

In this
Number :

THE RIVAL SCHOOLS.

Also,
'IN THE RANKS,'
A Tale of Army Life

THE Magnet

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No. 34.

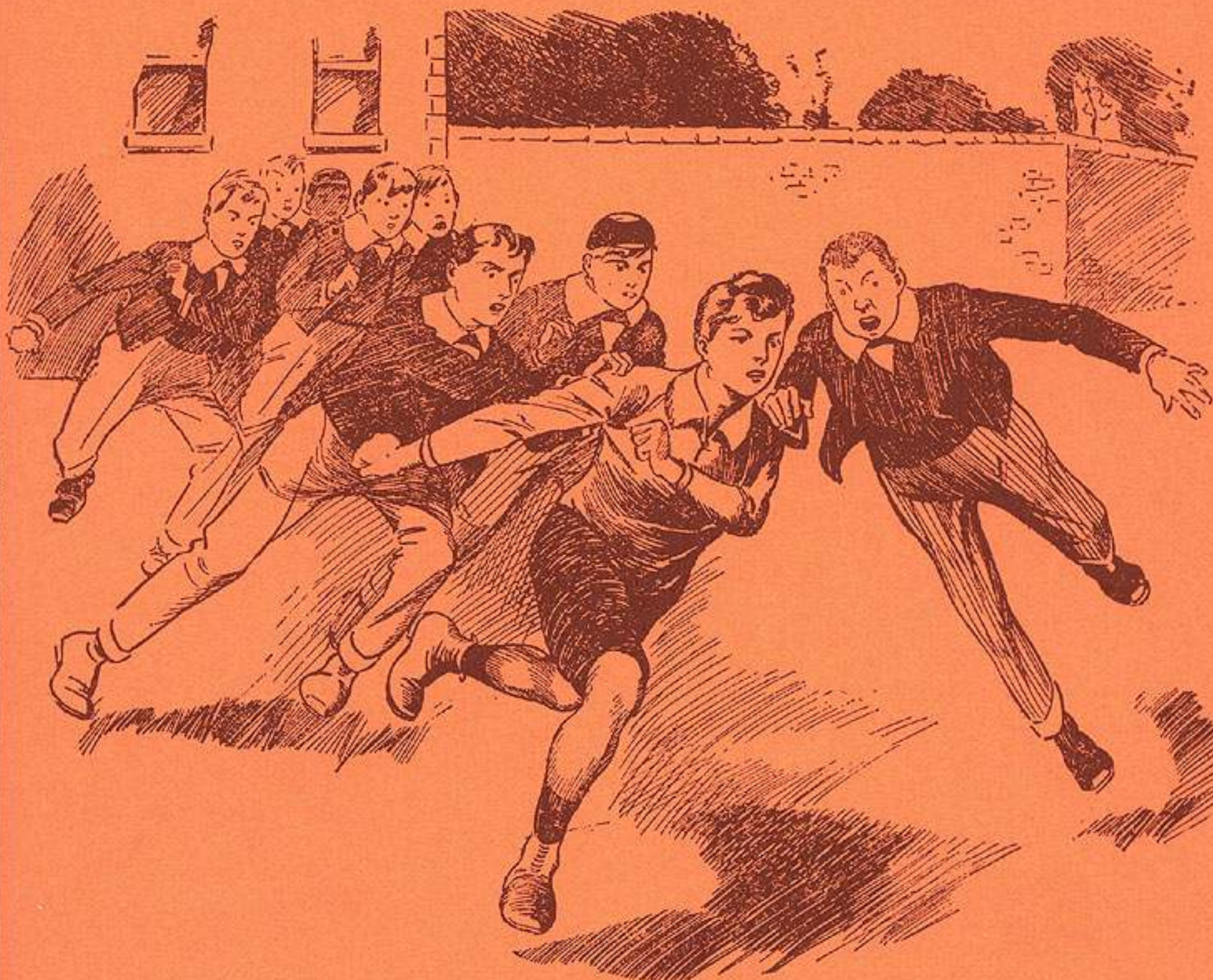
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By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**



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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Goal!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!
What have you got
there, Billy?"

Bob Cherry had just
run into No. 1 Study for his
football. Billy Bunter was
the only occupant of the
study, and he was sitting at
the table, with his spectacles
glued to a paper spread out
there before him, evidently
deeply engrossed in its con-
tents. As Bob Cherry ran in,
Bunter jumped up, and
hastily thrust the paper out of
sight under his jacket—a pro-
ceeding which Bob viewed
with considerable astonish-
ment.

"I—er—did you speak,
Cherry?" stammered Billy
Bunter.

"Yes, ass! I asked you
what you had got there?"

"Oh, did you?"

"Yes, I did," said Bob Cherry. "What is it? What are
you hiding under your jacket?"

Bunter turned red.
"Well, you see, I wasn't exactly hiding it," he said; "I
was just putting it away. It's all right, Cherry. What
have you come in for? It's not tea-time yet."

"I know it isn't. I've come in for my football." Bob
Cherry looked suspiciously at the fat junior. "What's the
little game?"

"The—er—little game?" stammered Billy.

"Yes. You were reading something, and you popped it
out of sight the moment I came in. I suppose"—Bob
Cherry's face grew extremely severe—"I suppose it's one
of those cheap American novels about Deadwood Bill, the
Broncho Buster—"

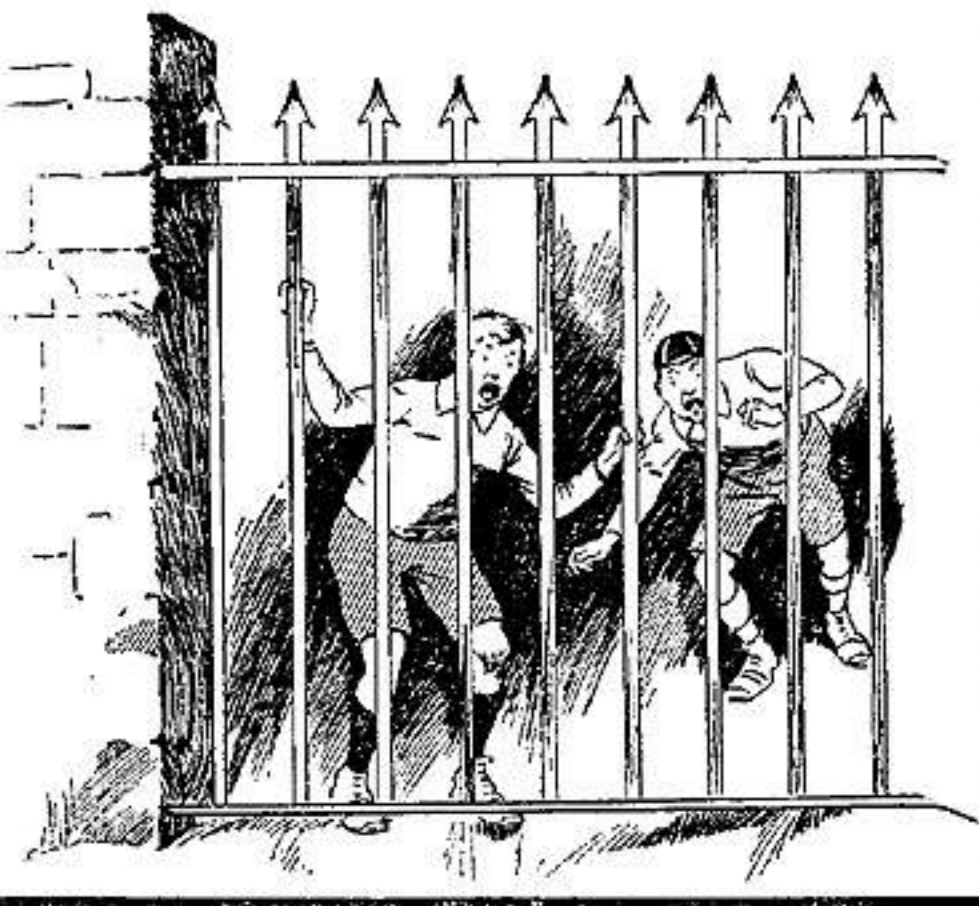
"No, it isn't, Cherry; it isn't really. You know I wouldn't
read that stuff."

"You would when my fatherly eye isn't on you," said Bob
Cherry. "What have you got there, then, you young Owl?"

"If you don't mind, Cherry, I—P'd rather not show you."

"Why not?"

"Well, you see—you see—I expect to make a great deal
over this scheme, and I don't want to let the whole school
into it. But I say, I'll tell you what I'll do," went on



Billy Bunter eagerly. "I'll
let you into the scheme on
equal shares for an entrance
fee of five bob."

Bob Cherry laughed.
"What's the scheme, you
young ass?"

"Well, you see—"

"Hallo, there!" came
Harry Wharton's voice along
the passage. "Are you ever
coming out with that ball,
Bob Cherry?"

"I'm coming!" called out
Bob, and he picked up his
football and turned to the
door.

"I say, Cherry, if you'd
like to come into the scheme
on those terms—"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry
cheerfully, and he quitted the
study. The chums of the
Remove were waiting for
him on the stairs—Harry
Wharton, the captain of the
Lower Fourth, Frank Nugent,

and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Been having a nap?" asked Nugent.

"The longfulness of the time has been terrific," remarked
the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"It was that ass Bunter. He's got some scheme on for
making money, and he wanted me to take a five-bob share
in it."

"By Jove! I thought he's had something on lately," said
Harry Wharton, laughing. "He has been looking
mysterious all day, and dropping hints of the feeds he is
going to stand later on. What is the scheme?"

"I don't know. That's a secret, at least, until the entrance
fee is paid over—and that means for ever, as far as I'm
concerned," said Bob Cherry. "I haven't any tin to waste.
I don't know what the scheme is, but if it keeps him off
the ventriloquism it will come as a boon and a blessing
to No. 1 Study. I was getting fed up with his ventriloquial
practice."

The chums of the Remove went out together into the Close.
Afternoon school was over, and in the fine, keen October
weather most of the Greyfriars fellows had turned out upon
the football field.

Bob Cherry dropped the football and punted it along

across the Close. A fat junior, with a good-humoured, Teutonic face, was coming from the direction of the Cloisters, and Bob Cherry grinned as he saw him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Hoffmann!" he exclaimed.

"By Jove, so it is! I wonder what he wants here?" said Harry Wharton.

"I don't know what he wants," grinned Bob Cherry; "but I know what he's going to get."

"What's that?"

"A goal."

And Bob Cherry dribbled the ball towards the German junior. The chums of the Remove followed him, laughing.

Fritz Hoffmann had until lately been a member of the Greyfriars Remove, but since the opening of Herr Rosenblau's Foreign Academy he had gone "over the way." The new academy had been built on Greyfriars ground, and was separated from the old school on one side simply by the Cloisters, which were used by both schools in common. Herr Rosenblau's pupils, mostly sons of foreigners resident in England, were on terms of rivalry with Greyfriars.

Fritz Hoffmann was coming towards the Famous Four, and he stopped as they advanced towards him. Perhaps he did not wish to get too far from the Cloisters, in case a retreat was necessary.

"Ach!" he began. "I tinks I speaks to you—"

"Look out in goal!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Himmel! Vat! Ow!"

Bob Cherry kicked the ball.

Right on Fritz Hoffmann's chest the football plumped, and the German junior was bowled over like a ninepin.

He sat up, and gazed about him with an expression of such absolutely idiotic bewilderment that the Removites burst into a roar.

"Ach! I tinks tat I have been knock over, ain't it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tinks tat te football knock me ofer pefore."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hoffmann staggered to his feet. Nugent was on the ball by this time, and he kicked it in again, and Hoffmann stopped it with his left ear. There was a roar.

"Ach! Vat is tat after?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tinks tat you kick tat football at me for te purpose after, ain't it?" roared Hoffmann. "I tinks tat you vant tat I lick you pefore."

"On the ball, Inky."

"The onfulness of the esteemed ball is terrific, my worthy chum."

The ball flew again from the foot of the nabob, and Hoffmann stopped it with his right ear this time. He spun round like a top.

"Ach! Tat peastly pounder! I tinks—"

"Harry! On the ball, there! Kick, you bounder!"

Wharton laughed and stopped the ball, and sent it in again. It biffed on Hoffmann's broad shoulders, and he staggered forward. None of the "biffs" had been hard enough to hurt—the chums took care of that—but Hoffmann was growing extremely confused and excited with the attack from all quarters.

"Ach himmel!" he roared. "I tinks tat—"

"On the ball!"

"Play up there!"

Biff! The ball bumped on the German junior's ribs, and he ran. He had come over to Greyfriars with a message of defiance from the aliens of the rival school, but he decided all of a sudden to depart with his message undelivered.

"Ach!" he gasped. "Himmel! I tinks tat I petter get cut pefore, ain't it." And he ran at top speed.

"Play up there!" roared Bob Cherry. "Pass, you beggars, pass!"

Wharton passed the ball to Bob, who let Hoffmann have it again, and the German junior sat down as it bumped upon his knees behind. He was up again in a twinkling, however, and running for the Cloisters. Five or six foreign faces were looking out from the Cloisters. Hoffmann saw his friends, and ran his hardest.

"Tat ve goes out and helps him, ain't it?" exclaimed Limburger, one of Hoffmann's chums. "Come on, poys!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Adolphe Meunier. "Stay here viz yourself, garcons. I zink zat ve collars zat football in anozer minute. Keep close viz you."

The foreign juniors caught on to the idea at once.

The chase of Hoffmann was too exciting for the Famous Four to have any eyes for the Cloisters, and they did not see the ambush there. The aliens promptly crouched out of sight. Hoffmann dashed on, and ran under the old stone arch, and Bob Cherry, who had the ball at his feet, sent it after him with a whiz.

"Goal!" roared Bob Cherry, as the football plumped upon Hoffmann's back. "Goal!"

The chums of the Remove rushed on to recover the ball.

There was a yell from the dusk of the Cloisters.

"At zem!"

And half-a-dozen aliens rushed out and hurled themselves upon the Greyfriars chums.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Allens do not Score.

"LOOK out!" shouted Harry Wharton.

But the warning came too late.

The aliens, with the surprise and the odds on their side, fairly rushed the Greyfriars juniors off their feet, and they went sprawling, with the aliens sprawling over them.

"Sock it to zem!" roared Adolphe Meunier.

"Giff dem peastly socks!" roared Limburger.

"Ach!" gasped Hoffmann. "Tat is goot. I tinks tat I collars te pall, ain't it?"

And Fritz Hoffmann kicked the ball on towards the academy grounds, and the other aliens followed him, laughing. The Greyfriars chums staggered to their feet, looking somewhat dazed and dusty.

Adolphe Meunier turned to kiss his hand at them ere he vanished from the Cloisters into the grounds of the new college.

"My hat!" exclaimed Nugent. "They've collared our ball!"

"The collarfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"It's tit for tat," he exclaimed. "I didn't see that there were any of the rotters in the Cloisters."

"Neither did I," Bob Cherry remarked ruefully. "I say, we're not going to be done. We've got to get that ball back."

"Four against four dozen," said Harry, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Well, let's have a look, anyway."

The chums of the Remove hurried on after the aliens. The latter had passed the bronze gate in the high brick wall which bounded the grounds of the academy. The gate was usually open, to give access to the shady Cloisters, but Meunier had shut it now, and fastened it on the inside. Through the bars of the gate the aliens grinned gleefully and triumphantly at the Greyfriars juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Adolphe Meunier. "I zink zat ve takes vat you Engleesh call ze cake, mes amis."

"Ve have te pall, at all events," grinned Fritz Hoffmann. "You keeck te pall at me, but I have capture te pall pefore, ain't it?"

"Zat is not correct, Hoffmann. It is I zat have capture ze ball."

"Himmel! Vat you do? You do nozzing, Adolphe Meunier."

"I zink zat—"

"I tink tat—"

"Sherman ass! Shut up viz yourself while Frenchman speak—"

"French peastly pounder! I tinks tat you shuts up mit you, ain't it?"

"Sherman rottair!"

"French peeg!"

Adolphe Meunier rushed at the German. Hoffmann, nowise disinclined to meet him, put up his fists. In a moment they were at it hammer and tongs. It was the Removites' turn to grin as they looked through the gate.

"Go it, Froggy!"

"Buck up, Hoffy!"

The aliens gathered round the two combatants in great excitement. There were about equal numbers of French and German boys in Herr Rosenblau's academy, and the

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rivalry between them was very keen. There was always a Franco-German war going on, and if it ever ceased it was when the aliens combined in some row with the Britishers "over the way"—in Greyfriars.

"But, I say, we want our ball," muttered Bob Cherry. "Look, there it is. I wonder—"

He paused. The football was lying where Hoffmann had dropped it when he faced the French junior in combat. It had rolled a few yards from the combatants, and no one on the spot had eyes for it. They were all too keenly interested in the fight.

Harry Wharton glanced at his chums.

"What are you thinking of, Bob?"

"I was thinking that one of us might nip over the gate and get that ball while they're slogging one another," grinned Bob Cherry. "The gate's easy enough to climb. As a matter of fact, I've climbed it once already."

"We shall be chipped to death by the other fellows if we allow the aliens to keep our footer," Nugent remarked.

"The chipfulness will be terrific."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"It's a good idea, Bob, only the chap who goes might be collared—"

"I'll risk that."

Bob Cherry threw off his cap and grasped the bars of the gate. It was easy for the active and athletic junior to draw himself up to the top—easy to swing over to the inner side. The danger was that he might be collared by the aliens.

But as yet he was not seen. The combat between Meunier and the German was growing terrific. The juniors were crowded round in a circle, looking on, and cheering the combatants in a babel of French and German. Bob Cherry dropped to the ground, and scudded to the spot where the ball lay. In a twinkling it was in his hands.

Then there was a sudden yell from Limburger.

"Look out! Te enemy!"

Nugent gave a gasp.

"They've seen him! They'll collar him now!"

Harry Wharton, with a set face, climbed to the top of the gate. Bob Cherry's eyes glistened as a dozen aliens rushed upon him. Meunier and Hoffmann were still fighting, but the spectators had turned their attention to the bold intruder.

The Removite dropped the footer, and, as it rose, kicked it. It was a splendid drop kick, as neat as any seen on a Rugger field, and it saved the ball. It flew over the heads of the aliens, over the gate, and dropped almost in Nugent's hands. The ball was saved, but Bob Cherry?

"Collar to peast!" roared Limburger.

Bob Cherry dodged desperately, and a dozen hands slid off him without a hold. He ran for the gate. Twice he was seized and held—twice he broke away, and then his grasp was on the gate. But then the aliens closed up in force, and hands gripped at him from all sides.

"Collar te pounder!"

"Zat you seize him!"

"Ciel! I have ze peast!"

"Himmel! I tinks tat I catch him."

Bob Cherry clung to the gate with both hands. With a desperate effort he tried to drag himself up. Harry Wharton leaned down and seized his hand in a hard grip.

"Now, Bob!"

He pulled, and Bob Cherry shook himself loose for a second. Nugent and Hurree Singh were hitting through the bars of the gate, and more than one alien nose and eye came in for a powerful drive.

Hoffmann and Meunier separated at last. They saw how things were going, and they dashed forward to help in making a prisoner of the Greyfriars junior.

"Hold him!" shrieked Adolphe Meunier. "Zat you seize him."

"Collar te peastly pounder," gasped Hoffmann.

Wharton and Cherry made a simultaneous effort. Bob was dragged up, and obtained a grip on the top of the gate. Hoffmann clutched at him, and reeled back from Bob Cherry's boot, which clumped heavily on his chin. One more effort, and the gasping, breathless Removite was on the gate.

Wharton helped him over, and he dropped exhausted on the Greyfriars side. Nugent picked him up.

"Steady, Bob, old chap."

"I—I'm winded!" panted Bob Cherry. "But we—we've done them."

"Come on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "They'll be through the gate in a second."

Meunier was already unfastening the gate.

With the ball under Nugent's arm, the Famous Four sprinted through the Cloisters towards the Close, and they were safe out of reach before the aliens could crowd through the gate.

The excited foreigners pursued them as far as the end of the Cloisters, but further than that they did not venture to go, for a score of the Remove were rallying to the spot now, attracted by the noise.

The Famous Four stopped, gasping for breath.

"That was a narrow squeak," said Bob Cherry, scarlet with his exertions. "But we've done the giddy aliens, anyway."

"The donefulness is terrific."

"I say, what's the row?" asked Bulstrode, of the Remove.

"Oh, they captured our ball; we've got it back, that's all."

"Let's go for them, and wipe up the Cloisters with them."

"Good wheeze. Come on!"

And half the Remove rushed towards the Cloisters, but the aliens did not stop to face the rush. They crowded back into their own quarters, and the gate was shut and fastened once more. The Removites rattled and shook it, and yelled all sorts of personalities between the bars, but the gate did not open. The aliens yelled back, and, as they were rather stronger in that line, they had the best of the war of yells. The Removites retired at last, followed by a screech of mockery from the aliens.

"I tink tat ve have lost tat pall," said Fritz Hoffmann.

"I tinks, too, tat is te fault of tat French ass Meunier."

"I zink zat it is ze fault of zat Sherman peeg Hoffmann," said Meunier.

"Is it tat you have not had enoff of te trashing pefore?" demanded Hoffmann.

"I never have enoff of ze trashing zat you can give me," said Meunier. "I zink zat I vipes up ze ground viz you."

"Ach! French peast!"

"Sherman cochon!"

And in a moment more they were fighting again, cheered on by a tangled jargon of German and French from their compatriots.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter's New Idea.

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Tea ready?" asked Bob Cherry, slinging a dusty football across the study as he came into No. 1.

"No, Cherry, tea isn't ready. You see—"

"Yes, I see that it's not ready," grunted Bob Cherry. "What do you mean, you young duffer. Have you scoffed all the tommy?"

"Well, perhaps I've had a snack," said Billy Bunter. "You see, I've been too busy to get tea, but I had to have a snack, or my constitution would have suffered. You fellows had better have tea in Hall this evening, as I haven't any time to cook, and, as a matter of fact, there isn't anything to cook."

"Nothing to cook! Why, Wharton gave you two bob to lay in the grub."

"Oh, yes, I know he did," said Bunter, blinking at the chums through his big glasses. "I know he did, Cherry, but—"

"Well, where is the tommy—"

"You see, I've got a new scheme on—"

"Where is the tommy?"

"I've got a new scheme on for making money—"

"Where is the tommy?" roared Bob Cherry, seizing the Owl of the Remove by the collar and shaking him. "Where is it, you young cormorant?"

"I wish you wouldn't shake me like that, Bob Cherry. It disturbs my nerves—"

"Where is the tommy?"

"And, besides, you might make my glasses fall off, and if they got broken I should expect you to pay for them."

"Are you going to answer me?"

"Ain't I answering you? As I said, I've got a new scheme—"

"Where is the tommy?"

"Oh, the tommy! There isn't any."

"Didn't you get it at the tuckshop?"

"Yes," said Billy Bunter, blinking. "I got it at the tuckshop. Wharton gave me two shillings to get some grub for tea at the tuckshop, and I should not be likely to spend the money for anything else, I hope."

"Well, where is the grub, then?"

"You see, as I've got a scheme on for making money, I thought I'd better get something that didn't require cooking, as I should have no time to cook—"

"Well, where is it? That's what I keep on asking you."

"So I bought cold sausages, ham sandwiches, and jam roll."

By Jove, that's all right, and I'm as hungry as a hunter!" said Bob Cherry.

"The hungerfulness is terrific."

"And I had some bananas, too, for Inky—"

"Good, my worthy chum."

"And a couple of those little cakes that Wharton likes—"

"Well, where are they?" said Harry, laughing.

There was no sign of the provisions anywhere in the study, and the fire was out, the table unladen.

"Well, you see, as they didn't require cooking—"

"All the better, as we're in a hurry," said Nugent.

"Where are they?"

"I'm sincerely sorry, but—but—"

"My hat! The young villain has wolfed them!"

"I'm sincerely sorry—"

"He's scoffed the lot!"

"You see, I thought I had better have a snack to keep up my strength, and—and I suppose I went on eating absent-mindedly, and—and—"

"And travelled through the lot?"

"I suppose I must have done so," confessed Bunter. "I remember leaving Inky's bananas till the last, but they're gone now. I get so hungry, you know, and I'm working out a scheme for making money—"

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"It's all right; we'll have tea in Hall," he said. "We're not too late, as it happens. But of all the young cormorants—"

"I don't think you ought to call me names, Wharton, when I'm working out a scheme for making us all rich."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, not exactly rich, but it will put money in our pockets, if it works out all right. Money or money's worth—it's all one."

"If the hurryfulness is not immediate, we shall be late for the teaful refreshment in the esteemed Hall."

"Right you are, Inky; come on!"

"But, I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, rats, Billy! We can't stop, or we shall lose our tea."

"I wish you fellows didn't think such a thundering lot about your meals," said Billy Bunter. "Blessed if you're not always thinking of eating!"

"Why, you young bounder, you've had your tea—and ours, too, as a matter of fact."

"I'm willing to take you all into my scheme, on an entrance fee of five bob each," said Bunter, following the Famous Four out of the study. "If you like to stump up five shillings each, you come into the scheme on equal terms."

"More rats!"

"With my ability in guessing the answers, we can't fail to scoop in the whole show."

"Guessing the what?"

"The answers—the names, you know."

"Is it a competition?"

"Dear me, I've let it out now. Of course, you fellows will keep it dark."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you like to stand five bob each, I'll let you into the whole thing," said Bunter, following the Removites down the staircase with his generous offers. "I really don't want to keep it to myself, and, as a matter of fact, it requires some capital, and I'm rather short of ready money at the present moment. I've been disappointed about a postal-order, and—"

But the chums of the Remove had gone into the dining-hall. Bulstrode was coming in from the Close, and Billy Bunter hurried towards him.

"I say, Bulstrode—"

"Don't bother!"

"I've got a new scheme—"

"Buzz off!"

"If you like to stand me five bob—"

"I'll stand you a thick ear if you bother me!"

And Bulstrode walked on. Billy Bunter blinked after him indignantly. Levison came in, and Bunter, turning round, ran into him.

"Hallo, Skinner! I'm sincerely sorry—"

"It isn't Skinner," said Levison, gripping the back of Billy's collar and shaking him; "it's Levison. Why don't you look where you're going?"

"I'm a little short-sighted—"

"You Owl! You trod on my foot!"

"I'm sincerely sorry, Levison; but I'm glad I've met you, too. Would you like to know an easy way of making money?"

"No, I wouldn't!" said Levison; and he strode on.

"My word!" murmured Billy Bunter. "Fancy a keen, cute chap like Levison turning up his nose at an easy way of making money! I can't understand it. I say, Russell! Stop a minute, Russell, will you?"

"I'm not Russell, ass; I'm Hazeldene."

"Oh, is it you, Vaseline? It was really you I wanted to see. I've got a new scheme on for making money, but it requires a little capital."

Hazeldene grinned.

"Better wait till your postal-order comes, then, Bunt."

"Well, I've been disappointed about a postal-order," said Billy Bunter. "I'm expecting another on Saturday, but I don't want to wait till then to work the scheme. What I mean is, I want to start at once. I'm thinking of taking a number of fellows into the scheme on equal shares at five bob each."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a joke, Hazeldene. If you like to stump up five bob—"

"If!" said Hazeldene. "Jolly big 'if,' isn't it?"

"Well, really, Vaseline, it's a good scheme—with my ability in. Where are you going?"

"I'm going in to tea."

"But I haven't explained my scheme."

"Don't trouble, Billy; explain it to somebody else."

"Oh, really, Vaseline—"

Hazeldene laughed and walked away. Billy Bunter slowly and discontentedly took his way up to Study No. 1. He was certain of cornering the chums of the Remove there when they came up after tea to do their preparation.

He drew a paper from his pocket, and began to con over a set of pictures in it, and make pencil notes. He was still thus engaged when the door of the study was thrown open, and the four chums came in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, don't!" said Bob Cherry, imploringly. "We don't want to make our fortunes. We're not yearning to get rich quick. We don't want any shares in a new scheme, even at the low price of five bob, with a reduction for quantities."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Peace, my son! Can't you see that your uncle is going to do his prep.?"

"Yes; but this is really an important matter, you know," said Billy Bunter. "If I hadn't been disappointed about a postal-order, I shouldn't let you into it at all. As it is, I must have working capital."

"To blow at the tuck-shop?"

"Certainly not. You see, I'm thinking of buying up a lot of copies of the paper, and sending in lots of answers. That's the scheme. With my splendid talents—"

"Your what?"

"My splendid talents for guessing the answers, I haven't the slightest doubt of walking off with all the prizes—"

"The splendidness of the esteemed Bunter's rotten talents is only equalled by the modesty of his conceitfulness," remarked the nabob. "If our worthy Bunterful chum would leave off talking, we could commencingly begin our honourable prep."

"This is a more important matter than prep., Inky. I thought you fellows took an interest in football."

"Football! What has your scheme to do with football?"

"It's a football competition."

"Oh, I see," said Bob Cherry, showing some interest at last. "I don't mind if I have a look at it, then. No five-bob shares, though."

"Well, perhaps I'd better explain the thing, and you'll see it's a good scheme to go into," said Billy Bunter thoughtfully. "With my ability—"

"Oh, never mind your ability! Where's the competition?"

"You see, it's a competition to guess the names of famous footballers, from pictures representing them," explained Billy Bunter. "With my ability—"

"Oh, I know! I've entered competitions of that kind, and they're jolly good fun," said Bob Cherry. "There's one starting in a paper I take every week, and I was thinking of going in for it. What's your paper?"

"The 'Gem.'"

"The what?"

"The 'Gem.'"

"Why, that's my paper, too!" said Bob Cherry indignantly. "That's the competition I was thinking of going in for, only I haven't seen this week's number yet with the pictures in."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"And is that your new scheme—to go in for the football competition in the 'Gem'?"

"You see—"

"Yes, I see a howling duffer."

"It's a ripping idea. If you fellows stand five bob each, I shall be able to buy up a heap of copies of the paper. How many penny papers can you get for a sovereign, Nugent?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"Wait a minute; I'll work it out on paper. Twenty times twelve are—"

"Don't trouble," said Bob Cherry, grinning. "You're not likely to have the sovereign."

"Oh, yes, if you four fellows subscribe five bob each."

"Yes, if we do; but we sha'n't."

"You're wasting a good chance. With capital to get a large number of the papers, so as to send in lots of answers,

and with my splendid ability at guessing the right answers, there's not the slightest reason why we shouldn't scoop in the whole of the prizes."

"Well, we don't want to be greedy, you know," grinned Bob Cherry; "and although the capital might be forthcoming, I'm not so sure about the splendid ability."

"Oh, you can rely on me for—"

"For gas—yes. I haven't had the 'Gem' this week yet, and if you've got your copy, just hand it over and let's have a look at the pictures."

"Oh, really, Cherry, unless—"

"Hand it over, old chap, and don't jaw."

And Billy Bunter drew a well-thumbed copy of the current number of the 'Gem' from under his jacket, and handed it over to Bob Cherry.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Football Competition.

BOB CHERRY opened the paper at the competition page, and spread out the sheet of pictures. Nugent, Hurree Singh, and Harry Wharton looked over his shoulders with great interest. For the moment prep. was forgotten.

"Here they are," remarked Bob Cherry. "Have you guessed any of those, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, I have guessed most of the first set," said Billy Bunter. "They're hard enough, some of them, but with my ability—"

"Let's have a look," said Nugent. "H'm! These pictures represent the names of well-known footballers. That's a jolly good idea for a competition."

"First picture, a hand and the word 'ley.' I see the answer's filled in. Handley. Second picture— What's that?"

"A hod," said Nugent.

"Good! A picture of a hod, and a lot of capital letters. Blessed if I know what to make of it."

"They're G's," said Harry Wharton.

"Yes, I know they're G's," said Bob Cherry. "The trouble is, what do they mean. Have you guessed that one, Billy?"

"Oh, yes, I guessed that at a glance."

"What's the answer?"

"Well, I don't see how I can give it away to you chaps, if you're going in for the competition, too."

"Don't, then."

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Bunter loftily. "There are to be a lot more sets of the pictures, and you'll never guess them without my assistance. I may as well tell you these few, just to encourage you."

"The encouragefulness will be terrific."

"Well, that second picture represents Hodletters."

"Hodletters!"

"Yes."

"Is that the name of a footballer?"

"Of course it is."

"It doesn't sound like a real name to me," said Bob Cherry suspiciously, "and I've never heard of a footballer of that name."

"Neither have I," said Harry, laughing.

"Have you heard of a footballer named Hodletters, Billy?"

"Well, no; but there are a lot of footballers whose names I haven't heard, of course."

"No doubt; but why do you think that there's one named Hodletters?"

"You see what the editor says—each of these pictures represents the name of a well-known footballer. That picture can't represent anything but Hodletters, and therefore there must be a footballer named Hodletters. It's impossible to doubt what the editor says in plain print."

"You shrieking ass!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"The picture represents something else—say, Hodges."

"Hodges?"

"Yes. Hod—see?—and G's—Hodges."

Billy Bunter shook his head.

"I'd rather stick to my solution, Cherry."

"Hodletters isn't the name of a human being, you shrieking duffer!"

"It must be, or it wouldn't be in the competition."

"But it isn't in the competition!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"This pictures isn't Hodletters—it's Hodges."

"You can stick to your opinion if you like, Cherry, and I'll stick to mine. We'll jolly well see who's right when the answers are published."

"Oh, ring off, Billy, or you'll be the death of me!" said Nugent. "What's the next picture?"

"A 'B,'" said Bob Cherry. "The first's a 'B,—lake, you know."

"And then there's a tube of paint."

"Beepaint. That's no good; it doesn't sound like a name."

"I say, you fellows, you're all wrong!"

"And what's the answer, Billy?"

"It's Lettortube, of course."

"It's what?"

"Lettortube. That's the name of a well-known footballer. I've seen it in the papers, I believe. See?"

"No, I don't. I think you're an ass!"

"What do you think, Nugent?"

"Same as Bob."

"You ass, Billy!" said Bob Cherry. "It's Bee—Lake."

"I've never heard of a footballer named Beelake."

"Ass! B-lake—Blake."

"Oh, Blake! Is that the name of a footballer?"

"Of course it is. I remember seeing a Blake play outside-left for Stockton once, when I was on a holiday in the North."

"Well, it may be Blake," said Billy Bunter. "But don't you see, that's where the advantage of my scheme comes in? It may be Blake, or it may be Lettortube—"

"Rats!"

"Oh, let me finish, Cherry! It may be Blake, or it may be Lettortube, or perhaps it may be a lot of other things. Now, if we work out my scheme, we can send in lots of sets of the pictures, and every possible name can go in. See? Then we're absolutely certain of collaring the prizes."

"Unless we happen to overlook one name—"

"Oh, with my ability—"

"More rats! What's the next?"

"The word wed—"

"Wed? And that thing's a lock."

"That one's plain enough," said Billy Bunter. "That's MacLuckie."

"It's what?" shouted Bob Cherry.

"MacLuckie."

"MacLuckie's a footballer," said Nugent. "I've heard the name—in connection with Aston Villa, I think. But how Billy makes it out—"

"You can do anything with a brain like mine," said Bunter modestly. "That picture's MacLuckie. I saw it at a glance. You see, the word wed means wed—"

"Go hon!"

"And the lock means lock—"

"Did you work that out in your head, Billy?"

"Without the aid of a net?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, don't be funny! You see how it's worked out into MacLuckie now?"

"No, I'm blessed if I do."

"Well, I must say you chaps are dense," said Billy Bunter, in disgust. "Not much good your going in for a football competition without me to help you guess the answers. The word wed means wed—"

"You've told us that before."

"It means marrying—see? And the lock signifies that when you're married, you're married and done for—I mean, fixed. Do you see now? And that makes you lucky. See?"

"No, I don't quite see yet."

"Oh, I say, you fellows, you are dense! Don't you see—a man's lucky to be married—at least, in stories. Make—lucky. See? Mac Luckie!"

"Make MacLuckie," said Bob Cherry seriously. "Mac-Make Luckie!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! A fellow's lucky to be married. Suppose, for instance, that his wife's a good cook? Make Lucky—"

"Make who lucky?"

"Anybody!" yelled Billy Bunter. "Don't you see? If a thing makes you lucky—"

"What thing?"

"Oh, dear, I believe you're only rotting."

"But who's lucky?"

"MacLuckie. See? Wedlock—to make lucky. Make Lucky—Mac Luckie. See?"

"Do you see, Nugent?"

"I'm afraid I don't. In the first place, I think Bunter ought to explain whom it is he means is lucky."

"I don't mean anybody—"

"Then you're talking out of your hat!"

"Look here, you fellows, that picture represents Mac-Luckie. I believe you're only rotting, and you know what I mean all the time."

"The knowfulness is great!" chuckled the nabob. "But the fatheadedfulness of the esteemed solution is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Do you see it now, Cherry?"

"I see that you're a howling ass, Bunt. The answer's Wedlock, of course."

"I don't think anything of the kind."

"Well, let's get on the next picture. Billy Bunter's solutions will give me a pain if there's many more of them. What's the next?"

"There's a picture of a mill—"

"Yes, it's a coffee-mill, you fellows!"

"We shouldn't be likely to mistake it for a water-mill, Billy. And there's the syllable 'er'—"

"Yes, that's plain enough."

"What do you make it out to be, with your splendid ability? I think it's pretty easy, myself."

"Oh, it's plainer than the other; it's Millander."

"Millander?"

"Yes, Mill—and—er. See?"

"Yes, I see, but is there a footballer named Millander?"

"Of course there is! Doesn't the editor say that each picture represents a—"

"Ass! Suppose it's Miller?"

"Miller! H'm! Well, it might be Miller."

"I think it might," said Bob Cherry. "In fact, I think it's pretty certain. Now for the last of the bunch! I say, this is getting interesting."

"There's a leg—"

"Only the knee. And a letter D."

"And a ham," said Billy Bunter. "That reminds me, you fellows. Mrs. Mumble has some lovely ham just now, and if you'd like me to cut down to the school shop, and get you some, I wouldn't mind in the least taking the trouble."

"I dare say you wouldn't," said Bob Cherry; "but I think we'll wait till your postal order comes. Meantime, about this giddy picture—"

"I can't quite figure it out, yet," said Nugent.

"And you, Harry?"

"I don't think I've quite got on to it."

"I can tell you, if you like, you fellows."

"Well, what is it, Billy?"

"Leggett, of course!"

"How do you make it out, then?"

"Why, that's a leg, and ham is a thing that you eat, you know—Leggett."

"Leggett rats! Is Leggett the name of a footballer?"

"It must be. The editor says—"

"And what about the letter D?"

"Oh, that's shoved in by mistake, I expect."

"Ass! I expect it isn't. We shall have to give that one up for a bit. We're going in for this, eh, you chaps?"

"Yes, rather!" said Harry Wharton.

"We stand as much chance as anybody else, if we don't let Bunter help us—"

"Oh, really, Cherry!"

"But we'd better get on with our prep, now, I'm thinking, or there will be ructions with the Quelch-bird in the morning."

And for the time the guessing was laid aside.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Allens in Council.

"MEIN friends—"

"Mes amis—"

"I tink tat I speaks if you be silent, Adolphe Meunier."

"I zink zat I speak, Fritz Hoffmann. Ze Frenchman always come before ze Sherman."

"Te Frenchman get a tick ear if he not shut up!"

"I zink zat you get ze zick ear."

"Nein, nein, shut up mit you!" exclaimed Limburger. "It is enoff of fighting tat tere has been, ain't it? I tink ve meet to hold council of war."

"Tat French peast interrupt me—"

"Zat Sherman rottair interrupt me—"

"Let zere be peace," said Alphonse Lerouge. "Ve must stand by one anozer to get level viz ze Greyfriars garcons."

"Zat is correct."

"I tink tat you vas right ain't it?"

"We leave our own quarrels till later," said Lerouge.

"Zat is no mattair. Ve have ze honour of ze academy to uphold."

"Goot!"

"I zink zat I agree viz Hoffmann zere."

"Let zere be peace," said Lerouge. "I move zat our

friend, Meunier, makes ze peace viz our friend Hoffmann, and zat zey embrace."

It was a crowded meeting in the Common-Room of the Foreign Academy.

The aliens were almost all there, and very excited.

They had had a chance of scoring off the Greyfriars fellows that day, but the chance had passed, owing to the untimely outbreak of the Franco-German War.

Now the meeting was being held, well attended by both parties, for the purpose of laying plans to bring the Greyfriars' Juniors "off their perch," and put them in their place.

It was pretty clear that nothing could be effected so long as the aliens were ragging one another on racial differences, and they had determined to pull together for the important purpose of crushing Greyfriars. But how long the amity would last was a difficult question to answer.

Lerouge's suggestion was greeted with cheers.

The excitable foreigners were as ready to fight as to make friends, and as ready to embrace as to fight; in fact, they were ready for anything that called for a show of emotion of some sort.

"I move," repeated Lerouge, encouraged by the enthusiasm which his suggestion evoked, "I move zat our beloved friend, Meunier, embrace our equally beloved friend, Hoffmann, and zat zere is peace and union."

"Goot!"

"Bravo!"

"Vive Lerouge!"

"I second tat motion," said Limburger. "Tat our beloved friend Hoffmann embrace our beloved friend Meunier, and tat ve ail be goot friends and allies, till ve have knock down and crush te Greyfriars peegs."

"I agree viz zat," said Meunier. "I zink zat I have a great respect for Hoffmann, and also for Sherman."

"Mit all my heart," beamed Hoffmann. "I tink tat I lofe Meunier, and tat I have te great admiration for te France."

"Zat I embrace you, my shum."

"Tat I also embraces you, mein friend."

And they forthwith embraced.

The aliens cheered the embrace ecstatically. Hoffmann hugged Meunier, and Meunier kissed Hoffmann on both cheeks, and the crowd clapped their hands joyfully. The Franco-German feud was healed again—for a time!

"And now," said Hoffmann, "I tinks tat ve puts our heads togedder, ain't it, and tinks out te plan for te knock down te Greyfriars pounders."

"I zink zat also," said Lerouge.

"Messieurs," began Meunier, with an important air, "I zink zat I have ze plan."

"Zat you speaks him, zen."

"Non, non! I have ze plan, but I zink zat my friend Hoffmann have perhaps ze better vun, and I vait for my beloved Fritz to speak."

Fritz Hoffmann shook his head.

"I stands pack for my beloved Adolphe to speak."

"Non, non—"

"Ja, ja—"

"I insists upon my dear Fritz speaking first."

"I insists upon my beloved Adolphe speaking first."

"My dear Fritz—"

"My dear Adolphe—"

"Ze vun zat have ze plan speak first," said Lerouge; and this brilliant suggestion was greeted with acclamation.

"I have no plan pefore," said Hoffmann. "I tink tat if I tink I soon tink out a plan, but I tink tat I have not tink yet, ain't it; so I tink ve hear vat Meunier tink."

"Tat is right," said Limburger. "Vat you tink, Meunier?"

"If my friend Fritz giff me permission zat I speak first—"

"I entreats you, my dear Adolphe."

"Zen if my dear Fritz entreat, I speak."

"Goot! Ve listen mit all te ears. Gentlemen, I calls for te silence while our goot and noble friend Adolphe speaks mit himself."

"Mes amis," said Meunier; "at ze entreaty of ze beloved friend Fritz, I speaks first."

"Vive Meunier!"

"Vive Hoffmann!"

"Pravo!"

And some of the aliens, deeply touched, shed tears of sensibility upon one another's shoulders at the sight of this concord between the old rivals.

"I say zat I have a plan," said Meunier. "I zink zat it is not so good a plan as my beloved friend Fritz would zink of, if he zought about it—"

"Ja, ja!" said Hoffmann. "Not at all, my dear Adolphe."

"Oui, oui, I ineist, my dear Fritz."

"I tink tat you tink a petter plan tan I tink, Adolphe."

"I zink zat you zink ze better plan, my Fritz."

"Nein, nein."

"Non, non."

"Ve have not heard te plan yet," said Limburger.

"Zat is correct. I go on viz ze plan. You are all avare, mes amis, zat ze Greyfriars rottairs get ze better of us zis afternoon. I zink zat ve avenge ze bonair of ze academy by going into ze Close and licking zem in vun big fight; but I zink, also, zat zey are more use to ze fist zan ve are, so zat not a good plan."

"Non, non."

"And also ze English boys not fight viz ze feet, as ve do, and zey call it cowardly to keeck vun in a fight, or scratch him—vich is all nonsense."

"Ferry mooch nonsense."

"All ze same, ze English have ze advantage of ze fist, and ve have ze advantage of ze cleveair brain, I zink, mes amis."

"Tat is right pefore."

"Zerefore I zink out a plan zat vill put zem in zeir place, and make zem vat ze English call sing small viz zemselves."

"Vive Meunier!"

"Hoch! Pravo!"

"I zink zat zis is ze plan. Ve vill crush zem, mes amis—ve vill crush zem! But not viz ze fist, and not viz ze keek—ve vill crush zem viz ze contempt."

"Viz wat, mon ami?"

"Mit vat, Meunier?"

"Viz ze contempt," said Meunier. "Ve takes our little vaks in ze cloisters, and in ze Close of Greyfriars—but ve not enters into any fights viz zem. Ven ve meets a Greyfriars garcon ve shrugs up ze shoulders like zis,"—here Meunier shrugged his shoulders almost up to his ears—"And zen ve turns our back on him like zat,"—and here Meunier swung round on his heel—"I zink zat zat make zem sing small, mes amis."

"Py Chorge!" said Hoffmann. "I tinks tat tat is te most excellent plan tat it is bossible to tink of. Ve not enters into any rows mit dem, but ve treats tem mit fearful contempt."

"Ach!" said Limburger. "I tink tat ve owe our friend Meunier a vote of tanks for tinkng of tat splendid plan."

"Vive Meunier!"

"Pravo!"

"It is vat te English poys call ripping pefore," said Hoffmann, beaming with delight. "Ven ve meets dem, ve shrugs up te shoulders like tat—"

"Ciel! Zat vill make zem feel ferry small!"

"Ten ve turns on te heel like tat—"

"Himmel! Tey vill be crush!"

"Ve speaks not a vord; ve simply shrugs up our shoulders like tis, and turns on our heels like tat."

"Zat is correct. Ve shrugs up our shoulders like zis, and turns on our heels like zat."

"Pravo!"

"My dear Adolphe, tat is a petter plan tan any I could efer tink of pefore. I tink tat I embraces my beloved Adolphe."

"I zink zat I embrace my dear Fritz."

And the rivals embraced again, and the crowd of delighted foreigners embraced each other indiscriminately and wept. And so the great plan for humbling Greyfriars was formed—but how far it would succeed in crushing the Remove was another question.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

On the Warpath!

HARRY WHARTON rose as the chapel bell began to ring, and Bob Cherry sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes.

"Up you get!" said Harry. "We'll get in a little bit of footer practice before breakfast. It's a ripping morning!"

"Right-ho!" said Bob Cherry, tumbling out of bed. "It's getting cold of mornings now. Billy Bunter, you young lazybones, why don't you get up?"

"It's so j-j-j-jolly cold!" said Bunter. "I think I can have another five minutes, Cherry, if I hurry over my washing. After all, a fellow doesn't need so much washing as all that. I don't hold with bathing every morning like Wharton. I'm afraid it wouldn't be good for my constitution."

"Get up, you lazy young grampus!"

"I can have another five minutes—"

"Would you like a jam-tart, Billy?"

Bunter sat up and groped for his spectacles.

"Yes, rather, Cherry. I always wake up hungry, somehow. Hand it over!"

"If you think I'm going to feed you in bed, Bunter—"

"Oh, I don't mind getting out, come to that," said Bunter; "I've got to get up some time, I suppose, and a jam-tart will just give me an appetite for breakfast." The

fat junior rolled out of bed, and shivered. "Where's the tart, Cherry?"

"Eh? What tart?"

"The jam-tart you were going to give me."

"Who said I was going to give you a jam-tart?"

"Why, you did!" howled Bunter. "Where is it, Cherry? Where's that jam-tart? You said distinctly—"

"I asked you if you would like one," said Bob Cherry. "I suppose a fellow can ask a question, can't he, without being supposed to have a lot of pastry to give away?"

Billy Bunter blinked at the humorous Bob Cherry with feelings too deep for words. He was inclined to get back into bed again; but the thought that he would have to rise, anyway, in a few minutes, deterred him. It was of no use going through the ordeal of getting out of bed twice. He turned to his washstand, and commenced the ablutions which some of the Remove facetiously described as a "cat lick." Billy Bunter was extravagant in some things, but no one had ever accused him of being extravagant with soap and water on a cold morning.

The Famous Four were the first down of the Remove, and they went out into the bright, breezy Close—Bob Cherry with his footer under his arm.

It was a keen October morning, and the chums of the Remove enjoyed a brisk punt about in the Close. They were coming in for breakfast when they sighted Adolphe Meunier. He had come out of the Cloisters, and was sauntering along in the Close, and apparently did not see the Removites.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, there's Froggy!" said Bob Cherry. "It would be rather a joke to get a goal, as we did with Hoffmann yesterday."

"The jokefulness would be terrific."

"Hold on," said Harry Wharton. "There's something up with Meunier. He's pretending not to see us."

"Some little game on," Nugent remarked.

The four juniors watched Meunier curiously. He was walking towards them, but his nose was high in the air, and his glance went right past them. He must have seen them, yet he gave no sign of doing so, and came straight on with elaborate unconsciousness.

"What on earth is the wheeze?" murmured Bob Cherry, in amazement. "He's going to cut us dead."

The nabob looked surprised.

"I think not that he is going to cut us, my worthy chum. He is an esteemed ass, but he would not inflictfully cause the serious damage to his respected enemies."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"I mean he's pretending not to know us, Inky—cut us in that sense."

"That's his game," agreed Nugent; "but what it means—"

"I say, Meunier—"

"Good-morning, Froggy!"

"How do you carry yourself this morning, mossoo?"

Adolphe Meunier halted and looked at the Removites, as if seeing them for the first time. He did not speak. He shrugged up his shoulders to his ears—a proceeding that was witnessed with astonishment by the Removites. Then he turned on his heel and walked away. And all without a word.

The chums of the Remove looked at one another.

"Mad!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Stark mad!" agreed Nugent. "Stark, staring, raving, jabbering insane!"

"The honourable ass is certainlyly rightfully off his esteemed rocker," the nabob remarked. "There is no other accountfulness of his worthy fatheaded actions."

Harry Wharton was looking puzzled.

"Blessed if I quite know what to make of it," he remarked. "I suppose Meunier's got something in his mind, and is working off a new wheeze, but I don't quite catch on to it."

They watched Meunier disappear into the Cloisters. Then they went in to breakfast, still wondering at the remarkable proceedings of the French junior.

After breakfast the Greyfriars fellows streamed out into the Close. Fritz Hoffmann was observed strolling by the Cloisters, and Harry and Bob walked over to him, with the idea of asking what was the matter with Meunier that morning. Hoffmann did not appear to see them coming. He seemed to be intently gazing at the flight of a bird in the sky, and had no eyes for anything else.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Hoffy!"

"Hallo, Hoffmann!"

Hoffmann did not lower his glance from the blue sky, and Bob Cherry, considerably amazed at his unusual deafness, gave him a gentle dig in the ribs. Hoffmann gasped, and came back to earth again.

"Ach! Mein Gootness!"

"Hallo, Hoffs! How is your excellent health this fine morning?" asked Bob Cherry affably.

Hoffmann did not reply.

He stared straight at Bob Cherry, and then slowly and deliberately shrugged up his plump shoulders till they threatened to dislodge his hat.

The Removites looked at him in amazement.

"Is that a new gymnastic exercise?" asked Bob Cherry.

Still Hoffmann did not speak. He turned round on his heel and walked away. The chums of the Remove gazed after him, and Bob Cherry tapped his forehead.

"Mad!" he said. "They've all got it, I suppose. Perhaps it's catching, and Meunier has infected the lot of them."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's a new wheeze, Bob, that's all."

"But what does it mean?"

"I suppose they fancy that it's awfully up against us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's the only way I can account for it, anyway."

"My only hat! This is too funny!"

"Hallo, what's the joke?" asked Hazeldene, joining them.

Harry Wharton explained.

"By Jove, then, that explains it! I just came across that German chap Limburger strolling by the Head's garden, and the ass shrugged up his shoulders and swung off. I thought he had a pain somewhere, or something."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only Aunt Maria! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums of the Remove were still chuckling over the absurdity when the bell called them in to morning lessons.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Want of Capital.

"HANDLEY," murmured Billy Bunter. "Hodletters, Lettertube—"

"Bunter!"

"Lettertube—or Beepaint? I wonder, if there's a famous footballer named Beepaint? I say, Levison, have you ever heard of a famous footballer named Beepaint?"

"Bunter!"

Mr. Quelch repeated the word in his sternest tones, and Bunter heard it this time, and gave a jump. He doubled up his copy of "The Gem" under his jacket, and blinked nervously at the Form master. The Remove were in their class-room, and not supposed to be devoting their attention just then to football competitions, but, Billy Bunter had hoped to escape the eagle eye of Mr. Quelch.

"Y-e-es, sir! Did you speak to me, sir?"

"Yes, I did speak to you, Bunter. What is it you have there?"

"Here, sir?"

"Yes, there," said Mr. Quelch, with asperity. "Is it that absurd book on hypnotism again, which you were reading in class the other morning?"

"Oh, no, sir. I've given up hypnotism, sir."

"I am glad to hear it, Bunter, although I have no doubt that you have taken up some other folly in the place of it."

"Oh, really, sir!"

"What book have you there now?"

"Cæsar, sir. De Bello Gallico, sir."

"I mean, what is the book you were reading, and whispering to Levison about," said Mr. Quelch severely. "Don't prevaricate, Bunter."

"I—I wasn't prevaricating, sir. I wouldn't do such a thing for worlds. I—I don't quite know what it is, but I wasn't—I mean I didn't—that is, I wouldn't—"

"Give me that book immediately."

"What book, sir?"

"The one you were reading," exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Any further nonsense, Bunter, and I shall cane you severely. Give me that book at once."

Billy Bunter unwillingly drew his crumpled "Gem" from under his jacket, and passed it to the Form master. The Remove watched Mr. Quelch with great interest, wondering what he would do. He looked over the paper, and his face relaxed as he saw the picture on the cover. Then he opened the book and glanced through it.

"Ahem! You should not read this in class, Bunter."

"It's a jolly good book, sir."

"I have no doubt about that, but the class-room is not the place for any book to be read, with the exception of the lesson books."

"But I wasn't reading it, sir," said Bunter eagerly. "As a matter of fact, sir, I read it last night while Wharton was writing out my imposition— I mean—that is—"

"While what?" thundered Mr. Quelch, who had been

surprised that morning by Billy Bunter bringing in an imposition very neatly written, and up to time.

"While—while—I mean, while Wharton wasn't writing my impot, sir."

The Remove giggled, and Harry Wharton coloured. Billy Bunter was one of those youths who always expect to have things done for them, and generally get them done, by the sheer force of cheek. It was no new thing for his impots to be written out by one or other of the chums of No. 1 Study. But Mr. Quelch, feeling that he could not very well act upon an unguarded admission, passed over the matter.

"If you were not reading this paper, Bunter, what were you doing with it?"

"I—I was guessing the answers, sir."

"What do you mean?"

"The football competition, sir—those pictures, sir. Every picture represents a famous footballer, and the first is Handley, and the second Hodletters—"

Mr. Quelch smiled involuntarily.

"You must not look at the book in class, Bunter. You will take fifty lines; and I shall examine those lines very carefully to see whose handwriting they are in. I will keep this book for the present."

"Oh, really, sir—I don't mind. If you would like to go in for the competition, I would willingly help you guess—"

"Silence, Bunter."

"I've filled most of them in, sir, and you can see them—Handley, Lettertube, Hodletters, MacLuckie—"

"Will you be silent, Bunter?" said Mr. Quelch, trying not to laugh. "Silence in class. I shall cane the next boy who laughs."

And Mr. Quelch laid the paper on his desk, and the Remove resumed their interrupted excursion among Latin verbs.

When morning lessons were over, Billy Bunter stopped at the master's desk to reclaim his book before he went out. Mr. Quelch had forgotten it, and he looked inquiringly at Bunter. Billy blinked apologetically.

"Please may I have my book, sir?" he said.

"Your book? Oh, yes, certainly."

"I'm not in a hurry, sir, if you'd like to read it. There's an awfully good story in it, about a school—"

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"You may have your book, Bunter."

"If you'd care to go in for the football competition, sir, I shouldn't mind your using the answers I've written in. There are a lot more sets of pictures to come, but I haven't the slightest doubt that, with my splendid ability at guessing the answers, I shall be able—"

"You may go, Bunter."

"Very well, sir. Could you tell me—if you don't mind, sir?—"

"Do you want to ask me something?"

"Yes, sir, if you don't mind, sir."

"Of course I do not mind," said Mr. Quelch testily. "I am always willing to impart any information to my class, and am rather surprised that you should desire any. What is it you wish to know, Bunter?"

"Have you ever heard of a famous footballer named Beepaint, sir?"

"Eh? What?"

"Have you ever heard of a famous—"

"You may go, Bunter."

"Yes, sir, but—"

"Go!"

And Bunter thought he had better go. He followed the grinning Removites from the room, with his "Gem" tucked under his arm.

"You shrieking ass!" said Bob Cherry. "The marvel to me is that Quelch didn't lick you."

Bunter looked surprised.

"I don't see why he should be annoyed, Cherry. He told me I could ask him, and said he was willing to impart information, and I really fail to see why he cut up rough when I asked him if he had heard of a footballer named Beepaint."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ass!" said Nugent. "I tell you the answer to that picture is Blake."

"Well, it may be Blake, Nugent, but if there's a footballer named Beepaint—"

"But there isn't"

"How do you know? You don't know the names of all the footballers in the kingdom."

"Of course I don't, but—"

"Well, then, very likely there's a footballer named Beepaint, and that's the answer to the picture," said Billy Bunter triumphantly.

"You unutterable ass!"

"I don't think you ought to call me names, Nugent,



The ball flew from the foot of the nabob, and Hoffmann stopped it with his right ear. He spun round like a top. "Ach! Tat peastly pounder!" he yelled.

because I see deeper into things than you do. The best thing we can do is to club together, and send in one set with Blake and another set with Beepaint—"

"No fear."

"That's the way to scoop in the prizes. If you fellows like to find the money for going into the thing thoroughly, I'm willing to share equally with you in what we get."

"You're too generous by half, Billy."

"And we're too unselfish to take advantage of it," laughed Harry Wharton.

"The fact is, I mean to be generous. I believe in a fellow sticking to his own study. I place my great abilities as a guesser completely at your service. All I ask in return is that you find a little cash to carry out the scheme. I've been disappointed about a postal order, or I wouldn't ask you. I say, you fellows, where are you going?"

"Out!"

"Hold on a minute, Wharton--Nugent! I say, Cherry, I'll have that jam tart now."

"What jam tart?" asked Bob Cherry, staring.

"The one you promised me when we got up this morning. I say, Cherry—"

But Bob Cherry was gone after his chums. Bunter followed them, and ran into Bulstrode. He caught him by the sleeve.

"I say, Cherry, I'm awfully hungry, and—"

"Can't help it, if you are," said Bulstrode, grinning.

"Is that you, Bulstrode? I'm so glad to see you. You used to lend me little sums when you were in No. 1 Study, before Cherry came—"

"Yes, it's a bad habit I've got out of," said Bulstrode, walking away.

"Dear me! How selfish all the fellows are!" murmured Bunter. "It isn't as if I were a fellow always cadging, like some chaps! And they could really make such a good thing out of this, if they could only see it. It's very annoying!"

The fat junior walked out into the Close. The Famous Four had gone down to the football ground, where they were putting in all their spare time lately. A match between the

Remove and the Upper Fourth was shortly coming off, and Harry Wharton and Co. had determined that the rival Form should be soundly licked. It was no easy task, however, to take on a higher Form, and the Remove eleven needed practice to keep them fit. Temple and Dabney, of the Upper Fourth, were standing by the door chatting when Billy Bunter came out, reading his "Gem" as he came, and, of course, the Owl of the Remove walked into them.

Temple took him by the collar and shook him, and backed him up against the wall with no gentle hand. Billy Bunter blinked at him.

"I say, Hazeldene, let go! I'm sincerely sorry—"

"What do you mean by biffing into your elders?" demanded Temple.

"Oh, it is you, Temple! I'm sincerely sorry, but I didn't see you. I'm a trifle short-sighted. I say, you fellows, would you like a chance of making money?"

Temple laughed.

"That depends, Bunt. Not if it's one of your schemes."

"This is a really first-class idea. The editor of the 'Gem' guarantees the prizes, so you can't fail to score. It's a football competition."

"How do we know we shall score? We mayn't get the correct answers."

"Oh, yes, it's infallible if my idea is carried out."

"And what's the idea?"

"You hand me over five bob each—"

"Do we?" grinned Temple. "Do we, Dab?"

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Dabney.

"I think I can see us doing it, too," said Temple. "Why not make it five pounds, Bunt?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, Temple, five pounds would be better," said Billy Bunter unsuspectingly. "Five pounds would allow me more scope. If you fellows could raise the tin, and stand five pounds each, that would make the thing a dead cert. But could you afford to put up a fiver each?"

"Quite as easy as five bob, Bunter."

"Oh, good! Well, this is the scheme. I buy up any number of copies of the paper, you see, and fill in every

possible answer. For instance, see this third picture. It might be either Beepaint or Beelake, or Lettertube——"

"I've never heard of footballers of those names."

"There are lots of footballers you haven't heard of. My idea is to send in a lot of sets with every possible variation, and if you fellows stand the cash, we're absolutely certain to walk off with the prizes. I've had some good ideas in my time, but really I've never had one quite so ripping as this."

"Do you think it's a ripping idea, Dab?"

"Oh, rather!"

"Then you'd better let it rip, Bunty. Good-bye!"

"When are you going to put up the cash, Temple?"

"When are we going to put up the cash, Dab?"

"In the year 1919," said Dabney reflectively.

"That's it, Bunter! On the thirty-second of October, 1919!"

"Look here, you fellows, if you're rotting——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Upper Fourth fellows strolled away arm in arm, leaving the fat Removite staring after them wrathfully.

"Rotters!" muttered Billy Bunter. "They sha'n't come into the scheme now, not if they come back with tears in their eyes, and a fiver each. But really I wish I could find somebody to finance this scheme. It seems an awful pity for the prizes not to be roped in when with my remarkable ability at guessing the answers—— Hallo, Levison! Will you take a squint at this picture, old chap?"

"Certainly!" said Levison, stopping. "What is it?"

"It's a picture of a 'B' and a tube of lake. I've got a lot of answers for it already. Lettertube, Beepaint, Beelake, Beecolour; and Cherry thinks it's Blake, but that doesn't seem to me so good. It's too simple. What would you take it for?"

Levison cocked his eye thoughtfully at the picture.

"Well, what do you say to Lettercolour?" he asked.

"Well, that's not so bad, either; but is that the name of a footballer?"

"My dear chap, haven't you heard of Lettercolour, who plays outside-left three-quarter full-back in the Muggleton Mudcatchers?" exclaimed Levison, in astonishment.

Billy Bunter rubbed his nose.

"He plays what, Levison?"

"Outside-right full-quarter three-back."

"Look here, Levison, if——"

"Perhaps I've got it mixed," said Levison. "But Lettercolour is the name you want. Shove in Lettercolour, Billy, and it will make them open their eyes."

"I'll put it in. That makes five answers I've got for that one. You see, to carry out my scheme I shall want to send in a lot of sets. If you would like to rope in the prize list, you can stand five bob, and——"

"Haven't it, Billy, or I'd jump at the chance," said Levison. "Why don't you ask Quelch?"

"Mr. Quelch!" ejaculated Billy Bunter, even his credulity staggered by the question. But Levison was perfectly grave.

"Yes, Quelch. Didn't you see how awfully interested he was in the thing when he took your paper away this morning?"

"Well, yes, I think he was."

"Then how annoyed he was when you wanted him to tell you his answer for that picture."

"Eh? When I asked him if he had heard of a footballer named Beepaint, do you mean?"

"That's it. He didn't want to give his answer away."

"Dear me, I shouldn't wonder," said Bunter. "I suppose he's going in for it, and he wants to keep it dark."

"No need to jaw it all over the Remove, you know," said Levison seriously. "Form masters are only human, and they might like going in for football competitions just as much as we do. If Quelch knew of your scheme, I haven't the slightest doubt that he would jump at it, and be glad of the chance."

"Do you really think so, Levison?"

"Well, try him, and see," said Levison encouragingly.

Billy Bunter hesitated.

"He might get into a wax, you know."

"Why should he? A cat may look at a king, and I suppose a junior may ask a civil question of a Form master? Put it to him straight—ask him if he'd like to come into a scheme for getting rich quick, and explain to him. Never mind if he interrupts you. It's for his own good; go ahead."

"Well, if you really think it would be a good idea, Levison——"

"It would be ripping!"

"Then I'll do it. After all, Quelch is a decent sort, and I should be glad to put him up to a good thing like this."

"That's right. He's in his study now; strike while the iron's hot."

Billy Bunter hurried off towards Mr. Quelch's study, and Levison sank down upon the stone steps, and laughed till he was almost in hysterics.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Something like Revenge.

"I TINK tat it vork vell, ain't it?"

"I zink zat you zink quite right, mon ami."

"Ve puts dem in deir place pefore."

"Zat is correct."

"Zat ve goes and insults zem again," said Lerouge, grinning. "Let us all go togezzer and valk past zem and shrug up ze shoulders viz ourselves."

"Ach! Tat is goot!"

"Ferry goot!"

"Zen come along viz me, mes amis," said Adolphe Meunier.

The aliens were fairly on the war-path. A dozen or more of them were in the Cloisters, looking out upon the old green Close of Greyfriars. They were grinning and chuckling over the success of the new wheeze; or what they regarded as its success.

"Come on den," said Hoffmann. "You leads, my dear Adolphe."

"Not so, my dear Fritz. You takes ze first place."

"I not goes before my beloved Adolphe."

"Zen ve goes togezzer, mon ami."

"Tat is goot."

The French and German juniors linked arms most affectionately, and walked, or rather strutted, into the Close. The rest of the party followed them. The Removites had come off the footer ground, and some of them were standing in a group, chatting, when the foreign youths came in sight.

Hoffmann, Meunier & Co. marched on solemnly, their noses in the air. They went very close to the Removites, who stared at them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, here they are again!" said Bob Cherry. "I say, Meunier, what are you doing off an organ?"

"Hallo, Hoffs! Where did you dig up that face?"

"What price frogs?"

"What's the matter with their necks?"

"Take no notice," murmured Adolphe Meunier. "Valk right on, and all of you shrug up ze shoulder ven I shrugs up mine viz myself."

"Ferry goot, my dear Adolphe."

And the aliens walked on, nose in air. The Removites stared and giggled. Some of them guessed that it was a new wheeze, others thought the aliens had gone suddenly insane, and some were too amazed to do anything but stare blankly.

"My—my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Look at them! They're moved by springs, and somebody has pressed the button."

It really looked like it, for at the same moment, on the signal from Meunier, each of the aliens shrugged his shoulders up to his ears.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent.

"Ach!" murmured Fritz Hoffmann. "Tey laff to cover up te defeat, ain't it? I tinks tat ve crushes dem tis time, ain't it, pefore?"

"Ciel! Zey vill nevair, nevair hold up zeur heads, my dear Fritz!"

"It vas a goot vheeze, my dear Adolphe."

The aliens swung round on their heels, and walked off, their noses still in the air, their backs turned upon the Greyfriars Remove.

A yell of laughter from the Remove followed them.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "This is meant to be crushing. Do you feel crushed, Wharton?"

"Terribly."

"Do you, Nugent?"

"Can't you see I'm trembling?"

"The tremblefulness at the honourable frown of the esteemed rotters is terrific."

"Oh, hold me up, somebody!" gasped Bob, falling round Nugent's neck. "I shall die—I feel I shall expire if they keep on. Human flesh and blood won't stand those funny merchants."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

The aliens looked back, a trifle disconcerted by the ringing

ANSWERS

"HARRY WHARTON'S SCHEME."

Another School Tale by
FRANK RICHARDS

NEXT TUESDAY.

laughter. Hoffmann seemed worried for a moment as he saw the Greyfriars fellows doubled up with laughter.

"Ach! Tey do not look crushed, my dear Adolphe."
"It is zat zey pretend," said Meunier. "Zey not know vat to do to hide zo mortification, and zerefore zey laugh ha, ha!"

"Ja, ja! I tinks tat tat is it."
"Zat is certainly correct, my dear Fritz."
"Den let us valk past tem again, my dear Adolphe, and crush dem."

"I zink zat zat is good."
And the aliens turned again, and "procceshed" past the group of amazed Removites, and shrugged up their shoulders, and turned on their heels, as before. Bob Cherry threw himself down on the grass and yelled. Nugent hugged the nabob and wept on his shoulder. The Removites roared, and roars of laughter came from all quarters.

"Ciel! How fearfully zey must be mortified, to laff like zat," said Adolphe Meunier.

"Ach! It is tat you are right pefore, my dear Adolphe."
"I zink zat ve gets ze best of it zis time, my dear Fritz."
"I tink tat you are right after."

And the aliens, satisfied with their splendid success, ambled into the Cloisters. The Removites were still yelling with laughter.

"My only hat!" gasped Hazeldene. "Did you ever see such a set of howling idiot? It's too funny for anything!"

"Oh, don't say a word," said Bob Cherry weakly. "I haven't another laugh left in me! I'm simply winded, and I've got a pain in my ribs."

"My word," grinned Nugent. "I've never been so insulted in my life! Oh, hold me!"

"The shrieking asses!"

"The howling duffers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Some of the Removites followed the aliens to the Cloisters, and in the gate Meunier & Co. turned back and treated them to a series of shrugs which would have put English shoulders out of joint.

Meunier was in the middle of a shrug which brought his shoulders above his ears, when Cherry put a pea-shooter to his lips, and let fly.

The missile caught the French junior under the chin, and he unfolded himself in remarkably quick time, with an ear-splitting yell.

"Vat is te matter?" demanded Fritz Hoffmann.

"Ciel! Somezing stung me viz itself."

"Ach! I tink— Ach! Himmel!"

"Vat is ze mattair?"

"Somezing stung me also as well, after," granted Hoffmann. "I tink tat it vas wasp."

"I tink tat it vas pea-shooter," grinned Linburger.

"Look at tat Sherry."

"Ciel! It is zat Sherry!"

Bob Cherry had sent the second pea, and his shooter was to his lips again. As the aliens caught sight of it, the missile flew, and caught Lerouge under the nose. The French youth gave a yell, and rushed towards the Removites.

"Come back!" cried Adolphe Meunier. "Zat is not ze vay ve crushes zem. Ve insult zem, and zat is enoff."

"Come pack, ain't it?" exclaimed Hoffmann.

But Lerouge did not come back. He rushed straight at Bob Cherry, and in a moment more they were rolling in the Cloisters.

"Ve goes to help him, I tink," said Hoffmann.

"Zat is correct, my dear Fritz."

The aliens rushed to the rescue. The Remove crowded up, and there was a scrimmage. Lerouge tore himself loose from Bob Cherry, with a swollen nose, from which the "claret" was streaming. Bob had an eye nearly closed. Wharton and Hoffmann reeled to and fro in deadly combat.

"Buck up, Remove!" shouted Nugent.

And the Removites rushed forward. The rush was irresistible. The aliens were hurled back, and driven pell-mell through the gate into their own quarters.

Harry Wharton gave Hoffmann a whirl that sent him spinning in after the others, and he bumped against Linburger and sent him down, and rolled on him. The Remove crowded up to the gate, greatly inclined to return the invasion; but the aliens flung themselves at the gate and jammed it shut, and Meunier fastened it.

"Come out!" yelled the Remove. "Come out and be licked!"

"Ach! Peegs! Pounders!"

"Ciel! Rottairs! Cochous!"

"Come out! Yah! Come out and be licked!"

"Don't say anyzing!" gasped Adolphe Meunier. "Zey are vild because ve have insult zem! Zat ve insult zem again, mes amis. Follow me."

"Ferry goot!"

The aliens fell into line, and ranged just inside the gate, and shrugged up their shoulders at the juniors outside. The Removites watched them between the bars. The shoulders

were shrugged as high as human shoulders would go, and then the foreign juniors turned on their heels.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites.
The aliens marched off without turning their heads, and disappeared behind an angle of the red brick academy. The Remove tottered away, shrieking with laughter.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch Refuses a Tempting Offer.

MR. QUELCH came hurriedly out of his study to go down to the dining-room, and at the same moment Bunter arrived at his door. The Form master and the junior met in collision, and Mr. Quelch staggered back against the doorpost. Bunter dropped his glasses, and gasped for breath.

"You—you ass!" he gasped. "You've knocked my glasses off, and if they get broken, I shall expect you to pay for them!"

"What!" said Mr. Quelch, in a voice of thunder.

Bunter gave a jump.

"I—I—I'm sincerely sorry, sir; I thought it was Bulstrode."

"Oh, indeed!" Mr. Quelch did not think that the junior really meant to call him an ass, but he was annoyed. "Bunter—"

"Excuse me, sir. I've dropped my glasses. If you were to tread on them, they would be broken, and—"

"Bunter!"

"And I haven't a second pair, sir. I—"

"They are lying close to your foot, Bunter."

"Dear me, so they are!" said Bunter, recovering his spectacles, and jamming them on his nose. "Thank you very much, sir."

"And now, Bunter—"

"I was just coming to see you, sir, on a most important matter—"

"Come, come, what is it?"

"It's awfully important, sir, and—"

"Well, come into my study," said Mr. Quelch, in a tone of resignation. "I can spare you exactly two minutes, Bunter. I have to go into the dining-room to take the Form table."

"The Form wouldn't mind being a little late, sir."

"Come to the point."

"Certainly, sir. Two minutes isn't very long, though, to explain a matter of such importance as this. However, I'll do my best."

"One minute is nearly gone," said the Remove master grimly. "If you really have anything to say, Bunter, you had better say it."

"Yes, sir, certainly, only I get so confused when I am hurried. It has been suggested to me, sir, and I think it's a good idea, that I ought to tell you about my new scheme."

"I don't understand you, Bunter. What scheme are you speaking of?"

"My new scheme, sir."

"Is it something in connection with your lessons?"

"Oh, no, sir! It's a way to scoop in all the prizes in 'The Gem' football competition."

"Eh?"

"What I want, to work the scheme on a proper basis, is capital. I have tried to get the fellows to take shares, but they're short of tin."

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir. And it has been suggested to me that you might like to take a share in the scheme, sir!"

"I! Bunter! Really—"

"You see, sir, with my splendid ability in guessing the names of the footballers represented by the pictures, we only require capital—"

"We! WE! Well, upon my word!"

"I was thinking of taking in four or five fellows upon five bob shares, sir, but if you cared to go in for it, you could supply the money, and I would supply the brains—"

"Bunter!"

"I would keep all others out. A capital of a couple of pounds would be sufficient, and I would guarantee—"

"Boy—"

"Yes, sir. I would guarantee that we scoop in all the prizes—"

"Silence, sir!"

"Certainly. But as I was saying—"

"If this is intended for impertinence, Bunter—"

"Impertinence, sir!"

"Yes, sir, rank impertinence!"

"Rank impertinence, sir!"

"Don't repeat my words! This is evidently intended for—"

"It's a jolly good scheme, sir. You don't think there is any harm in football competitions, do you, sir?"

"Of course not! I think—"

"And it's a jolly good paper, sir—complete stories for everyone, and every story a gem—"

"Bunter!"

"If you think I couldn't guess the answers, sir, there's no doubt whatever on that point. I have a way of dropping on them at first glance. There's No 3, for instance—Cherry and Wharton both thought that was Blake, but I knew it was either Boopaint or Lettortube all along."

"Bunter, your stupidity—"

"Not at all, sir; I'm not stupid, only common minds can't always understand me."

Mr. Quelch did not waste any more breath. He reached out for a cane. Billy Bunter eyed that proceeding in nervous alarm.

"I say, sir—"

"Hold out your hand, Bunter."

"My—my hand, sir?"

"Yes, and at once."

"But, I say, sir—"

Thwack! The cane descended upon Billy Bunter's shoulders, and he gave a roar.

"Now you may go," said Mr. Quelch.

"Ow! Thank you, sir! Ow!"

And the fat junior gladly scuttled out of the study. Mr. Quelch looked angry for some moments; then the clouds cleared off his face, and he laughed.

Bunter did not stop running till he collided with Levison in the doorway. Levison caught him by the collar, and steadied him.

"Is it all right, Billy?"

"That you, Levison!" gasped Billy. "No, it isn't all right."

"Oh, I thought perhaps you were rushing off to the post-office to get an order for a pound to send for copies of 'The Gem.'"

"Oh, no, Levison! It won't work."

"Oh, come, you couldn't have put it to Quelch properly. Did you explain to him that you would supply the brains if he would supply the money?"

"Yes."

"And didn't he agree even then?"

"No, he didn't. It seemed to annoy him. The fact is, Levison, I've thought for some time that Quelch was a little off his chump. A reasonable man wouldn't turn up his nose at a chance like this, and there was no reason for him to lose his temper, that I could see. But he was awfully waxy. He gave me a thwack."

"He did, did he?"

"Yes, and he seemed quite annoyed."

"Tackle him again, Billy."

"Not much," said Billy Bunter. "You can tackle him yourself next time, Levison."

"Oh, so you are the author of this nonsense, Levison?" broke in the voice of the Remove master.

Levison swung round in dismay to meet the stern eyes of Mr. Quelch.

"I—I, sir—" he stammered.

Mr. Quelch was frowning.

"I shall not take any notice of words accidentally overheard, Levison," he said. And Levison drew a breath of relief. "But I shall keep an eye on you."

"If you please, sir, I—I—"

"That is enough."

And Mr. Quelch walked on with chilling majesty. Levison was very red, and Billy Bunter wore a wondering look.

"He seems to be waxy with you now, too, Levison," he remarked. "I wonder if he is annoyed at your having suggested the idea to me of taking him into the scheme?"

"Oh, shut up, you young ass!"

"Oh, I say, Levison!"

Levison swung away. The Remove were coming in to dinner now, and Bob Cherry playfully took Billy Bunter by the ear to escort him into the dining-room.

"Oh, please don't, Wharton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, is it you, Cherry? I knew it was you, of course. I say, Cherry, Quelch is in a wax."

"What have you been doing, you young reprobate, to ruffle the plumage of our esteemed Form master?" demanded Bob Cherry severely.

"Blessed if I know. I thought it would please him, and Levison thought so, too."

"What have you done, ass?"

"I offered to take him in on shares in the football competition, he to supply the money, and me the brains, you know."

"You—you—you unspeakable young duffer! Did Levison put you up to it?"

"Well, he suggested the idea."

"You shrieking duffer, and couldn't you see that he was

pulling your leg!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Did Quelch lick you?"

"Well, he seemed very much annoyed."

"It was too bad of Levison!" said Harry Wharton, with a darkening brow. "Bunter is so stupid that he is taken in easily."

"Oh, I say, Wharton—"

Levison, with a reddened face, moved beside Harry as they entered the dining-room. He seemed to want to speak, but hesitated. Ever since the night when Harry Wharton had found him in the storm on the Black Pike, Levison had changed his line of conduct towards the captain of the Remove. The old mockery, the old cynicism, were still strong in his nature, but towards Harry Wharton they were never shown.

"Wharton!" muttered Levison. Harry's face was cold and hard. "I say, Wharton, it was only a joke on that young ass, you know."

"It might have got him an awful licking," said Harry.

"Well, he ought to be licked for being such a confounded young ass!" said Levison. "He tempts people to make a fool of him, with his silly fatheadedness and conceit."

"Yes, there's no harm in a joke; but setting a young ass to cheek a Form master is rather more than a joke."

"Oh, well, perhaps—perhaps you're right," said Levison, with an effort. "I—I'm sorry."

And he moved quickly away. Harry Wharton glanced after him in astonishment. They were the last words he had ever expected to hear upon Ernest Levison's lips.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise in Store.

THE aliens were to the fore again when the Greyfriars fellows went out after dinner. They were watching from the Cloisters, and when the Removeites appeared, Meunier and Hoffmann and their merry men came into sight immediately. They walked past the Removeites with their noses in the air, shrugged their shoulders, and turned on their heels.

Some of the Remove were ready to "go for" them, but Mr. Quelch's window was open, and the Remove master could be seen sitting within, and a "row" was not judged expedient under the circumstances.

"The asses!" grinned Nugent. "It's funny, but I'm getting fed up with their grimaces, all the same."

Hoffmann, Meunier & Co. shrugged their shoulders, and walked away. They made no reply to the jeers and taunts of the Remove, but walked off quite satisfied with themselves and their revenge.

"Ach, it is better as efer was!" grinned Fritz Hoffmann, in the Cloisters. "Tey not know vat to do mit demselves, I tink."

"Ze mortification is great," smiled Adolphe Meunier. "I zink zat ve makes zem sing small, mon ami."

"I tink te same, dear Adolphe."

"Ve vill keep on to insult zem and shrug ze shoulders at zem," said Adolphe Meunier. "I zink zat ve makes zem vish zat zey had nevaire roused us."

"Ach, ve are terrible ven ve are roused, my dear Adolphe!"

"Zat is correct, my dear Fritz."

"Perhaps ve are a loodle bit too hard up tem, howefer."

"Not at all, my dear Fritz. I zink zat ve ought to crush zem!"

"Ferry goot. I agrees mit my dear Adolphe."

And so they carried on the campaign; but the Greyfriars Remove were tired of laughing now. As Nugent had remarked, they were getting "fed up" with the antics of the foreign juniors. The next time the shrugging expedition was carried out, without a master's eye being near, there were likely to be ructions.

Bob Cherry was thinking it over. He thought it over during lessons that afternoon, and suddenly the silence of the class-room was disturbed by a loud and prolonged chuckle from the unlucky Bob.

Mr. Quelch turned an eye like a gimlet upon him. Bob Cherry, realising where he was the next moment, turned crimson, and sat dumb.

"Cherry, you appear to be greatly amused about something," remarked Mr. Quelch, in the dry, sarcastic tone which the Removeites knew and dreaded. "Is it possible that I have unwittingly expressed myself humorously in my remarks upon deponent verbs?"

"I—I—I— You see, sir—" stammered Bob Cherry.

"Ah, perhaps you were not thinking of the lesson, however, but were amused by some extraordinarily good story that recurred to your mind," suggested Mr. Quelch blandly. "Perhaps you were not thinking of the lesson at all, Cherry?"

Bob Cherry was dumb.

"Perhaps you will tell me what I have just been explaining to you," said Mr. Quelch, in the same tone. "Will you have the kindness to define a deponent verb, Cherry?"

"I—I— Certainly, sir. A deponent verb is—is—"

"Go on, Cherry!"

"A deponent verb is transitive in form, sir, and—and intransitive in meaning."

The Remove giggled joyously. Mr. Quelch smiled.

"Ah, so that is your definition of a deponent verb, Cherry?"

"I—I— If you please, sir, I think I—"

"You will write out one hundred times, Cherry, that a deponent verb is passive in form and active in meaning," said the master of the Remove; "and you will have the kindness to bring me the lines before bedtime to-night. Do you think that a hundred times will be sufficient to impress it upon your memory?"

"Ye-e-es, I think so, sir."

"Very good. We will now resume the lesson if Cherry has quite finished his ebullitions of merriment," said Mr. Quelch.

Cherry had quite finished his ebullitions of merriment. No junior ever felt very merry with Mr. Quelch's eye on him and piercing him like a gimlet. Bob Cherry sat abashed, and more or less attentive, till the lesson was over, and the welcome time of dismissal came to the Remove. Nugent thumped him on the shoulder as the Remove left the classroom.

"What on earth did you suddenly go off like a cheap German alarm-clock for, Bob?" he asked.

"Like a what?"

"Well, like a hen with the croup, then."

"The cackleness was terrific!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Was it indeed the funniness of the deponent verbs, or was it that an esteemed new wheeze entered flashfully into the honourable Cherry's fat head?"

"I don't think anybody ever found Latin verbs funny," grunted Bob Cherry. "It was an esteemed new wheeze, my inky friend."

"Get it off your chest, then, Bob!"

"Is it a new idea for No. 3, Cherry?" chimed in Billy Bunter. "Have you thought of anything better than Beepaint or Lettertube?"

"It wasn't a new idea for No. 3, Billy; and you can buzz along before I speak, as I don't want it yarned all over the school."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Cut—"

"But, I say, Cherry, you know how you can rely upon me."

"Yes, I do, Billy, and that's why you're to cut. We had to watch you like a giddy pack of detectives last time we had a wheeze up against the aliens, in case you gave it away. We're not looking for work now."

"Oh, if it's only a wheeze against the aliens you can keep it. If it was anything to do with the football competition—"

"Well, it isn't. Cut!"

"On second thoughts, though, you had better tell me, Cherry, and I can probably suggest some improvements that haven't occurred to you—"

Bob Cherry took the obliging Owl of the Remove by the ear, and compressed his thumb and forefinger till the fat junior squeaked.

"Does that hurt, Billy?" he asked, in a tone of solicitude.

"Yes. Ow! Yes. Ow!"

"Would you like me to serve the other ear the same?"

"No. Ow! No. Ow!"

"Then you'd better cut while you've got the chance."

Billy Bunter thought so, too. He cut.

Bob Cherry stopped where the afternoon sun was glimmering in through the diamond panes of the hall window, and his chums stopped, too. They were anxious to hear the wheeze which had cost its originator a hundred lines.

"Well, get it off your chest, Bob!" said Nugent.

"We are waiting anxiously to hear the honourable wheeze," purred the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Go ahead, Bob!" said Wharton encouragingly. "Leave the chuckles till afterwards, and we'll chuckle, too."

"Oh, right you are. Now, I reckon that when we go for our gentle little walks in the Close again we shall meet the shrugging brigade, as usual."

"I suppose so."

"My idea is, that when they march past and shrug their shoulders at us—"

"Go for 'em!" said Nugent. "It's about time they had another licking."

"Not at all, my fiery son! There have been too many rows with the aliens of late, and our respected Form master is keeping a wolfish eye upon us. Rows with the aliens are barred except when we can meet them in the comparative seclusion of the Cloisters, where there is no eagle-eye to watch our peaceable, persuasive methods of putting them in their place."

"Right enough!" laughed Harry Wharton. "But if we

are not to go for them, and not to stand it what are we to do?"

"You can buy squirts at Mrs. Mible's shop."

"What on earth has that to do with it?"

"We can sneak any amount of red ink from one of the class-rooms."

"My only hat!"

"A squirt is a little thing you can keep out of sight—till it's wanted. Then it comes to the fore, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think about twenty of us to form a firing-line would be able to make the aliens tired of marching past us and shrugging up their shoulders."

"I think so, too. Ha, ha!"

Nugent thumped Bob Cherry on the back

"Ripping!" he exclaimed.

"Well, don't bust my spinal column!"

"My dear kid, what does a spinal column matter at a moment like this?" said Nugent, doubling his fist for a more energetic thump, which Bob dodged just in time.

"Keep off, ass! Now, is it a go?"

"The gofulness is terrific!"

"Yes, rather!" said Harry Wharton. "We must put a stop to their antics, and I think it's a jolly good way. It will be rather a surprise for Hoffmann & Co. Ha, ha, ha!"

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Aliens are Surprised.

"I TINKS tat tey are crush, my dear Adolphe."

"It looks like zat, certainement, my dear Fritz."

"I tinks tat ve have been vatching for half an hour since te school was ofer, and tey have not come out mit demselves, Adolphe."

"I zink zat is correct."

"It is gewiss—it is certain den tat tey are crush."

"I zink you are right."

"Ten ve triumph!"

"Ciel! Ve triumph!"

"Pravo!"

The aliens were watching from the Cloisters. They were all ready to carry on the sneering and shrugging campaign, but the Removites were not in evidence. Fellows of other Forms, higher and lower, were to be seen in plenty in the quad. But the Remove, the special rivals of the foreign juniors, were conspicuous by their absence.

It was only natural that Meunier, Hoffmann, & Co. should conclude that the Remove had been crushed.

Hoffmann had lately had a doubt or two as to the efficacy of the treatment meted out to the Lower Fourth Form of Greyfriars. Meunier never lost confidence in his excellent plan, but Hoffmann was beginning to have doubts. But the disappearance of the Remove from the Close at Greyfriars was proof enough that the campaign had been a success.

"Ve have conquered tem," said Hoffmann. "Mein freund, ve have conquered dem."

"Ach! Goot!" said Limburger.

"Zat is good!" exclaimed Lerouge. "Ze Remove not dare to show ze face in ze open, and now I zink zat ve starts on ze next Form."

Adolphe Meunier grinned approval.

"Zat is correct! Ve have conquer ze Remove, and now ve starts on ze Upper Fourth. Zey are shecky, and ve put zem in zeir place."

"Sehr goot!" said Hoffmann heartily.

"Mon Dieu! Zere is vun of zem!" suddenly exclaimed Charpentier.

"Ach! You vas right, ain't it?"

A Removite was cutting across the Close from the direction of the school shop. It was Bob Cherry. The aliens sent a concerted yell after him, but Bob Cherry apparently did not hear. He did not turn his head, at all events, and the next minute he had disappeared into the house.

"Zat vas Sherry," said Meunier. "If he not dare to face ze enemy, it is certain zat ze rest are cowed. Ve have conquered!"

"It is because ve have made to goot friend," said Hoffmann. "I tinks tat I embraces my dear friend Adolphe."

"Mon Dieu! I embrace my beloved friend Fritz!"

And they embraced. It was a most affecting scene. Then the aliens continued to watch the Close, while debating whether to begin operations on the Upper Fourth with the same invincible, crushing tactics.

There was a sudden exclamation from Lerouge.

"Ceil! Zere zey come!"

The Remove were seen issuing from the great doorway, and nearly the whole of the Form came gradually into view. Harry Wharton & Co. were at the head, and they came strolling with a careless air towards the Cloisters.

The Removites followed in a crowd, with prim and serious faces, and their hands in their pockets.

"Zere zey are!" said Meunier. "I zink zat I not comprehend. Is it zat zey have just screw up zeir courage to ze sticking-point?"

"I tink tat tat is it, my dear Adolphe."

"Zen ve starts on zem again, my dear Fritz."

The foreign juniors were quite ready to start. They came out of the dusky Cloisters, and shaped their course so as to pass close to the Removites.

Harry Wharton made his followers a sign to halt.

The Remove stopped, in an irregular line, and waited solemnly for the aliens to come up. Meunier grinned at Hoffmann.

"Zey know vat to expect, my dear Fritz."

"Tat is so, my dear Adolphe."

The foreign juniors walked on. They held their noses high in the air, and halted within a few paces of the Removites, to shrug their shoulders up to their ears.

"Fire!" shouted Harry Wharton.

The word startled the aliens.

They stopped in the midst of their shrugging; but there was no time for them to escape.

As Harry Wharton shouted out the word, each Removite's right hand came out of his pocket, and each right hand held a squirt, full of red ink.

Squizz-z-z-zz!

"Ow! Oh!"

"Parbleu!"

"Ach himmel!"

"Ciel!"

"Mein gootness!"

There was no avoiding the fire. The squirting ink squizzed into the faces of the aliens before they knew what was coming, converting them with startling suddenness into Red Indians.

"Mein gootness!" roared Hoffmann, as the red ink trickled over his face. "Vat is tat? I tinks tat I am vet, ain't it?"

"Mon bleu!" gasped Meunier. "I not zink of zis!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Remove.

Some of the Removites were provided with a second squirt, and they brought the reserves into action promptly.

Hoffmann rushed furiously at Harry Wharton and reeled back as he received a fresh dose in the left ear from Bob Cherry, and one under the chin from Nugent.

"Sock it to the esteemed rotters squirtfully!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "My worthy Meunier, this is for your esteemed left ear."

And Meunier's esteemed left ear received it.

The French junior gave a wild yell and dashed at the nabob. A fresh squirt from Hazeldene stopped him. The aliens were shrieking and gesticulating by this time like lunatics. There was a babel of French and German shrieks. The Removites roared with laughter.

"Ach!" roared Hoffmann. "I am vet! I am inky before! Tat is all te fault of tat French peast Meunier!"

"I zink zat is all ze fault of zat Sherman peeg Hoffmann."

"Pounder!"

"Rottair!"

"I trashes you!"

"I zink I gifts you licking."

And the late beloved friends rushed at one another, not to embrace this time, but to renew the old quarrel. Locked in a tangled embrace, less amicable than their previous ones, they reeled to and fro, their reddened faces close to one another.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Did you ever see such asses!"

"We can't have these inky rotters about here," said Nugent. "Hurree Jampot is the only inky bounder allowed here. Kick them out!"

"Good!" laughed Harry Wharton. "Shove them out, kids!"

The Removites rushed forward. The inky and disconcerted foreigners were swept back into the Cloisters in a twinkling, and through them to their own quarters. There they rallied for a moment, but only for a moment. Then the Removites clamoured at the gate, which was closed against them in time. Through the bars they could see the foreign juniors, their faces streaming with ink, their aspect wholly ludicrous.

In the melee Hoffmann and Meunier had separated for a moment. But now a babel of recrimination arose, French and German voices being mingled in mutual denunciation and invective.

"It vas tat ass Meunier tat—"

"It vas zat Sherman rottair Hoffmann—"

"If you says tat again I tinks I trash you, Meunier."

"I says it again—I says zat vun hundred times—"

"Peastly pounder!"

"Rottair!"

"Go it!" shouted Bob Cherry, through the gate, as the French and German juniors closed in strife once more. "Go it, Froggy! Go for him, Sauerkraut!"

The excitable aliens were all arguing, recriminating, shrieking, and shouting. Hoffmann and Meunier were soon not the only combatants. Argument gradually proceeded to punching and scratching, and ere long most of the aliens were at fistcuffs—French against German.

The sight was extremely diverting to the Removites, who crowded at the gate, shouting encouragement to the combatants. The din was terrific, and it was not surprising that it brought Herr Rosenblum out of the house with a cane in his hand.

Then the Removites prudently retired, laughing till their ribs ached.

"My only hat!" Nugent gasped. "It was a ripping wheeze, Bobby, my boy! I never saw such a set of funny merchants!"

"The rippingfulness was terrific," said the nabob, chuckling. "I thinkfully consider, my esteemed chums, that we shall see no more of the sneerfulness and the shrugfulness of the worthy esteemed rotten aliens."

"Ha, ha, ha! I fancy not."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was right.

There were many little difficulties to crop up yet between the Greyfriars juniors and their excitable neighbours; but Adolphe Meunier's grand plan for crushing the Remove was never tried again.

THE END.

NEXT TUESDAY.

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GRAND TALE OF ARMY LIFE.



READ THIS FIRST.

On the death of his father (Colonel Sir Harry Dashwood), Jack Dashwood finds to his astonishment that he has been practically disinherited in favour of his Uncle Dominic and Cousin Leonard. He consequently enlists in the 25th Hussars, under the name of Tom Howard, and soon becomes a corporal. Unfortunately for Jack, however, his Cousin Leonard is attached to the 25th as second lieutenant, and, with the aid of a bullying trooper named Sligo, succeeds in getting Jack deprived of his stripes. By the death of his father (Dominic), Lieutenant Dashwood is at first prevented from accompanying the 25th to India; but he subsequently joins the troopship at Port Said, having travelled there overland. While at Port Said he bribes a Greek gambler named Constantinidi to kidnap Trooper Howard, whom he sends ashore on a false errand. Our hero is attacked and stunned, and wakes to find himself a prisoner. Irene, the beautiful daughter of his captor, however, procures for him a disguise, and Jack, by means of a rope, lowers himself down into the garden, wherein, seated round a table in a kiosque, Constantinidi and a party of British officers from the troopship Ganges are gambling. A scene takes place and Jack, with the help of the officers, makes his escape. He continues his journey to India on the Ganges, and eventually rejoins the 25th Hussars. On his arrival in camp, Sergeant Clavering immediately takes the prodigal trooper to the Colonel. (Now go on with the story.)

An Understanding!

"Trooper Howard just returned, sir, and anxious to report to you. He came along on the Ganges, which is just in, sir," said the sergeant, as he saluted Colonel Greville.

"I will tell you whether I am glad to see you, Howard, when I have heard your explanation," said the colonel drily. "You can go, Sergeant Clavering. Come inside here, with me."

And, flushing scarlet to the roots of his hair, Trooper Tom Howard, No. 3842, followed his chief into the dim interior of the bungalow. A whisky-peg stood on one of the tables, and the room was empty. The colonel, returning to the chair from which he had risen, sat down.

"Now, my lad, out with it," said he.

It was impossible to keep his cousin's name out of it, since it was Leonard Dashwood who had sent him ashore. But when he reached that point where he had recovered consciousness in Constantinidi's house, Tom paused.

"Go on. What are you hesitating for?" said the colonel sharply.

He was a very handsome man, with a clear-cut, aristocratic face, and grey eyes that could look fiercely and kindly by turns, a bold rider and a fine polo-player, and the beau-ideal of the British cavalry officer.

"Well, I was kept there, sir, for several days. I think—I think"—and he faltered, dropping his eyes for the first time from the colonel's gaze—"I think when they found out that I was a British soldier, they were afraid of what they had done."

"You will excuse me, Howard," said the colonel gravely, "but you don't think any such thing." And, rising to his feet, he walked straight up to the lad and seemed to look into his very soul.

"Now, look here, boy," he said. "The colonel in a regiment should act in the position of a father to all those under his command, and I want you to confide in me and tell me your real name."

Tom Howard's lips trembled a little. Then he set that determined jaw of his rigid and stiff.

"I am sorry, sir, but I can't do what you ask."

The colonel's face expressed no anger, but he took Tom Howard by the shoulder and said:

"Come here with me."

The wall of the mess-bungalow was hung with pictures and trophies that all our regiments carry about with them from place to place, and the colonel stopped before a portrait of a former commander, whose memory was still revered in the corps. It was the first time our hero had seen it, and if Colonel Greville had been a French "juge d'instruction" reconstructing the gruesome particulars of some crime, he could not have been more dramatic nor more correct. The denouement was exactly that which he had wished to bring about; for, stretching his arm involuntarily towards the portrait, the lad next moment buried his face in his hands and burst into tears. The colonel stood motionless for a few moments, and waived back a mess-waiter who had appeared in the doorway.

"I have thought so for some time, Dashwood," he said at length. "That portrait of your father was done a good many years ago, but there is no disguising the likeness. It is twenty-five years since I joined the regiment, and your father was my first colonel."

Jack brought his hand from his eyes and clenched his fists, and there was an appealing look in his tear-stained face as he looked at Colonel Greville.

"You need not speak," said the colonel. "Your secret is safe with me. But there is another matter which we must go into together. Your cousin had some sinister motive in sending you ashore at Port Said. To my mind, it savours very strongly of murder."

"I can't say that, sir," said Jack.

"No, but you can't help thinking it, nor can I," said the colonel. "Were your cousin going to remain with us, I should feel it my duty to make a very strict inquiry into this matter. As it is, he is going to exchange, and for the sake of the good old name which has been associated so long with the 25th Hussars, it is my intention to pass the thing over; but I shall keep a very close eye on Mr. Leonard Dashwood wherever he goes. And now, Howard—for so I shall continue to call you—remember that you have always a friend in me. Return to your squadron and do your duty, I shall see that you reap your reward."

Poor Jack forgot himself for the moment, stretched out his hand, and as suddenly checked himself; but the colonel saw the action and put his own forth.

"I am glad that we have had this explanation," said he; "it explains many things that were a mystery."

And, as the lad saluted, and went out, Colonel Greville continued to watch him from the verandah of the officers' mess, and then, lighting a cigar, smoked furiously for a long time.

When Tom Howard returned to his quarters there was a look on his face which forbade any close questioning on the part of his room-mates. He told them just as much as he thought they ought to know—and no more; and Tom Howard's adventure was the topic of conversation for the next forty-eight hours.

One item of interest they had to impart in their turn, which was that Mr. Dashwood, having made himself extremely unpopular with his brother officers, had been practically given the cold shoulder and sent to Coventry, and was only awaiting an opportunity to exchange into another regiment. And then a strange thing happened, and the Hon. Algernon Armstrong, of the 1st Battalion of the Ploughshires, rode over from the infantry lines to hold a

long consultation with Colonel Greville. Leonard Dashwood was sent for, and the result came as a great surprise to several of the actors in our story. An exchange had been effected, which only required the ratification of the higher military authorities; and the Hon. Algy, having messed with the 25th, and been voted a very good fellow, was duly posted to "B" Squadron, and the fact read out in orders.

Certainly, the only man in the 25th Hussars who found any reason to quarrel with the exchange was Trooper Alf Sligo. But, the cantonment of the Ploughshires being not very far away from the cavalry lines, Alf Sligo put his tongue in his cheek, and said nothing either one way or the other.

Leonard Dashwood, although his pride had sustained a very severe shock, and the unexpected return of the man he had thought removed for ever from his path had terrified him for the time being, congratulated himself that he had got out of the scrape so easily—his one annoyance being to find Dick Vivian among his new brother-officers. They had never been friends, and Leonard's cowardly heart failed him as he met Dick Vivian's eyes, realising that he must know the true history of the whole business.

"I'll stick it for just as long as it is useful to me, and then I'll either sell out or apply for a station billet. In the meantime, that beast Sligo is to be trusted, and my dear-cousin shall not find his life a path of roses. I wonder how much the colonel knows? Sly old beggar! He's as impenetrable as the Sphinx!"

Three months after he had rejoined, Tom Howard became lance-corporal, to the great joy of his troop—some members of which, to mark their approbation, got very intoxicated, and tore up one of the bazaars, Bill Sloggett paying the penalty by going to "cells" for the specified number of days.

When he came out he was possessed of a terrible thirst and no money, and notifying this fact to Alf Sligo, that individual suggested an adjournment to the canteen, and, in paying for the beer, produced a handful of silver and copper coins, in the middle of which Bill Sloggett's shrewd eyes detected the glitter of gold.

"Where did you get that from?" said Sloggett.

Whereupon, Sligo, taken off his guard, grew hot and cold by turns, and asked what the dickens that had got to do with him.

"Oh, nothing," said Bill Sloggett, finishing his drink, and walking out of the canteen, leaving Alf Sligo to look after him with an uneasy feeling. "Can't make it out, no'ow," said Bill Sloggett, to himself. "That fellow 'as always got a fist full of brass. 'Ow 'e does it, hanged if I know! I'm goin' to watch this!"

It was Thursday, which is a holiday with the troops in India, and, having nothing particular to do, and no money to spend, Trooper Sloggett strolled away to a clump of greenery near an ancient well some distance from the lines, where he lay down in the shade of a teepul tree and went to sleep. When he woke the shadows were lengthening across the plain—those long, long shadows so typical of India.

Sloggett sat up, and was about to return to the lines, when he saw Sligo loitering along the road, occasionally stopping to pick up a stone, which he flung at a lizard, but all the time looking backward and forward, as though he were expecting someone.

A dust-cloud floated towards him across the limitless vista of the dreary flat, and an officer in civilian attire came along at a quick trot. Sloggett recognised Leonard Dashwood's chestnut cob, and continued to recline on his elbow, as he saw Sligo pull himself together and salute the approaching lieutenant.

Dashwood looked round about him, and, seeing no one in sight, pulled up. There was a short conversation, which ended in the lieutenant putting his hand into his pocket, and handing something to the trooper of the Hussars.

"So—o," said Trooper

Sloggett, "that's it—that's where he gets his money! Now I want to know what does he git it for? I'll find out, too, before I'm a week older!"

And when the lieutenant had gone, and Sligo turned his back on the teepul tree and disappeared in the direction of the cavalry lines, Bill Sloggett gathered himself up, and followed in the same direction, with a heavy frown on his low brow.

Trooper Bill Sloggett's Strange Feeling.

"I say, Howard," said Sergeant Clavering one day, a few weeks later, "I wonder if you could do anything with young Sloggett. I've had to tell him off every day this week. He's had 'cells' three times since we've been out here, and been confined to barracks Heaven knows how often! I don't like the fellow, but it's a pity to see a youngster going to the dogs like this—besides, it's a disgrace to the regiment!"

Tom Howard looked dubious. He knew Sloggett to be a very tough customer, and yet he was conscious that many times he had gone out of his way to do little things for him.

Tom Howard was full-corporal now; and next day, seeing Sloggett making for the bazaar, Tom followed him, and overtook him in the native quarter.

Sloggett was about to turn into a stall where they sold arrack—that potent liquor that has been the downfall of so many British Tommies—when he heard the jingle of spurs behind him, and, turning round, stopped on the threshold.

"Hallo, corporal! What's up?" said Sloggett, seeing a frown on Tom's face.

"Nothing particular, Sloggett; but I should like to speak to you."

Sloggett fell into step, and they walked along together.

"Look here, Sloggett, I want to have a word with you," said Tom Howard. "You have got to pull up, your defaulter's sheet is becoming quite a curiosity. If you don't watch it, you'll be a disgrace to the troop!"

Bill Sloggett's eyes twitched viciously, and he looked wicked.

"Look 'ere, 'Oward, don't you start preachin'!" he said. "Clavering's been on to me, and I've had enough of it. I've had enough of everything, and I'm jolly well sick of the whole sketch!"

"What's wrong? What's the matter with you?" said Tom Howard, looking at the man.

"Wrong! Why everything is wrong! When I 'listed for a soldier, I 'listed to fight, not for these field-days where yer can't see yer troop-leader for dust, and yer can't sleep at night for things that bite yer, and 'eat that stifles yer. It's enough to drive anyone to drink!"

Tom smiled.

"Don't be a fool, Sloggett," he said. "If you want to fight you can put the gloves on and have a turn with me; I should be only too pleased."

"Here, chuck it!" said Bill Sloggett. "Yer knows yer

can down me in a couple o' two's." And a look of the old admiration came into his face. "I say, 'Oward," he said suddenly. "D'yer never feel as 'ow yer'd like to kill somebody? D'yer never want to take Dashwood into a corner by yerself and punch the 'eart out o' him? Tell me honestly, man to man, don't yer?"

A dark glow came into the corporal's cheeks.

"That's nothing to do with it, Sloggett," he said.

At the same time the trooper's quick eye noticed that the corporal's hand tightened on his riding-whip.

"There, yer needn't say any more," said Bill Sloggett quickly. "I knew yer did, and that's just 'ow I feels. And if something doesn't turn up soon, I shall have a fair beano on my own!"

(Another long instalment of this splendid story next week.)

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THE EDITOR.



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