, he had not thought of the consequences at all when he japed the Form-master. He had acted without thinking—a little way he had.

Tom Merry gave him an expressive glance. It was time for him to own up. Whatever happened, he had no right to evade punishment at the cost of bringing a fortnight's gating and a host of lines upon his Form-fellows.

Mulvaney minor understood the glance, but he did not need the hint. He had already made up his mind while Mr. Linton was speaking.

Mr. Linton paused impressively, and looked over the class.

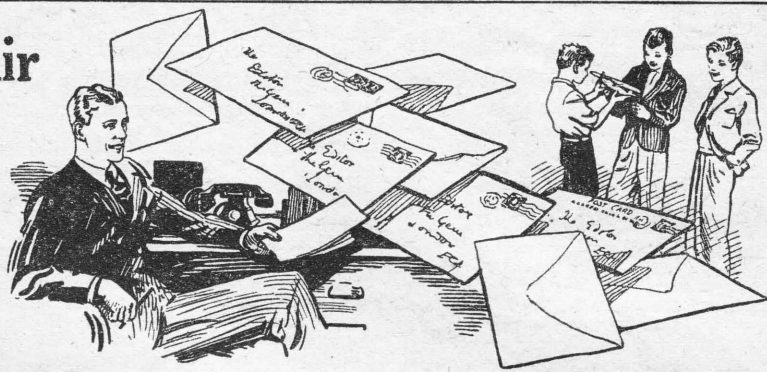
Mulvaney minor rose to his feet meekly. The Form-master's eyes rested inquiringly upon him. He did not think for a moment that a new boy, on his first morning in the Shell Form Room, would have the astounding audacity and impudence to play such a trick on his Form-master. His natural idea was that Micky was going to give him information, and, much as he desired to know the culprit, his lip curled with contempt of the sneak. Micky Mulvaney understood his expression, and his blue eyes glimmered with fun for a moment.

"If you please, sir—"

(Continued on page 18.)

The Editor's Chair

Let the Editor be your pal!
Drop him a line to-day,
addressing your letters:
The Editor, The GEM,
Fleetway House, Farring-
don Street, London, E.C.4.



HALLO, chums! The postman who serves the GEM office is complaining of an arm-ache, and I must say I'm not surprised, for my postbag is getting bigger every day. If it goes on at this rate, I shall be too busy answering readers' letters to edit the GEM at all.

But please don't think I dislike hearing from you. The more letters I get, the better I'm pleased. So if you have anything to praise—or grouse at—let me hear from you. Remember, criticism is as valuable to an editor as compliments are welcome.

Most of my letters nowadays bear the new Edward VIII stamps, and very nice they look. Incidentally, the present stamps are only temporary, and it's quite possible that they may shortly be changed, so if you stamp collectors haven't already got a set of unused ones, here's the tip to get in while the going is good.

Pretty often the postbag provides us with a good laugh. Only the other day a letter turned up from an Irish reader containing a stamped addressed envelope. "Dear Editor," it ran, "I wrote to you the other day and I didn't send a stamped addressed envelope. So I'm sending one now." We hastily started to search for the reader's previous letter so that he could have his reply at once. But though we went right through all our correspondence, no trace of another epistle from the same address could we find.

We were just going to write to him about it, when along came a second letter, with a covering note which ran:

"Dear Editor,—I forgot to post the letter, which I forgot to put the stamped addressed envelope in." We opened the letter. It started off "Dear Auntie Mabel" and ended "With love from Paddy." (What a shock Auntie Mabel must have had when she found herself addressed as the Editor of the GEM).

When we came to reply, we found that the stamped addressed envelope he had sent had an Irish stamp on it. So that wasn't any use, either!

"THE SCHOOLBOY RAIDERS!"

Next week's long story of St. Jim's is a wow, even if I say it as shouldn't! I feel that I must offer my congratulations to Martin Clifford, and I'm sure you'll want to do the same.

Personally, I always enjoy myself extra specially when Tom Merry & Co. run foul of Gordon Gay and the rest of the Grammarians; and that happens with a vengeance in "The Schoolboy Raiders." First Arthur Augustus D'Arcy fights a duel with Gustave Blanc

—known to his Grammarian chums as Mont Blong—and then Gordon Gay & Co., determined to wipe off a debt of honour, stage the most daring raid on St. Jim's they have ever attempted. Whether or not they succeed in ragging Tom Merry & Co., is a secret until next Wednesday.

"BILLY BUNTER'S COMPETITION!"

The one and only William George Bunter has fancied himself as many things during his career as the world's most famous eater. He's had a shot at being a film star, an actor, a big-game hunter—he's even told fortunes at a circus. He has never attempted to win fame as either a jockey or the daring young man on the flying trapeze, though he would probably tell you that both those things were well within his capabilities.

In next week's story of the early days of Greyfriars, written in Frank Richards' usual breezy style, the famous and fatuous Owl of the Remove is convinced that he's the "tops" at angling; and he even organises a competition for budding fishermen amongst the Greyfriars juniors. The prize list worries him a bit, certainly, but Bunter's no man to let a little thing like that stand in his way. Until his famous postal order comes it is a simple matter to purloin a few belongings from other members of his Form to add to the awards.

But I'm not going to give the whole story away.

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING!

I expect most of you have seen the fine coloured cards showing fighting planes of the world which are being given free in each copy of "Modern Boy." If you haven't, you ought to. The three given away with this week's issue of that paper are the Boeing fighter, from America; the Kawasaki bomber—say it quickly; it's not so difficult—from Japan; and the Icarus I.K. fighter, Yugoslavia. There are sixteen cards in the full series, and a free album and pocket atlas were given away with the first set, a fortnight ago. Back numbers are running short, so if you want to obtain them you are advised to get a shift on.

HEARD THIS ONE?

This week's best story comes from Afghanistan. It appears that a certain

R.A.F. pilot, flying solo, crashed in the middle of a patch of waterless desert, a full day's walk from anywhere, without, however, damaging himself.

Said a local chieftain—a giant of a man about six-feet-six high and just about as broad—to his pals: "You wait here while I go and chew him up."

They weren't his exact words; but that was what he meant.

He selected two of his biggest henchmen as bodyguard, and the three of them started out, while the rest of the tribe got out their dancing shoes and prepared to make a party of it as soon as the boss returned.

But the boss did not return. A day later a strange procession was observed approaching the nearest R.A.F. station. Staggering under the weight of the plane's engine came the three tribesmen, while behind them, spurring them on to faster pace, strutted a very cocky pilot armed only with a wing-strut from his damaged plane.

The tribe now has a new chief.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Harry Jenkins, of Croydon, has been told by a chum that it once rained snakes, and he doesn't believe it. In order to settle an argument, he has written to me.

Well, Harry, I'm very sorry, but you lose. It has rained snakes! A little while ago a couple of workmen, engaged in mending the roof of a house near Dumka, Bengal, got caught in a storm, and the next moment found cobras falling all around them. As you may imagine, they didn't stay to investigate.

The explanation appears to be that the cobras—which were baby ones—were in the trees above the house and the storm blew them down.

And while we're on the subject of snakes; anyone heard about the two thieves who pinched a large wicker basket from a Hamburg music hall, and then found, when they got it home, that it contained a full-grown python. S'fact!

The instrument you've heard about, Peter Fletcher, of Bolton, is a bolometer. It is used to detect minute changes in temperature, and is one of the most delicate instruments in the world. Given proper conditions, it can measure the heat which reaches it from a lighted candle situated five miles away.

THE EDITOR.
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PEN PALS COUPON
17-10-36

"Mulvaney, do you know who played that trick?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you see him?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. Who was it?"

Mulvaney minor hesitated.

"Ought I to tell you, sir?" said Micky innocently.

Mr. Linton frowned. Some of the Shell fellows chuckled softly, but the frowning glance of the Form-master soon made the chuckles die away.

"Don't bandy words with me, Mulvaney minor!" said the Form-master harshly. "I order you to give me the name!"

"I—I—I should be licked if—if I gave the fellow away, sir!" stammered Micky.

"Nonsense! I will protect you!"

Mulvaney minor brightened up.

"Sure, then, I'll tell you with pleasure, sir, if you promise me that I shan't be licked for telling you, sir, intirely."

"You have my assurance upon that point, Mulvaney," said Mr. Linton majestically.

"Very good, sir!"

"Now tell me who it was."

"I, sir!"

"What!"

"It was I, sir!" said Mulvaney minor meekly.

Mr. Linton almost staggered. There was a breathless howl of laughter from the Shell. They could not keep it back. The cool, astounding impudence of Mulvaney minor simply took their breath away. Mr. Linton gazed at him like a man in a dream.

"It was—was you, Mulvaney?" he panted at last.

"Yes, sir."

"You fastened my gown to Crooke's jacket?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what did you do it for?"

"To see what would happen, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Linton.

"Well, Mulvaney, you will now see what will happen." He picked up his cane. "Come out here!"

Mulvaney minor came out.

"Hold out your hand!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Hold out your hand!" thundered the master of the Shell.

"But, sir, you promised—"

"What!" Mr. Linton lowered the cane involuntarily.

"You promised I shouldn't be licked if I gave you the name of the fellow, sir," said Micky Mulvaney meekly.

Mr. Linton stuttered with rage.

"That—that—that was because I supposed that it was another boy—"

"I couldn't help what you supposed, sir, could I?" murmured Micky, still meekly. "I only know what you said, sir. I relied on your word when I owned up."

Mr. Linton breathed very hard. The Shell were breathless. They wondered what the Form-master would do. They fully expected him to take the new junior by the shoulders and thrash him till his arm ached. It would perhaps have been no more than Mulvaney minor deserved for his impudence. But Mr. Linton did not. He controlled his temper with difficulty, and laid the cane on the desk.

"That was a trick, Mulvaney," he said. "However, I gave you my promise, and I shall keep it. I shall not cane you as you deserve."

"Thank you, sir."

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"But I shall give you an imposition of a thousand lines, and you will be gated on Saturday afternoon!" said the master of the Shell grimly.

"Oh, howly Moses!" ejaculated Mulvaney minor, in dismay. "I—I—I'd rather have the licking, if you don't mind, sir!"

"But I do mind!" said Mr. Linton coolly. "Go back to your place, Mulvaney! And if you are guilty of any further impertinence you will be caned soundly."

And Mulvaney minor went back to his place, and he was as good as gold the rest of that morning. Mr. Linton's keen eyes were upon him, and Mulvaney minor had to be very wary. But he gave the Form-master no excuse for using the cane, and escaped unscathed from the Form-room when morning lessons were over.

CHAPTER 14.

Held to Ransom!

BLAKE of the Fourth tapped Mulvaney minor on the arm in the Fourth Form passage.

"Message for you," he said.

"Get it off your chest, darling!" said Micky.

"Your major wants you."

Micky Mulvaney made a grimace.

"What for?" he asked.

"Well, I fancy it's a whopping!" grinned Blake. "I heard him telling Darrell that you had flopped him over this morning, and that he was going to teach you to behave yourself. You're to wait for him in his study."

Micky Mulvaney groaned dismally.

"Sure, a thousand lines and a gating from Linton are enough!" he said. "Paddy might go easy on a chap, I think. I suppose I'd better go."

"I suppose you had," said Blake. "Your major's a prefect, and prefects generally want to be obeyed by fags."

Mulvaney minor walked away to the Sixth Form passage, and entered his major's study. The study was empty. Mulvaney major was not there. Perhaps he wanted the waiting for the punishment to impress upon Micky's mind the fact that the way of the transgressor was hard. If so, he was mistaken in his hope, for Micky was not at all depressed as he waited for the prefect to come in.

He amused himself by looking round the study, and he turned things out and about with cheery unconcern. In Mulvaney major's desk he came upon a whole sheaf of impot paper written out, and he gazed at it in surprise.

"Lines, by Jove!" he said. "How many, I wonder."

He looked the sheaf over. It was in a scrawling junior schoolboy hand, and the impot was a very large one. There were five hundred lines in all from Virgil's *Æneid*. Micky Mulvaney's eyes glistened.

"Five hundred, by Jove! I—"

"You young rascal!"

Mulvaney major entered the study. Micky looked up, not in the least abashed by being discovered at the prefect's desk.

"Hallo!" he said coolly.

"What are you doing at my desk?"

"Looking into it," said the junior calmly. "I suppose I can amuse myself by looking round my brother's quarters if I like?"

"Shut that desk at once!"

Bang! The lid of the desk descended with a crash like a gunshot, and Mulvaney major jumped.

"You noisy young savage—"

"Faith, some people are niver satisfied. I say, Paddy—"

"Don't call me Paddy!"

"I mean Pattikins. I say, can I have those lines?"

"What lines?"

"You've got a whole heap of lines there—"

"Oh, that's Levison's imposition!" said Mulvaney. "I haven't looked at it yet. No, you can't have it. What do you want it for?"

"What do you want me for?" asked Micky, without replying to the question. Mulvaney major frowned.

"I've been thinking it over, and I've decided to lick you. It's the only thing to be done, and it will be for your good in the long run. If you start here with a jolly good hiding, it may keep you out of lots of trouble. And I can't have any favouritism. Any other kid who tripped a prefect up in the passage would be licked, and you can't expect me to make an exception for you."

Mulvaney minor eyed him warily.

"Now, look here, Pattikins—"

"Shut up!" roared the prefect, snatching up a cane. "Now hold out your paw!"

"Which paw?"

"Whichever you like. You're going to catch it with both."

"I say, this isn't playing the game, Paddy. If I were your major—"

"Hold out your hand!"

"Besides, I'll let you trip me up in the passage, if you like, and call it square," Micky offered. "That's cricket."

"Will you hold out your hand—or will you have the cane round your shoulders?" asked Mulvaney major, in a concentrated voice.

Micky sighed, and held out his hand.

"Go easy, Pattikins, for the sake of old times," he pleaded.

Swish!

Mulvaney major did not go easy—far from it. He brought down the cane with a terrific swipe. Micky jerked his hand away just in time, and the cane swept down, missing the prefect's own leg by about a quarter of an inch. Mulvaney major almost lost his balance as his arm swept down and met with no resistance, and he stumbled a pace forward. Micky promptly brought both his hands down on top of his major's head before the prefect could recover himself, and shoved with all his strength, and Mulvaney major fell on his knees.

"Why, you—you—you— What—I—" he stuttered.

Before he could rise, Micky had reached the door.

He paused one instant to jerk the key out of the lock, and stick it in the outside of the keyhole, and then he was outside, slamming the door behind him.

Mulvaney major charged furiously across the study, and grabbed the handle of the door, and dragged at it.

Click!

The key turned as he grasped the handle. The door rattled, but it did not open. Mulvaney major dragged at it in vain. He was locked in his study, and he heard a low chuckle in the passage outside.

"You young villain! Unlock that door!" he shouted, hammering on the panels with both fists.

"Paddy, old man—"

"Open the door!"

"Not unless you make it pax."

"Wh-what! Pax with a fag! I'll—I'll—I'll smash you!" yelled Mulvaney major. "I'll write to the pater to take you away! I'll report you to the



In the dim light, Gore could just make out the form of the sleeping new boy. He raised the heavy water jug and tilted it over the pillow. "Swoosh!" "Owwhhh!" gasped Mulvaney minor, jumping up like a jack-in-the-box!

Head! I'll pulverise you if you don't open the door!"

"Make it pax!"
 "You—you—you— Help!" roared Mulvaney major. "Kildare—Darrell—Rushden—Langton—somebody come and help—"

"I've taken the key out of the lock," said Mulvaney minor calmly. "If anybody comes along, I'm going to throw it out of the passage window into the ivy! You'll be a giddy prisoner for the rest of the day, Paddy."

Mulvaney major gasped with rage. "Micky, open this door! I—"

"Make it pax, then!"
 There was a pause. Mulvaney major did not want to be locked up in his study all the afternoon; and he knew how he would be chipped if it came out that he had been made a prisoner in his study by a fag. To descend from the window, or break the lock would attract rather too much attention for a dignified prefect of the Sixth Form. He felt himself driven to making terms with his minor.

"I—I—I'll let you off," he stuttered. "Open the door!"

"Not just yet. Prisoners have to ransom themselves," said Micky calmly. "What! If you think I'm going to give you any tin—"

"I don't want any tin."
 "What do you want then, you young rascal?"

"Those lines in your desk. They're no good to you, and they'll do nicely for me."

"Open the door!"
 "Can I have the lines?"

"Ye-es!"
 "Honest Injun!"
 "Yes!" gasped Mulvaney major.

Micky Mulvaney opened the door and smiled sweetly at his brother. Mulvaney major's hands were simply itching to be upon him; but he was a fellow of his word. Micky opened the

desk, and took out the sheaf of impot paper.

"So-long, Paddy!" he said.
 "Get out!" gasped his brother.
 "Would you like me to come to tea with you this afternoon?"

"No!" roared Mulvaney major. "I give you one second to get out!"
 "Ta-ta, then! Keep your wool on!"
 And Mulvaney minor skipped into the passage, with the impot paper under his arm.

Mulvaney major slammed the door after him, and then fanned his fevered brow.

Mulvaney minor walked away cheerily to his study, where he deposited the lines in his desk, and safely locked them up. That evening he started to work on the lines Mr. Linton had given him, and he made his writing as like as he could to that upon the impot paper he had obtained from his major.

As he was a new boy, Mr. Linton's knowledge of his handwriting was of the slightest; and as Levison, who had written that impot, was in the Fourth, the Shell master would not be likely to know his hand, either. The astute young rascal had escaped exactly one-half of his long imposition.

The next morning he presented himself to Mr. Linton, after lessons, with his thousand lines.

Mr. Linton gazed at the sheaf of paper in surprise. He had not expected that impot to be written out quite so quickly. Indeed, he had expected that it would keep Mulvaney minor busy all Saturday afternoon.

"My imposition, sir," said Mulvaney minor meekly.

"You have lost no time with it," said Mr. Linton, somewhat graciously. "Put it on the table. You may go."

And Mulvaney minor went. He met Levison in the passage; and Levison

noticed that he was grinning gleefully. Mulvaney gave him an affable nod.

"Much obliged to you, Levison," he said.

"Eh!" said Levison. "What are you obliged about, you ass?"

"For whatever you did to get an impot of five hundred lines from my major," replied Mulvaney minor, with a chuckle; and he walked on, leaving Levison of the Fourth utterly mystified.

CHAPTER 15.

Detained!

MULVANEY MINOR had soon dropped into the way of things at St. Jim's. His propensity for practical jokes was strong —but he had learned not to give it rein as far as Mr. Linton was concerned.

But, upon the whole, the fellows liked Micky Mulvaney.

He was so frank and hearty and breezy and good-natured, that one could not help liking him.

He was always cheerful, too, which made him a pleasant companion. Even his detention on Saturday afternoon was not allowed to make him downhearted.

"Sorry you're detained," Tom Merry remarked to him on Saturday morning. "Your major's refereeing for us in a match with the Grammarians this afternoon."

"Sure, and if I was free I'd play for ye," said Micky.

Tom Merry laughed. "The eleven's made up," he said; "and we don't generally play new kids without a trial in the regular fixtures, my son. You could come and watch."

"Your major's going great guns after the match," Jack Blake remarked. "There's going to be a feed in his study—he's got Kildare coming and half a dozen of the Sixth—and it's going to

be ripping. I've got to do the shopping for him. If you weren't a young ass, you might go to the feed, as he's your major."

"Sure, he didn't tell me about it, or I'd have been as good as gold," said Micky. "When are ye going to do the shopping?"

"After dinner. The feed's got to be ready by five o'clock."

And after dinner Jack Blake was busy fagging for Mulvaney major. The prefect had entrusted him with a pound, to be expended on good things for the little celebration in his study. Jack Blake was very skilful at shopping, and he obtained the very best value for his money, and quite a good pile of things were placed in Mulvaney major's study when he had finished.

Having finished his shopping and bestowed the proceeds in the prefect's study, Jack Blake changed for the match.

Tom Merry & Co. were on the footer ground when the Grammarian juniors arrived. Mulvaney major, the referee, was with them, in blazer and shorts.

At the window of the Shell-room Mulvaney minor stood watching the distant playing fields.

For once the cheerful face of Mulvaney minor was clouded.

He would dearly have loved to join the crowd of juniors gathered round the junior football ground, where Tom Merry's eleven were beginning a tough match with Gordon Gay & Co. of the Grammar School.

But it was not to be. He was detained until half-past four, and as the kick-off was at three, his detention would last as long as the football match.

The first half ended with the score level, one to one. Micky watched the commencement of the second half through the Form-room window, and then he quietly went to the door of the Form-room and looked into the passage. On that fine, sunny half-holiday the School House was deserted. Mulvaney was probably the only fellow remaining within the walls.

He crept to the Sixth Form passage and entered his major's study.

The bundles brought in by Mulvaney major's dutiful fag were piled in the cupboard. Micky collected them up quickly, stuffing the smaller packages into his pockets, and taking the larger ones in his hands or under his arms. Then he quitted the study.

Two minutes later he was back in the Form-room, and the plunder was hidden in his locker.

A few minutes later Mr. Linton glanced in at the door of the Form-room, and Micky Mulvaney turned away from the window.

"You may go now, Mulvaney!" said the master of the Shell.

"Thank you, sir!"

And Micky lost no time. He ran out into the quadrangle, jamming his cap on the back of his curly head as he went.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry, meeting him as he came off, with a coat and muffler on. "Did you see the game? We've beaten them!"

"Faith, and I did! I want you fellows to come to a feed to celebrate the giddy victory!" said Mulvaney minor. "I'm standing it in the Form-room!"

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry. "We'll bring the Grammar School chaps

—they're going to stay to tea, anyway—and we'll bring our grub along, too, and make a regular beanfeast of it!"

"Right-ho!"

And the rival footballers, when they changed after the match, trooped into the Shell Form Room.

CHAPTER 16.

Mulvaney Minor Stands Treat!

JACK BLAKE, after changing, had gone to Mulvaney major's study, to perform his duties as a fag there. He told his chums he would join them later in the Shell-room.

Blake made up the fire in the study, and laid the tablecloth, and then opened the cupboard to take out the good things he had left there. He had to open the jam, boil the eggs, cut the ham and the bread-and-butter, and make the toast. He stared blankly at the cupboard. He was prepared to perform all those various duties, but the materials were lacking. Not a single article remained of the pile he had placed in the cupboard before the match.

"My hat!" ejaculated Blake.

Mulvaney major came into the study.

"Have you taken the things away?" asked Blake.

"Of course I haven't!" said the Sixth Former testily. "How could I take them away when I've been refereeing your blessed match?"

"But—but they're gone!"

"What!"

Blake waved his hand towards the cupboard. Mulvaney major looked into it. The cupboard was in the same state as that of the celebrated Mrs. Hubbard—quite bare.

"Did you put the things there?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, the whole quid's worth!"

"Then somebody has taken them away while we've been on the ground. Some of the New House kids, perhaps—"

"Figgins & Co. were in our team," said Blake, shaking his head, "and the New House kids wouldn't raid a prefect's study, anyway!"

"Then who—what—"

"Blessed if I know!"

Mulvaney major gave a sudden yell.

"My minor!"

"Your minor!" ejaculated Blake.

"Yes!" roared Mulvaney. "The young rascal has been in the House all the time! It's just one of his tricks! Oh, I'll—I'll smash him!"

He dashed up the stairs to the Shell passage, and burst into his minor's study. A junior was sitting at the table, bending over a book, and Mulvaney major grabbed him by the shoulder and yanked him to his feet.

"Now, you young scoundrel, where—where—"

"Dear me!" ejaculated Skimpole—it was Skimpole. "What is the matter, my dear Mulvaney?"

Mulvaney hurled him away. Skimpole blinked at the enraged prefect in amazement.

"My dear Muldoon—"

"Where's my minor?" roared the senior.

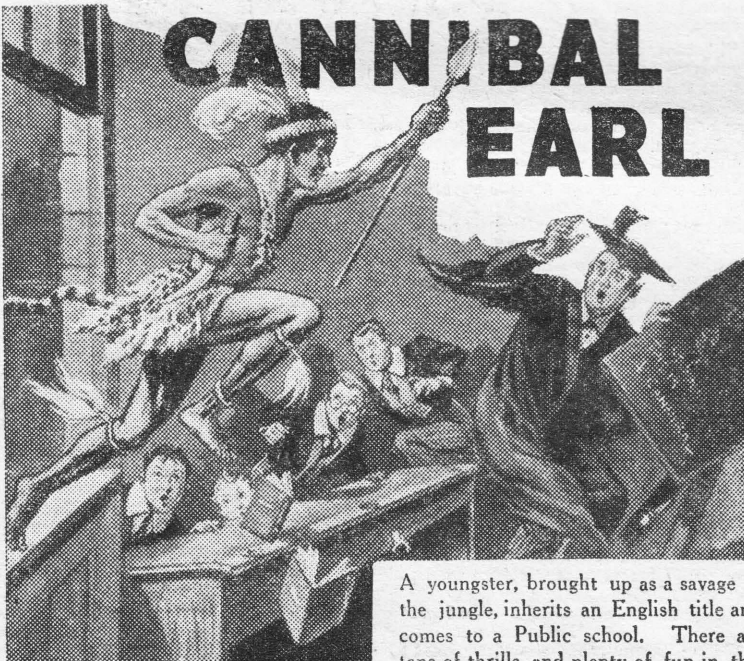
"You—your minor! I think he is standing a feed somewhere!"

"A—a—a feed!" stuttered Mulvaney, with an instant inward conviction that he would never see the raided supplies again.

"Yes; I was told so. I was unable to go, as I am engaged in studying Professor Balmcrumpet on the subject of Determinism—"

"Where is he?"

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"Professor Balmcrumpet? I really do not know. Probably in London or—"

"Idiot! Where is my minor?"

"Oh, your minor! I think he is in the Form-room. But, my dear Muldoon—"

The prefect dashed out of the study as hurriedly as he had dashed into it. Skimpole blinked after him, greatly surprised.

"Dear me!" said Skimpole. "He seems quite excited about something!"

But Skimpole had no time to bother about trifles like that. In a few moments he was deep again in the abstruse arguments of the famous Professor Balmcrumpet.

Mulvaney major raced downstairs and dashed along the Form-room passage. He reached the door of the Shell Form Room, and the sound of merry voices saluted his ears.

"Pass the eggs, Lowther!"

"Done to a turn, by George! You're a dab hand at frying bacon, young Mulvaney! Don't leave the frying-pan about the Form-room, though!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, this jam is spiffing!"

"Yaas, wathah! Pass the jam, deah boy!"

Mulvaney did not need telling further what was becoming of the supplies intended for the delectation of a select party of Sixth Formers in his study. He tore at the handle of the Form-room door.

But the door would not open.

Micky Mulvaney had guessed that his major would probably "tumble" to what had become of his feed, and he had carefully locked the door after his guests were all within the Form-room.

Mulvaney major hammered on the door.

"You kids open this door! Do you hear?"

"Hallo! Is that you, Paddy?"

"Open the door, you young villain!"

"Faith, and what do you want?"

"I—I want to slaughter you!" stammered Mulvaney major. "I'm going to break every bone in your body! Let me in!"

"Not good enough!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tom Merry, Blake, D'Arcy, Noble! Open this door at once!"

"Sure, and they can't! I've got the key in me pocket!" said Mulvaney minor cheerfully. "Try coming down the chimney, Paddy darling."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Thump, thump, thump!

"Sure, I'll leave you a sardine, Paddy, and a lump of sugar!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mulvaney major kicked the door again, and gave a gasp of pain. The door was harder than his toe. He limped away furiously down the passage. He found Kildare and Darrell and Rusden and Langton in his study when he returned there. They were ready for tea, but the tea was going on in the Form-room of the Shell—with other guests!

"Better come and have tea in my study!" said Kildare, laughing.

And Mulvaney major admitted that he had better.

Meanwhile, the feed was proceeding in the Shell-room without interruption, and with great enjoyment. Tom Merry & Co. had brought in supplies, but the major portion of the feed was that supplied—unwittingly—by Mulvaney of the Sixth.

St. Jim's fellows and Grammarians enjoyed themselves exceedingly. Gordon Gay, of the Grammar School, proposed the health of the founder of the feast, and Mulvaney minor chimed in:

"Sure, that's my major!"

And, with cheers and laughter, the health of Mulvaney major was drunk.

And when the feed was over, Tom Merry & Co. escorted their departing guests as far as the school gates. All the fellows agreed that Mulvaney minor was one of the best, and also that they shouldn't care to be in his shoes when he met his major again.

It was a painful meeting when it came off, and for the whole of the next day Micky Mulvaney was observed to prefer standing up to sitting down. And Mulvaney major's tag noticed a broken cane in the prefect's study. But, as Micky said, it was all in the day's work; and as soon as the effect of that tremendous licking had worn off, there was no cheerier fellow in St. Jim's than Mulvaney minor.

(One of the best—and funniest—stories Martin Clifford has ever written about St. Jim's appears in next Wednesday's GEM. It's a yarn you mustn't miss!)

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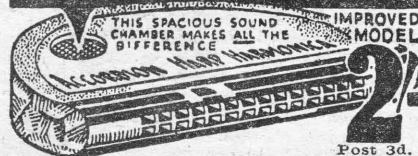
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WITH HIS WATCH PAWNED, AND HIS MONEY MYSTERIOUSLY SPENT, NO WONDER HARRY WHARTON DREADS THE APPROACHING VISIT OF HIS UNCLE!

An Old Boy at Greyfriars!

"HARRY, my boy!" It was a cheery, hearty greeting. The Remove were in their class-room, and Harry Wharton had been in his place in the Form when a message was brought in to Mr. Quelch, and the Form-master signed to Harry to come out before the class.

Harry guessed at once what it meant, and he rose unwillingly from his place, and went out towards the Form-master. Mr. Quelch gave him a kind look.

"Your uncle has arrived, Wharton. You are excused the rest of the lesson."

"Thank you, sir!" said Harry.

But his look was not joyful as he left the class-room and went out into the hall, where Colonel Wharton was awaiting him.

The colonel gave him a quick, searching look as he came into view. Harry advanced towards him with downcast eyes, not knowing how to greet the guardian with whom he had parted on such ill terms.

"Harry, my boy!"

Wharton started involuntarily. There was true heartiness in the colonel's deep voice, true regard and affection in the look he gave Harry as he grasped his hand. In spite of himself, Harry melted a little, and he raised his eyes to his guardian's face with something like a smile. The old soldier surveyed him critically.

"By Jove, Harry, you've improved!"

"Do you think so, sir?"

"Yes, I do certainly. You are twice the fellow you were. How do you like Greyfriars?"

"I like it very well."

"I thought you would, when you got used to it," said the colonel, with a cheery nod. "I was a boy here myself thirty years ago, and the old place looks just the same. It's a splendid place for the right kind of lad. I have just seen the doctor, Harry, and you are excused the rest of the morning lessons. It's some time since I have seen you. Let's go out into the Close—or, rather, show me up to your study. I'd like to have a peep at your quarters."

"Certainly, uncle!"

In spite of his prejudice, Harry could not help thawing in the presence of this frank, unaffected heartiness and cordiality. His own look and feelings became insensibly more cordial.

He led the way to the staircase, and Colonel Wharton followed him up to the Remove passage and into Study No. 1. The colonel looked about him with the keen interest of an "old boy."

"By Jove, just the same place! Same little dens, and jolly comfortable, too. Do you have your tea in here, the same as we used to thirty years ago?"

"Yes," said Harry, smiling.

"Good! What sort of fellows do you chum with here?"

"There's Nugent and Bob Cherry and Bunter in this study," said Harry, "and Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur."

The colonel uttered an exclamation.

"By Jove! Is it possible?"

"Do you know Hurree Singh?"

"Do I not?" said the colonel, with a grim smile. "I fought by the side of his father, the old Nabob of Bhanipur, in India, and I have carried Hurree in my arms when he was a child of four, through the tulwars of a rebel mob."

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HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL!

By Frank Richards.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper the "Magnet.")

~~~~~

Harry's eyes gleamed.

"I should like to hear about that, uncle."

"I'll tell you the story some time," laughed the colonel. "I don't suppose Hurree Singh remembers it, or remembers me; but we shall see. You have your four chums in this study with you?"

"Well, three chums," said Harry, "and Billy Bunter."

"Good! I have asked the Head if he could allow you and any special friends of yours to have a holiday this afternoon, and he has promised to think of it. I am going to lunch with him, and I shall push the attack home, and I'm pretty certain about that holiday. What do you think of the idea?"

~~~~~

There was no love lost between Harry Wharton and his uncle—until the rapids above the weir threatened to sweep the helpless junior to his death!

~~~~~

Harry's face flushed. It was rather a needless question to ask a healthy schoolboy what he thought of the idea of having a half-holiday.

"It's very kind of you, sir," said Harry. "I—I—" He broke off.

"What is it, Harry?"

"I"—the boy went very red—"you are very kind to me. I—I'm glad I came to Greyfriars, and—and you were right in what you said when I left home; it was the best place for me."

The colonel patted him on the shoulder.

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Harry—very glad indeed. I thought you would come to see things in that light in time. I always knew that there was sterling stuff in you; as, by Jove, there should be in the son of a soldier who died fighting for his country. Let's go for a stroll round the Close, Harry. I'm curious to see the old place again."

They left the study and the School House, and Harry played the part of

guide. At almost every step fresh delighted exclamations broke from the colonel as he recognised some familiar spot. The space behind the chapel rails, where many fistical encounters of Greyfriars took place, brought reminiscences to the colonel. It was the spot where he had licked Baker Major in seven rounds, as he told Harry with great gusto.

"That was something like a fight, too," said the colonel. "I was half a head shorter than Baker, but I licked him. I had better wind than he had; that was the reason. He stood it out as long as he could. Poor Baker. We were in India together after that, and the best of friends, and we often had a little jaw about that fight behind the chapel. Baker always maintained that if his foot hadn't slipped in the last round he would have licked me. Of course, I couldn't allow that."

Harry laughed. These reminiscences were curious enough from the grim old bronzed veteran who had faced danger and death in a dozen fields.

"By the way, how does the time go?" asked the colonel suddenly. "I mustn't be late for lunch with the Head."

Harry coloured.

"I cannot tell you, sir," he said in a low voice.

The colonel laughed heartily and felt for his own watch.

"Same old tale," he exclaimed. "Has somebody been pouring water into your watch, or have you trodden on it?"

"Oh, no; but—"

"Well, never mind, accidents will happen to watches, especially schoolboys' watches," said the colonel good-humouredly. "If it is really done for, Harry, tell me, and I'll send you down another from town."

Harry's face turned crimson.

"It is not that, sir, but—"

"Well, never mind," said the colonel, noticing the boy's red and confused face. "It doesn't matter a bit. It's time we were moving."

Harry walked silently by his side. It was like deception to leave the colonel under this misapprehension, yet—

"Uncle!" said Harry abruptly.

The colonel looked down at him.

"I have parted with my watch."

Colonel Wharton laughed.

"Ah, I see! Well, my lad, you needn't look so bothered about it. Changed it for a bat or a fishing-rod, I suppose?"

"No. I have parted with it outside the school."

The colonel's face became grave.

"If you were short of money, Harry, you might have written to me. You know I don't want to treat you meanly. There was no need to sell the watch."

"I—I have not sold it."

"Then what the deuce have you done with it?" said the colonel, a trifle testily. "You have not pawned it, I suppose?"

"Yes, I have."

Colonel Wharton stopped dead and looked at his nephew. The moment had come at last. They faced each other in silence.

"Things have changed here a little since my time, after all," said the colonel. "The boys in my time did not visit pawnshops."

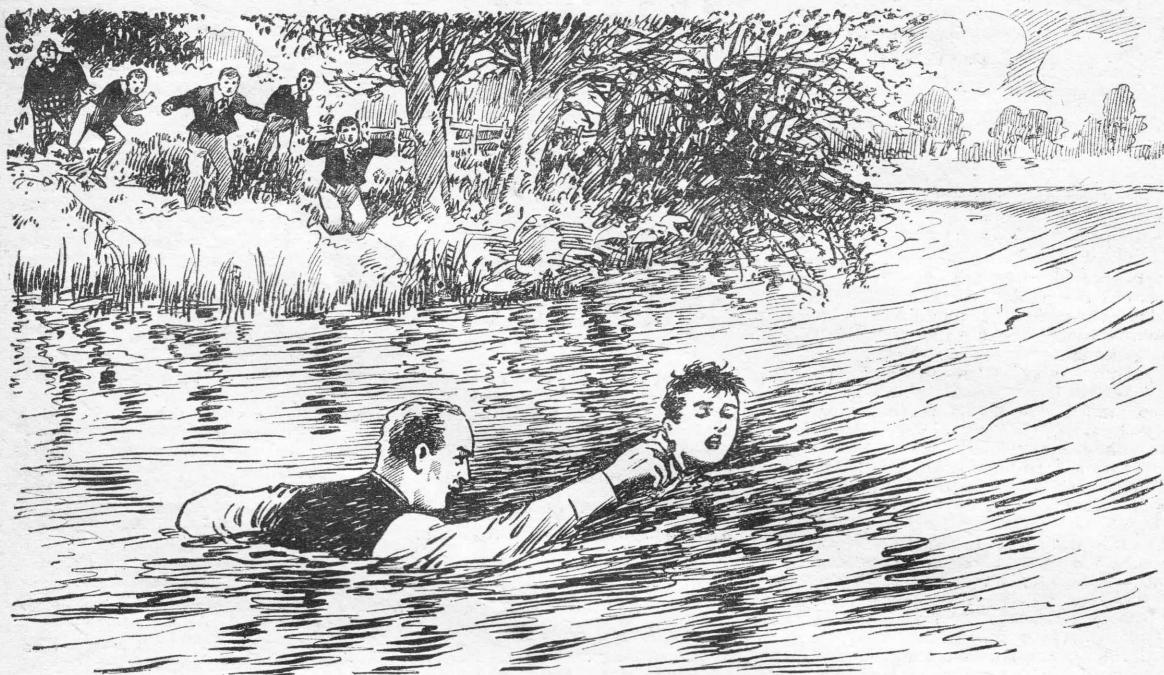
Harry's face flushed scarlet.

"When did you pawn the watch, Harry?"

"Last Wednesday."

"And you preferred that to writing to me?"

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"All right, Harry. I've got you," gasped Colonel Wharton, as he seized the drowning boy's collar. But the bank was still some distance away, and every second carried them nearer to the weir!

"I did not think of it, and there was no time."

"Do you mean to say that you had a sudden call to meet?"

"Well, yes, it was like that."

"I really don't see how it could be. Would you mind explaining?"

Harry was silent.

"You surely had some other resource without that, even if you did not care to ask me?" said the colonel. "There was the money I sent you for the cricket things; you might have used that and postponed getting them."

"I have done so."

The colonel knitted his brows.

"Now, Harry, I'm the last person in the world to inquire into a boy's private affairs; young fellows have their right to privacy as well as old ones, I am aware of that. But I don't see how a boy in the Lower Fourth could have wanted two or three pounds in a great hurry, unless he had been—well, transgressing in some way. Have you been getting into any difficulties?"

"No, sir!"

"Then what did you want the money for?"

Harry did not speak.

"You don't want to explain to me."

"I'd rather not."

"Suppose I command you to do so?"

Harry Wharton's face set obstinately. "I shall not do anything of the kind, of course," said the colonel. "But I cannot rest satisfied with this matter as it stands, Harry. You have no right to visit such a place as a pawnshop, and you have no right to spend so much money without giving me an explanation. I suppose this is all a secret?"

"The Head does not know, of course."

"So I should think. I must turn this over in my mind. Leave me alone for a bit, please."

Harry Wharton walked away in silence. The Remove had come out of

their class-room and were pouring into the Close. Harry passed Hazeldene, who looked at him curiously, but Harry did not see him.

Hazeldene drew a quick breath. He had seen Harry part from his uncle, and noted the gloomy expression on the junior's face. He guessed that something had happened; and, in the light of what Billy Bunter had told him the previous evening, he could guess what it meant.

It was a difficult position for Hazeldene. A few weeks ago the cad of the Remove would have shrugged his shoulders and dismissed the affair from his mind. But Hazeldene was no longer the cad of a few weeks ago. There had been a change in him; he saw many things differently now.

### Hazeldene Owns Up!

**C**OLONEL WHARTON walked slowly under the elms, his head bent a little, and a gloomy frown puckering his brows. The discovery he had just made had come as a heavy blow to him.

He had had faith in Harry. The boy was full of faults, hurried into them by his obstinate and passionate temper; but the colonel had believed that he was made of the right stuff. He had believed that the faults were all on the surface, and that with judicious training, they would pass away. Now his belief had received a rude shock.

For the right kind of boy a Public school was the right place. But for the wrong kind of boy? For the boy prone to fall into reckless and evil habits, it was by no means the right place. He had never dreamed that his nephew was that kind of boy, but he had his doubts now. A lad who spent a large sum of money—large for a junior—and refused to explain how or why—who immediately thought of the pawnshop when it

was necessary to raise money—was not the kind of boy he had believed Harry Wharton to be.

Yet the colonel could not help reflecting that, had the lad been really mixed up in any disgraceful transaction, it would have been easy for him to keep it a secret. A lad who had gambled away his money would probably have few scruples in prevaricating to account for it. Harry could easily have pretended that his watch had been lost or broken. Surely the boy's sturdy truthfulness was a sign that his character was sound, though it might be reckless. Yet what had become of the money? Why did the boy refuse to explain, as he could easily have done, if there was nothing in the secret to be ashamed of?

"If you please, sir—"

A rather timid voice at his elbow roused the colonel with a start from his gloomy reverie. He glanced down at Hazeldene. The Removeite blushed, but there was a determined look on his face.

"What is it, my boy?" asked the colonel. "Do you want to speak to me?"

"Yes, if you are Harry Wharton's uncle."

"I am Colonel Wharton. What is it?"

Hazeldene hesitated. Colonel Wharton looked at him keenly, wondering what was the cause of the emotion visible in the somewhat weak face of the junior.

"What do you wish to say to me, my lad?"

"It's about Wharton, sir. I—I think I ought to tell you, but I don't want him to know—"

Hazeldene broke off in confusion. The colonel's face hardened. Hazeldene's words sounded like the preamble to tale-bearing, which was a petty meanness for which Colonel Wharton had a very strong contempt.

"I don't want to hear any tales about

my nephew, if that is what you mean," he said abruptly.

Hazeldene went crimson.

"It's nothing of the sort, sir. I've nothing to say against Harry. I—I think I ought to tell you, because you'll be down on him—"

The colonel started.

For the first time it occurred to him that the boy might be able to enlighten him as to the affair of the watch; perhaps explain what seemed black against Harry. The old soldier's grim face relaxed.

"Go on, my lad," he said, kindly enough.

"I don't know whether you know that Wharton parted with his watch," blurted out Hazeldene, "and that he hasn't bought the cricket things you sent him the money for? I found out that he was worried because he thought you would ask him."

"I know all about it. Go on."

"Well, I think you ought to know why he did it," said Hazeldene eagerly. "Only if you tell the Head, I shall be expelled, that's all!"

"You will be expelled? What do you mean? Have you been mixed up with Harry in any affair as serious as that?"

"Oh, no! It was all my fault. I—I got into difficulties!" stammered Hazeldene. "It was a rotten moneylender! Wharton found it out, and made up his mind to help me—I don't know why, because I always treated him badly enough, but he did it—and he pawned his watch and gave up buying the cricket things to get me out of a horrible fix. Isaacs was going to show me up to the Head, and I should have been expelled." The colonel gave the junior a keen glance.

The tale was evidently true; it was no made-up explanation. And a load lifted from Colonel Wharton's heart.

"Let me understand you," he said quietly. "Had my nephew anything to do with your getting into the clutches of the moneylender?"

"Oh, no! He never knew till it had been going on for weeks."

"And then he helped you?"

"Yes."

"You hadn't been the best of friends?"

"I'm afraid not. We had been mostly on bad terms."

"Whose fault was that?"

"Mine, I suppose, though Wharton wasn't the easiest fellow to get on with when he first came to Greyfriars."

The colonel smiled slightly. He could quite believe that. It was probable that even now Harry was not the easiest of fellows to get on with. "And yet he did this for you?"

"Yes; and he wasn't going to let me know, either, only I found it out. But I knew he wouldn't explain to you, and

I knew you would be down on him. Only—only, if you tell the Head I shall be expelled!"

"I shall not tell the Head, my lad. You seem to have acted foolishly, and to have hardly deserved what my nephew did for you; but your explaining this to me shows that you have real good in you. I shall keep the secret, of course."

Hazeldene breathed more freely.

"Thank you, sir! And you won't tell Wharton?"

"Why should I not tell him?"

Hazeldene shifted uneasily.

"Well, he's so jolly touchy, you know. He might think I was interfering in his affairs. I don't want to quarrel with him."

The colonel smiled grimly. That was Harry to the life, and he knew it; and he quite understood Hazeldene.

"Well, I must think about it," he said. "By Jove, that's the hour striking, and I shall keep the Head's lunch waiting! I am very much obliged to you, my boy. What is your name, by the way?"

"Hazeldene, sir."

"Good! I shall remember."

The colonel, with the cloud all gone from his brow, strode away rapidly towards the Head's house. He left Hazeldene feeling relieved in his mind, and yet not without some uneasiness, too, as to how Wharton might regard the matter if he came to hear of it.

### The Colonel's Party!

THE chums of the Remove joined Harry Wharton in the Close. They surrounded him, and he made an effort to clear his countenance.

"The troublefulness is great in the honourable countenance of our esteemed chum," Hurree Singh remarked. "Why this thushiness?"

"Oh, it's all right!"

"I am truly relieved to hear that it's all rightful, as I had a fearfulness that it was all wrongful. Has the worthy uncle turned up triumphfully?"

"He's here."

"I saw him," said Nugent. "He looks a decent old boy."

"He is."

"Good!" said Bob Cherry. "Lucky bouncer! I suppose the Head will be letting you off this afternoon?"

Harry was silent.

"Has he asked you about your watch, Wharton?" asked Billy Bunter, whose curiosity was never restrained by discretion.

Harry flushed angrily.

"Mind your own business, Bunter!"

"Oh, don't get ratty, Wharton! Of course, you could have told him some

yarn; and I dare say you did. You couldn't very well explain that you had had a day on the racecourse at Dale, and had blued four or five pounds—What ever are you doing, Wharton?"

Wharton took the talkative and indiscreet Bunter by the ear.

"Do you want me to bang your head on the floor?" he asked wrathfully.

"Certainly not! Mind how you

shake me, or you'll make my spectacles fall off, and if they break, you'll have to pay for them."

Harry released the fat junior of the Remove with a short laugh.

"Oh, get out!"

"I'm sorry if I've said anything to offend you!" said Bunter. "Of course, I didn't know you were keeping that about the races a secret from the other fellows!"

"You young ass, I haven't been to the races!"

"Oh, haven't you? Well, I don't see why you should cut up so rusty at the idea, then? Looks to me like a guilty conscience. But, of course, I take your word for it. I say, if your uncle stands you a feed, don't forget me!"

Nugent slipped his arm through Harry's as the latter walked away.

"Don't mind that young ass, Harry!" he said. "But, really, are you in any trouble with your uncle, old chap?"

"Yes. He knows I've pawned the watch."

"And you haven't told him what for?"

"I couldn't."

"Then I've a jolly good mind to!"

Harry started.

"You don't know yourself, Nugent!"

Frank Nugent laughed.

"I've got a jolly good idea, though. It was to save Hazeldene. You paid the moneylender Isaacs, and got him out of a fix."

"Mind you don't say a word to my uncle about it, anyway."

"I don't see why not."

"Do you think I'm going to make capital out of it?" demanded Harry passionately. "I won't curry favour with him. If he chooses to think badly of me, let him. I don't care."

"It may be worse than that. He may speak to the Head."

"I don't care."

"You would care, I suppose, if you were called up before the Head and ordered to explain, wouldn't you?"

"Perhaps. But I shouldn't explain."

"Then—"

Harry looked at his chum. There was a determined frown on his face.

"I don't want you to say a word, Nugent. If you've guessed the secret that gives you no right to give it away. I expect you to say nothing."

"Of course, I shouldn't speak against your wish."

"That's all right, then."

"But it looks to me as if you were in for a fearful row, Harry, unless you explain."

"I can stand it, I suppose."

After dinner the chums of the Remove went up to the study, where Billy Bunter was roasting chestnuts. Bunter had made a good dinner, but he had plenty of room left for any amount of chestnuts.

There was a knock at the door a few minutes later. Bob Cherry sang out "Come in!" and Colonel Wharton walked into the study. The veteran's face was very bright and cheery.

"I've good news for you, Harry—at least, I hope you will regard it as good news. The Head has given me permission to take you out with me on a little holiday this afternoon, with a few friends to be selected by yourself."

"Hip-pip!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Harry, old fellow, don't forget that we were brought up together under the same old roof—for the last few weeks, at any rate."

"Show not forgetfulness to the newness of your esteemed friends," purred Hurree Singh. "In the case of my esteemed self, the gratefulness of the

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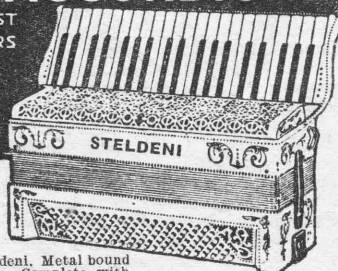


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friendship is only equalled by the newfulness!"

The colonel laughed. "You haven't introduced me to your friends yet, Harry."

Harry Wharton hardly knew what to make of the colonel's look and manner. The cloud under which they had parted an hour ago seemed to be completely gone. The colonel was more cordial, more jovial, than ever.

Harry presented his friends to the veteran, who shook hands heartily with each of them, not forgetting Billy Bunter.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, all of you!" said the colonel heartily.

"The same with us, sir!" said Billy Bunter. "I really don't see what Wharton was so worried about at his uncle coming—Ow! What are you treading on my foot for, Bob Cherry, you clumsy beast?"

But the colonel apparently heard nothing.

"Let me see—how many will there be for this little excursion?" he said. "Harry and Cherry and Nugent, and my old friend, Hurree Singh—"

"And Bunter!" said that individual promptly.

"Yes, Bunter," said Harry, with a smile.

"Is there anybody else—any special chum?"

Harry hesitated. "Well, there's a chap I'd like to take, but I can't call him a special chum," he said. "I should like to take Hazeldene."

"Good idea!" said Billy Bunter. "He stood us a tea last night, and we ought to show that we're grateful; and then Wharton's very fond of his sister—"

"Oh, shut up!" "Certainly, Wharton. I'm sorry if I've said anything to offend you. But, as a matter of fact, we know jolly well—Ow! What beast was that kicked my shin?"

"That's six," said the colonel. "I shall be very glad to have Hazeldene. I have already made his acquaintance."

Harry Wharton gave a start. He did not need telling more. The change in the colonel's manner was explained now. Hazeldene must have acquainted the old gentleman with the facts.

It came as a surprise to Harry. He knew that Hazeldene had turned over a new leaf, and he had been trying hard to live up to it. But a generous act like this Harry had been far from expecting of the cad of the Remove.

It was generous; for the colonel might not have taken it in the right spirit. A fussy old fellow might have considered it incumbent upon him to tell the whole story to the Head. In that contingency Hazeldene would have been made to suffer for speaking out.

"Six," said the colonel. "The Head asked me to give in the list of names to the Remove master before afternoon school. One of you lads may as well write it down and take it to Mr. Quelch."

"With great pleasurefulness, sir!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "Nugent will write it down and Cherry will take it to Mr. Quelch, which will be an equal division of labourfulness. I cannot fully express the joyfulness of my hearty satisfaction at meeting the honoured sahib," went on Hurree Singh. "I have often heard my father speak in my childhood of his esteemed friend, Colonel Wharton, but I did not know that the august colonel sahib was the relation of my honourable

chum, the name not being uncommon. I have heard my father say that I was carried through a rebel mob in the streets of Bhanipur in the honourable arms of the colonel sahib."

"By Jove, so you were!" said Colonel Wharton. "I'll tell you that story this afternoon, my lads. But now for the programme. My idea was to make a picnic of it, as it's such a beautifully fine afternoon. We can stroll down to the village, get a car or something there, and load it with provisions, and then drive to some quiet spot."

"You can bring your fishing-rods with you. There's a nice pool in the Sark a mile or so up, where we used to land some fine specimens thirty years ago."

"It's still there," grinned Bob Cherry. "I've fished there myself."

Harry Wharton found Hazeldene in the Close. Hazeldene looked at him rather nervously as he came up. He had made up his mind to take the bull by the horns, so to speak.

"I say, Wharton—" "I was just coming to speak to you—"

"I've told your uncle about you helping me the other day," said Hazeldene, abruptly. "I felt that I ought to. I hope you're not going to get ratty about it."

Harry laughed. "I guessed something of the sort. Oh, it's all right! As a matter of fact, you've got me out of an awkward fix by telling him. I was expecting a row with the Head mixed up in it. It's all right now."

Hazeldene drew a deep breath of relief.



"Roll him in!" "Collar the fat porpoise!" "Scrag him!" As the laughing juniors rolled him down the bank towards the stream, the fat Owl of the Remove had cause to regret that he had raided the picnic basket before tea-time!

"And I've reclined upon the bank and watched the fishfulness of my worthy chum," said the nabob. "In that spot everything is gardenfully lovely!"

"Then the sooner we get off, the better," said the colonel. "What do you all think of the idea?"

"Ripping!" was the general verdict. "Then how long will it take you to get ready?"

Bob Cherry jammed his cap on the back of his head.

"I'm ready!" he announced.

"About two ticks," said Nugent, grinning. "We haven't got to curl our hair. Bunter had better wipe the jam off his face."

"Oh, I say, Nugent—" "I'll cut along and speak to Hazeldene," said Harry Wharton.

"That's right. Hurry up!"

"Oh, that's good, then! But a fellow never knows how you're going to take things."

Harry frowned a moment. The reference to his uncertain temper was not pleasing, but his face quickly cleared.

"Oh, that's all right! I was coming to speak to you, Hazeldene. My uncle has got us a half-holiday this afternoon, and I want you to come."

"Can I get off?"

"Yes, I have permission."

Hazeldene's face brightened up. "This is jolly decent of you, Wharton! Of course, I shall be glad to come—jolly glad! What do the others say about it?"

"They all want you to come, the same as I do."

"Right you are!"

And Hazeldene was one of an extremely jolly party that left Greyfriars a little later.

### Unexpected!

A BRIGHT and pleasant afternoon, a roomy brake, two big lunch-baskets crammed with a variety of good things, the best that the local tuckshop could supply, regardless of expense! Colonel Wharton was doing the little holiday in good style, and the chums of the Remove appreciated it.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "This is really ripping. If you'd rather I drove, Nugent—"

"I wouldn't!" said Nugent tersely.

"Think you can manage two horses all right?"

"Better than you could, I think, Bob."

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Oh, all right! We don't want to break our necks—at least, mine."

"The breakfulness of the esteemed neck would mar the jollification of the holiday," purred Hurree Singh. "But worthy Nugent seems to manage the horseful team in good stylefulness. Still, if he were tired at all, I should have pleasurefulness in relieving him of the trouble of driving."

"No trouble," said Nugent.

"I don't see the fun of driving," said Bunter. "I'd rather eat toffee any day, especially toffee like this."

"Why, the young cormorant has started already!"

"Only just a little snack, Cherry, to whet my appetite."

"The snackfulness of the esteemed Bunter is only equalled by the hearty dinnerfulness of the otherful persons," the nabob remarked.

Harry Wharton was sitting silent in the brake beside the colonel. There had been no explanation between the two, and relations were still a little strained—that is, they were a little strained on Harry's side. The colonel seemed to have forgotten that there had been any friction.

Harry's feelings were mingled. The colonel's treatment of him to-day had come as a complete surprise, and he had not yet got his bearings, so to speak. He had expected something very different—a stern uncle, an unyielding martinet. A cheery old soldier, with a boyish fun and good-humour in his bronzed face, was very different from the uncle Harry Wharton had expected. The colonel had been nothing like this at home.

Yet he had been the same man. It was borne in on Harry's mind that in those days at Wharton Lodge the fault had not been on his uncle's side. The colonel had been the same man, but Harry had been different. That was what it meant.

To the sulky, passionate, spoiled boy the colonel had been unable to show the kinder side of his nature, or, when he had done so, Harry had deliberately misunderstood him. That was how the case was now presenting itself to Harry Wharton's mind, and it gave him a sense of discomposure. It was not pleasant to feel that he had been in the wrong, and that the injuries of which he had nursed the remembrance had been mostly imaginary.

Nugent stopped the brake at last.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We'll leave the brake here, and let the horses graze, and walk down to the river. Bunter can carry the lunch-baskets."

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"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I expect you'll carry away about half the contents, anyway!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Mind you don't roll into the river, Bunter. There's a current out a bit from the land, and it's dangerous. The bank is sloping here, so the only thing I can think of is to tie a rope to Bunter's ankle, and have somebody holding it all the time. If he once started rolling, we should lose our Owl for good."

"The goodfulness of the wheezy idea is great," said Hurree Singh; "but if we fixed some of the fishful hooks into the ears of the esteemed Bunter, it would serve the purposefulness equally well."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hand out the lunch-baskets," laughed the colonel. "I will carry one of them. You can hobble the horses and give them a little run here. Don't forget the fishing-rods and the cans."

Laden with their various properties, the cheerful Removites quitted the brake, and followed the short footpath down to the green, sloping banks of the Sark.

It was an ideal spot for fishing. The glimmer of the sun on the wide, rolling river, and the moving shadows of the foliage on the water close to the grassy bank were pleasant to see.

Bob Cherry looked about him with glistening eyes as he lengthened his rod.

"My hat, Wharton, I wish you had an uncle come to see you every day!" he remarked. "This beats swotting over Latin in the class-room. What?"

"Rather!" said Nugent.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!" "It is jolly," said the colonel. "It makes an old fellow feel a boy again. Mind the water, you know. I remember that it's deep and dangerous here; and there was a fellow drowned a little lower down, in my time."

"I know, sir," said Nugent. "It was Haywood minor of that day. They still call it Haywood's Pool here."

"You fellows can go and fish," said Billy Bunter. "I haven't a rod, and I don't want to fish, so I'll look after the lunch. I'll spread the cloth, and boil the kettle, and get all the things ready for you. I have seldom seen so really ripping a feed as this one. Your uncle is a brick, Wharton."

"The brickfulness of the honourable uncle sahib is great."

"Let's get to the fishing," said Wharton. "You brought your rod, Hazeldene?"

"I borrowed Russell's," said Hazeldene. "I sold mine a week or two ago." He coloured a little. "This one of Russell's is all right."

"Come on, then."

The juniors made their way to the bank. With rods and lines and baits and cans, they looked very businesslike, but whether they had the patience necessary to the true angler was a question. The colonel went up the bank and pulled out a newspaper. He didn't want to fish.

Billy Bunter paid his attention to the feed. That was just in Bunter's line. He had the spirit stove going very soon in a sheltered spot, and the kettle singing away cheerily on it. He spread the cloth on the grass, and laid out the eatables in enticing array. So enticing, indeed, did they look that it was impossible for Billy Bunter to resist the temptation to sample them.

After all, he reflected, there was plenty—and he was hungry. The fishermen had their backs turned to him and were intent on the stream. Bob Cherry

had a bite and there was great excitement. It turned out to be a fragment of a sardine tin from the bottom of the river, and there was a general grin at Bob's expense as he landed it. Then they fished again, but it suddenly occurred to Nugent that Bunter was very silent. He looked round.

There was Bunter, kneeling among the eatables, in the very act of tilting a bottle into his mouth.

Nugent gave a shout.

The sudden alarm made Bunter jump, and the bottle slipped. The contents ran all over his neck and chest.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent.

Billy Bunter gasped.

"Ow! You beast, Nugent! What did you do that for?"

"What were you scoffing the grub for, without giving a fellow a chance?" demanded Nugent. "Look at the gorging young villain, you chaps!"

"Ow! My shirt is all wet and this stuff is sticky. Ow!"

"Serve you right!" said Bob Cherry. "You young cormorant! Still, if he's sticky we'd better duck him in the water and clean him, you chaps!"

"Ow! I won't be ducked in the water!"

"Collar him!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"The collarfulness is swift," said Hurree Singh, grasping Billy Bunter by the back of the neck. "Here, you young gorgor."

"Lemme alone!"

"The duckfulness in the water would be a wheezy good idea!"

"Yank him along!"

"Ow! Leggo!"

"Roll him down the bank!"

"If he gets started he can't stop. He'll go on like a barrel!"

"The stopfulness would be impossible after the startfulness. Roll the esteemed rotter down the bank, my honourable chums."

"Ow, Harry Wharton—ow! Stop them!"

Harry Wharton was laughing. The Removites rolled the helpless Bunter down the bank, as if fully intending to roll him into the water. Harry Wharton picked up the Owl's spectacles and placed them on a basket in safety.

Billy Bunter blinked and roared and gasped. The colonel laid down his paper at the uproar, and looked through the trees at the noisy Removites.

"By Jove, what is the matter there, boys?"

"Help!"

"It's this young cormorant has been scoffing the grub!" said Bob Cherry. "We're thinking of drowning him, sir, to see if it will cure him!"

"Help! Murder!"

"Here, chuck it, you chaps!" said Harry Wharton, laughing, as Bunter was rolled into the sedges on the bank. "The young ass thinks you're in earnest."

"The earnestfulness is terrific."

"Will you promise never to eat anything again as long as you live, Bunt?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yes, certainly. I'll never touch a morsel again."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent.

"The promisefulness is prompt, but what price the performfulness?" said Hurree Singh, grinning.

"Ow! Lemme gerrup! I'll punch all your beastly heads."

The chums of the Remove released Bunter. Harry Wharton stepped towards him to help him to his feet, but Bunter, without his glasses, was as blind as the owl from which his nickname was derived. He fancied it was one of the juniors about to seize him again, and he hit out.

The right-hander caught Harry Wharton on the solar plexus and winded him. He staggered back, overcome by the unexpectedness of the blow.

"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry. But it was too late. Harry Wharton was staggering on the verge of the steep bank, and, even as Bob Cherry's cry rang out, he toppled over and fell with a big splash into the deep water.

### In Peril of His Life!

**SPLASH!**  
The splash of Harry Wharton in the river was followed by a cry of horror from the chums of the Remove.

"Harry!"  
"He's in!"  
"Great Scott! You know how deep it is here!"

The chums ran forward to the water's edge. Billy Bunter was blinking, hardly knowing what had happened, but he was forgotten now.

Harry Wharton was in the midst of the waters. He had fallen backwards into the river, and gone under like a stone. He came up again some distance from the bank. He was seen to struggle, but his attempt at swimming was a feeble one, and he was caught in the current, which was too strong for him. Evidently he had not recovered from Bunter's punch.

Nugent threw off his jacket.  
"I'm going in!"  
Bob Cherry dragged him back.  
"No good. You couldn't swim there, and you know it. I'm the chap."  
"I—"

But they had forgotten the colonel. There was a heavy footstep beside them, and the veteran was staring over the river, with face suddenly pale.

"Harry! Keep back, boys, I'll save him!"

The colonel had thrown off his jacket and hat as he ran to the water's edge. He plunged into the gleaming Sark, while the juniors watched him breathlessly.

The current, a dozen yards from the bank, was swift and strong, and Harry Wharton was being whirled along with it. The colonel swam towards him with powerful strokes. The junior was keeping himself afloat, but he seemed unable to do more.

"I say, you fellows, is that somebody fallen into the river? I'm awfully sorry!"

But no one was listening to Billy Bunter now.

The chums of the Remove hurried along the bank, following the swimmers down the river.

Harry Wharton was a strong swimmer; but he was still dazed. He was not much like the strong and sturdy swimmer who had dragged Frank Nugent from the jaws of death that first day at Greyfriars which Nugent had never forgotten.

"Help!"  
Harry gasped out the word feebly.  
"I'm coming!"

It was his uncle's voice, close at hand. The powerful grip of the colonel closed on Harry's collar, and the sinking head was jerked up above the surface again.

In the midst of the racing stream, far out from the gliding banks, Harry Wharton looked into his uncle's face, as pale as his own.

"Uncle!"  
"All right, my boy! I'll save you!"

The old soldier's powerful grip sustained Harry. But the current had already swept them far, and now the

water was running like a mill-race. In the distance, as the colonel knew, was the weir, and then—

He set his teeth and fought his way shorewards. He heard the shouts of the juniors on the bank. He knew they were shouting warnings of the weir, but he did not heed them. His schoolmate of thirty years ago had been drowned there, and he knew the danger.

He struggled landward, but the eddying current sucked him away, again and again.

His hand struck something in the gliding water—something that moved and swayed. It was a broken branch trailing down from an overhanging tree. He grasped it, and hung on with a strong grip, and the race to death was stopped.

There he hung, dragged at by the strong waters, but clinging on with desperate tenacity.

"Help!"  
The cry was answered. The juniors were tearing along the bank. They were abreast of the hanging branch and its burden in a moment. But how to help the colonel? The bank was steep; the water of unknown depth. To plunge in was to be swept away, and the trailing branch would bear no greater weight.

Bob Cherry cast a desperate glance round. A long, slender branch projected from the tree on the land side, and he grasped it, calling to his comrades.

"Get this off—quick!"  
They understood, and lent their aid. The weight of four sturdy juniors was thrown upon the slender branch. It cracked and groaned, and broke! The juniors dragged it from the parent trunk.

(Continued on the next page.)

## PEN PALS

A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest with each other. If you want a pen pal, post your notice, together with the coupon on page 17, to the GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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"Now, then!" panted Bob Cherry. Grasping the branch by the foliage at the one end, they pushed the other extremity into the water. The branch was quite long enough to reach the spot where the colonel floated, with the almost fainting boy in his arms.

"Catch hold, sir?" The colonel understood. "Can you manage it, boys?" "Rather, sir!" shouted Hazeldean. "Catch hold!"

The colonel shifted his grasp from the trailing branch to the end of the stem held out to him. He gripped the new hold firmly, and the four Removites drew him in towards the bank. The river raced under and round him, seemingly eager as a beast of prey to drag its victim away to death.

But the arms of the juniors were strong; the colonel's hold tenacious. He was drawn close to the bank, and Bob Cherry bent down and seized Wharton, and dragged him safely ashore.

Harry was laid on the grass. He was white as death, gasping painfully, and his eyes were half-closed. He was utterly exhausted. The colonel, forgetful of himself, knelt in the grass beside the boy.

"Harry, my dear lad, you're safe now."

Harry's eyes opened, and he met the gaze of his uncle. In that moment, the distrust and dislike passed away for ever—henceforth there would be no cloud between those two.

Good Friends!

HARRY WHARTON had had a narrow escape; but after getting a rest, and his clothes dried at a neighbouring farmhouse, he was little the worse for his experience, and the colonel was quickly himself again. It was a somewhat long walk back to the scene of the picnic; but the party were all feeling cheerful enough when they arrived there.

Billy Bunter had not succeeded in finding his glasses, and he was blinking among the eatables. He had a bun in

his hand; but evidently had not had the heart to take a single bite, a clear enough proof that his feelings were deeply stirred. He blinked mournfully at the party as they arrived.

"Hallo! I'm sincerely sorry that Wharton has been drowned," he said, not perceiving Harry with the rest. "It's a horrible thing to have happened on a picnic."

"But I'm not drowned!" said Harry, laughing.

Billy Bunter gave a jump.

"Is that you, Wharton? I thought you fell into the river."

"So I did; but my uncle fished me out."

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Bunter was handed his spectacles, and he blinked with satisfaction. He took another enormous bite out of the bun.

"I say, you fellows, as nobody has been drowned, we may as well go on with the picnic. I should have been sincerely sorry if it had been spoiled. You must all be awfully hungry by this time. I am, though. I've had a snack."

"We are hungry!" Colonel Wharton laughed. "Let's get started; the feast looks enticing enough."

The time to return to Greyfriars came all too soon. The last toast had been drunk in currant wine and ginger-pop, the last tart consumed by Bunter. The colonel and his young comrades walked down to the brake with cheery, happy faces. The horses were put in and the party drove back to the village.

And there the colonel said good-bye. He had to catch his train at Fridge Dale, and the juniors saw him off before walking back down the lane to the school. The colonel shook hands with each of them on the platform, last of all with Harry.

"Good-bye, Harry!"

"Good-bye, uncle! And—"

The colonel smiled quickly.

"Yes, Harry?"

"I—I can't say what my uncle—"

"I'm not used to talking much, I suppose," said Harry, with the colour in his cheeks. "But—but I think you understand."

The colonel pressed his hand.

"Perhaps I was not patient enough. But that's all over now. Good friends from this day forward, eh?"

The train was moving.

"Good-bye, uncle!"

The colonel waved his hand from the carriage window. The juniors waved their caps back, and the train rumbled out of the station.

"Well, he's a jolly good fellow," said Bob Cherry. "You must have brought your uncle up very carefully, Wharton, for him to turn out such a credit to you. About time we hopped it to Greyfriars. I think, or we shall be late for call-over."

The next day there was something of a surprise for Harry Wharton. A parcel arrived for him, and was taken up to the study, and the chums of the Remove gathered round it with great curiosity as it was opened. It was a bulky parcel, and Harry suspected its contents before he cut the cord.

"My hat! A new bat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

It was a splendid new bat. And that was not all. There was a small leather case, and when Harry opened it he found it to contain a new silver watch, with his monogram engraved on it. There was a slip of paper attached, with the words:

"From your affectionate uncle, James Wharton."

"Look out for 'Billy Bunter's Competition' in next week's issue. It's a story in a hundred, with the famous fat junior right at the top of his form!"

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