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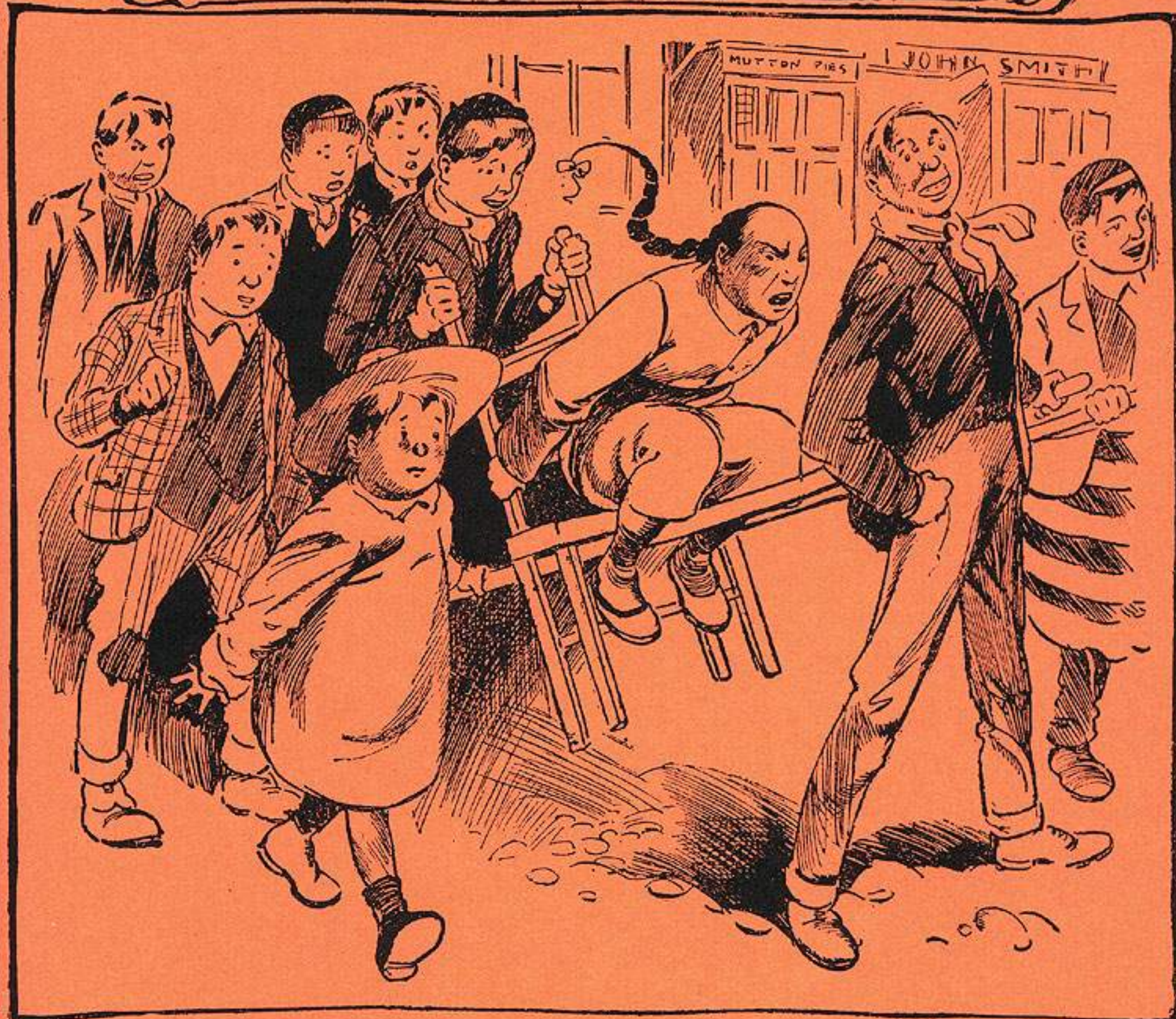
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Vol. 2.

COMPLETE
STORY
FOR ALL

GREYFRIARS v. ST. JIM'S.

By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**



WUN LUNG IS CAPTURED BY THE VILLAGERS. (An incident in "Greyfriars versus St. Jim's," the splendid complete School Tale contained in this issue.)



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ONE HALFPENNY



THE FIRST CHAPTER.
A Visitor Expected.

HARRY WHARTON came into the study with an open letter in his hand, and a thoughtful expression on his face. There was a strong smell of bloaters in the study, and a crackling sound from the frying-pan Billy Bunter was watching on the fire. Wharton gave an expressive sniff.

"Bunter, hold on! Open the window, Nugent! Billy, get that frying-pan off the fire at once!"

Billy Bunter looked round from his busy occupation with a red and perspiring face. He blinked at Wharton through his big spectacles.

"Oh, really, Wharton! The bloaters are not done yet!"

"Chuck them out of the window!"

"What?"

"Chuck them out of the window! We can't have them niffing here like that with a visitor coming!"

"A visitor?" exclaimed Bob Cherry and Nugent together.

"Yes; a distinguished visitor, too! Just like Bunter, to be filling the study with a niff of bloaters at a time like this!" said Wharton severely.

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Billy Bunter indignantly.

Greyfriars

VERSUS

St. Jim's.

A Splendid Complete Tale of
the Two Famous Schools.

By

FRANK RICHARDS.

"There's nothing for tea except bread-and-butter, and I raised a tanner by selling a penknife to get these bloaters. Is that what you call gratitude, Wharton?"

"Whose penknife did you sell?" asked Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"Well, as a matter of fact, it was yours."

"Mine?" howled Bob Cherry.

"Yes. As you chaps leave it to me to keep the meals going, I had to raise the wind somehow. I sold it to young Johnson II., and he said I could have it back for a bob any time I liked. It's all right, you know. I've got a postal-order coming to-morrow, and I'll get it back if you want it."

"You—you—you——"

"There's nothing to be excited about. Anyway, you've got the bloaters. They're nearly done, and they will be ripping for tea."

"Take them away!" said Wharton.

"But——"

"Chuck them out of the window, or kill them somehow! I tell you we've got a distinguished visitor coming, and I can't have the study reeking of bloaters! I wish I'd known you were going to start cooking bloaters, and I'd have chained you up in time!"

"Oh, really Wharton——"

"Off with them!"

"I fancy they're off already, to judge by the niff!" grinned Bob Cherry. "But who's the distinguished visitor who is going to honour our humble roof? This is the first I've heard of it!"

He glanced at the open letter in Harry Wharton's hand.

"Same here!" said Nugent. "Is that letter from St. Jim's?"

"Yes, it's the reply from St. Jim's junior captain. It's all right about to-morrow. I ought to have settled the matter before, but I've been so busy keeping you chaps out of mischief, and so on. This letter is from Merry; I'll read it out to you."

"Go ahead!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Dry up, Billy. Get on with the letter."

"But about these bloaters?"

"Take them away," said Wharton. "I can't read the letter out while they're talking. Go and bury them somewhere."

"That's all very well, but what are we going to have for tea?"

"We've got to get up a good feed somehow, with young D'Arcy coming, but bloaters won't form part of it. Get those horrors away, and leave the door wide open. Open the window wide, Nugent. With a draught straight through, we may get rid of the conversation of those bloaters. Buck up, Bunter!"

"I may as well finish cooking them, and then if you don't want them for tea, I can have them first as a snack—"

"Take them away!"

"Yes, but—"

Wharton strode to the grate and jerked the frying-pan off. A hissing steam rose from it, and the fish crackled again.

"Now if you don't want this lot biffed on your head, Billy, you'll get out!"

"Oh, very well! But really—"

"Get out!"

"I'll take them along to Wun Lung's study," said Bunter, taking up the frying-pan. "He'll let me finish them there, if I let him have one of them."

"You'd better buck up, then; we shall want you to help with the tea."

"Right-ho! This won't take me long, but it's against my principles to waste good grub. You see—"

Harry Wharton pushed him out of the study, and he carried the frying-pan and its odorous contents along the passage. Then Wharton read out the letter. Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, and Hurree Singh—the Nabob of Bhanipur—listened with great attention.

"The School House, St. Jim's, November 4th, 1906.

"Dear Wharton.—Yours just received. We are in the same boat, so it will be all right. We always have a half-holiday on the Fifth of November, and as it comes on a Thursday this year, the Wednesday half is given on Thursday instead. The same arrangements will hold good, the match being played on Thursday afternoon instead of Wednesday, as previously fixed; but in case there should be anything new to be settled, one of our fellows is coming over to see you about it. I don't know whether you know D'Arcy. He will call this evening, about tea-time. Kindest regards,

"TOM MERRY."

"Nice letter!" said Bob Cherry, with a nod.

"Yes. I saw Merry about making the arrangements for the football match," said Harry Wharton. "A very decent chap. I don't remember meeting D'Arcy, and I don't know what sort of a merchant he is, but we must do him down pretty well, you know. I think we shall get on pretty well with the St. Jim's chaps, and we might fix up other matches later. If D'Arcy is coming about tea-time, he won't be long now."

"And there ought to be some tea."

"Yes, rather! I should really like to do things in decent style while that chap is here, and show him that Greyfriars knows how to be hospitable. What on earth can we do to get the smell of bloaters out of the study?"

"Oh, it will clear off in time! The chief question is, what about the tin? We're all stony—everything gone for fireworks."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Yes, that's awkward. Even the nabob is busted—eh, Inky?"

"The bustfulness is terrific," purred the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The lastful cash of my honourable self has been expended in largeful stores of the esteemed crackers, the honourable squibs, the excellent Romanful candles, and the august catherine-wheels. The brokefulness is wide."

"And we are all in the same state," said Bob Cherry. "I suppose we can't wire to anybody for tin? You can send money by telegraph, you know, when you've got any."

Wharton shook his head.

"A chap's governor would be apt to get wild, if he received a wire from school and found it was only a kid wanting tin," he remarked. "He wouldn't send any. My uncle might, as he's so jolly good-natured, but—"

"But you wouldn't ask him?" grinned Bob. "Quite so! But otherfully, as Inky puts it, what's to be done? We can't borrow it of D'Arcy when he comes, can we?"

"Hardfully, my worthy chum," said the nabob.

"There's Wun Lung," said Harry Wharton, brightening. "He's rolling in tin, and he would do anything for us. The young boulder is always lending money right and left to fellows who will never repay him. I hate borrowing money, but there are times when one has to do it, and this is one

of them. I'll get a sovereign from Wun Lung, and we'll square him on Saturday. I know my uncle is sending me an extra tip then."

"Good! China to the rescue!"

"You chaps put the study as straight as you can—don't shift the things too much, though, in case D'Arcy comes in in the middle of it. I say, don't have the milk in that old gum-bottle this time—see if you can borrow a milk-jug of somebody. And mind you don't put a pen-handle for the visitor to stir his tea with—D'Arcy is to have the spoon."

"Right-ho! I'll look out for that!"

"Then I'll run along and speak to Wun Lung, and Bunter can come to the tuckshop with me and do the shopping."

And Harry Wharton left the study, and hurried along the corridor to the Remove study, which the Chinese junior shared with Russell and Lacy. A strong smell of frying bloaters proceeded from the study, and warned him that Billy Bunter was at work. Wharton stepped in at the open door.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Coming Guest.

WUN LUNG, the Chinese member of the Greyfriars Remove, greeted Wharton with an expansive grin. The new junior was very much attached to the captain of the Remove, and there were few things he would not have done for Harry Wharton. Billy Bunter was at the fire, frying the bloaters, which were nearly done by this time. Wharton coughed as he came into the study.

"For goodness' sake kill those bloaters, Billy!" he exclaimed. "The scent simply haunts one! You'll make the whole house reek with it!"

"They're jolly good bloaters!"

"They talk too much!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Well, keep them quiet while I'm here! Wun Lung, old chap, I want to ask you a favour."

"Wun Lung ledy."

"I want a sov. till Saturday."

"Me muchee glad lendee."

The Chinese dived his hand into the pocket of his loose trousers and brought out a palm full of money—several golden coins being mingled with the silver. The Chinese was the richest junior at Greyfriars, and extremely careless with his money.

Wharton laughed as the Celestial laid the money on the table.

"Takeo muchee—all—allee samee," said Wun Lung.

"A sovereign will do," said Wharton, selecting the coin. "We've got a visitor coming to No. 1, and we want to give him a decent spread, and all our tin has gone for fireworks for the Fifth. You shall have this on Saturday for certain."

"Allee lightee."

"And put that tin into your pocket again. I don't like to see a chap careless with money," said Wharton, frowning.

The Chinese clinked the coins back into his pocket.

"Allee lightee."

"I want you to come and help me do some shopping, Bunter," said Wharton. "We're going to have a decent feed. Let those bloaters alone!"

"Right you are, Wharton," said Bunter. "I'm always willing to oblige a fellow I like. I'll do the shopping for you with pleasure, and the cooking too—"

"And most of the eattee!" grinned Wun Lung.

"Oh, really, Wun Lung—"

"Come on, then!" said Harry. "There's no time to waste. D'Arcy may be here any minute. Tea ought to be ready when he comes. You'll come in to tea, Wun Lung?"

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The Chinese junior grinned.
 "Me comee, muchee plenty glad!"
 "Good! Leave those bloaters there, Billy, and get a move on you."

"Me cookee fol you if likee," suggested Wun Lung.
 Harry Wharton shook his head decidedly.
 "Not much! I remember the last feed you stood us!"
 "Nicee dogee! In China allee people catee dogee!"
 "We don't like them here, though; and we won't have any more of your cooking. Thanks all the same, of course. Come on, Bunty!"

"I'm coming! I say, Wun Lung, you'll finish these bloaters for me, won't you; and take them off when they're done? I'll be back soon."

"Me cookee nicee-nicee."
 Billy Bunter followed Wharton from the study.
 Wun Lung assumed charge of the bloaters with a curious grin on his quaint, little face, and a glimmer in his almond eyes that would have warned Billy Bunter of mischief if he had seen it. But the Owl of the Remove was too shortsighted to see it, and moreover he was thinking just now of the feed planned for Study No. 1.

"I suppose you're going to have a decent spread?" he remarked, as he walked with Wharton to the school-shop, kept by Mrs. Mible, the gardener's wife. "Is it necessary to limit yourself to a sovereign?"

"It's all I have."
 "Your credit is good at Mrs. Mible's. She won't trust me, for some reason, but she will let you run it up to any figure. Suppose you spend a pound and owe a pound—"

"Bosh!"
 "Not to make use of credit when you can get it is a sin," said Bunter, with a shake of the head. "You lose the use of money, you know, by not making use of credit."

"What about when the time comes to pay the bills?"
 "Well, of course, it is never easy to pay bills. For myself, I have a certain income to look forward to for thirteen weeks, when the result of 'The Gem' football competition is announced. You know, I am expecting to get the prize of a pound a week for thirteen weeks, as my answers to the pictures are bound to be better than any others sent in. If you like to run up a pound at the tuckshop, I'll consider it my debt, and pay it with the first pound I get from 'The Gem.'"

"Rats!"
 "That's hardly a polite way of answering a chap who wants to do you a service. I only want to stand a jolly good feed to do honour to the stranger within the gates. I'm not thinking of the little bit I shall eat myself. If you think I'm allowing that to weigh with me, the sooner we get off the subject the better," said Billy Bunter, with dignity.

"Quite so! Get off it, then!" agreed Wharton. "Here we are! You young ass, you can get a ripping feed for a sovereign—and there are very few fellows in the Sixth who spend as much on a study spread. It's a curious thing to me that a chap who never has any money is always more extravagant than a chap with a large allowance. Good-afternoon, Mrs. Mible. We are having a little celebration in the study at teatime, and I want Bunty to select stuff up to that figure."

And Wharton laid the sovereign on the counter.
 The good dame was all smiles at once. Wharton was not her best customer, but he always paid cash, and that was very grateful and comforting to Mrs. Mible.

"Made up your mind about the other sovereign, Wharton?" asked Billy Bunter.
 "Yes, you young ass!"

"If you like, I'll settle it out of my postal order to-morrow, instead of waiting for the prize in 'The Gem' football competition—"

"Oh, cheese it! Get those things to the study as quickly as you can, and get tea ready— Hallo, what's that row about?"

There was a sudden sound of voices in the Close—a shout of laughter, followed by many voices in a buzz.
 Harry Wharton stepped out of the tuckshop, remembering the distinguished visitor whom he expected any moment at Greyfriars. The next moment he uttered an exclamation of anger and indignation, and ran swiftly towards the crowd that had collected near the gates of Greyfriars.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
 D'Arcy of St. Jim's.

A YOUTH had entered the gates, and was looking about him with an expression of somewhat languid interest. He was a very interesting youth to look at. There were some fellows at Greyfriars who "dressed to kill," though they were not numerous in the lower Forms. But the new-comer was a swell such as had seldom been seen at the old school.

He was clad in Etons, which fitted him like a glove. He

carried a light overcoat of elegant cut over his arm, and a cane in his neatly-gloved hand. The polish of his boots equalled that of his silk hat, but could not excel it. His collar was high and white, his necktie tied with a finish that bespoke a master hand. A diamond pin flashed in his tie, diamond links on his shirt-cuffs. An eyeglass was jammed in his right eye, and it was through the gold-rimmed monocle that he was taking his nonchalant survey of Greyfriars.

Every fellow who was in the Close had immediately moved towards this elegant personage to obtain a closer view. But what occasioned the laughter was the action of Bulstrode, of the Remove. It happened that Gosling had been tarring some timber, and had left the tar-pot outside his lodge when called away on some other duty. Bulstrode had taken the tar-brush, and holding it behind him, was walking towards the new-comer. His intention was evident—to get near enough to dab the tarry brush in the face of the elegant stranger, without giving the alarm till he was within reach. The tar-brush was hidden from the stranger by Bulstrode's bulky figure, but it was perfectly evident to all the Greyfriars fellows, and they shrieked with laughter, as much at the absolute unconsciousness of the stranger as at the coming joke.

Wharton immediately guessed that the elegant junior was the emissary from St. Jim's, and he ran forward to stop the intended joke. It would have been a rough enough joke on a fellow belonging to Greyfriars, but upon a friendly visitor it was shocking bad form. Wharton dashed up at full-speed, and caught Bulstrode by the shoulder when he was within a few feet of the new-comer.

The Remove bully looked round.
 "Let me go!" he exclaimed. "What are you holding me for?"

"Put that tar-brush down!"
 "Sha'n't!"
 "Look here, this is the chap from St. Jim's, come to arrange about the football match to-morrow—"

"I don't care a rap!"
 Harry Wharton swung the big Removite round.
 "Put that brush down!" he said. "If you put it anywhere near that chap, I'll knock you into the middle of next week!"

Bulstrode breathed hard. Harry's eyes were flaming, and when he was in that mood there were few who cared to face him.

The new-comer turned his eyeglass upon the two juniors. The tar-brush was visible to him now that Bulstrode was facing Harry Wharton.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated. "Is that the way you usually greet visitahs, deah boys?"

Wharton turned towards him. Bulstrode, after a brief hesitation, hurled the tar-brush to the ground, and strode sulkily away, with his hands in his pockets.

"I'm glad to see you," said Wharton, making no reply to the new-comer's remark. "I suppose you are D'Arcy, of St. Jim's?"

"Yaas, wathah!"
 "My only hat!" murmured Hazeldene. "I wonder where he dug up that accent?"

"Good! I'm Wharton, junior football captain here."
 And Harry shook hands with the elegant stranger.
 "Are you weally?" said D'Arcy. "I am vevy pleased indeed to make your acquaintance. I have come by twain from St. Jim's, and walked from the station. You have a gweat many wude little boys in the village."

"Have we?" said Harry, laughing. "I hope they haven't ventured to treat you with anything approaching disrespect."

"As a mattah of fact, that is exactly what they have done, deah boy. Sevewal wude little boys called out 'Here's anoathah guy!' when I came out of the station, and I wogarded that as extwemely wude."

"They're rathor excited about the Fifth," said Harry, laughing. "We've got a Chinese boy here who gets the same greeting whenever he goes to Friardale."

D'Arcy fixed his monocle upon Wharton.
 "Weally, deah boy, I hope you do not mean to say that I bear any wesemblance to a Chinese boy," he said.

"Oh, no!" said Wharton hastily. "I mean he's a little remarkable, too—that is to say—"

"I pwesume the young shavahs are not accustomed to seein' a weally well-dwessed fellow about here," said D'Arcy complacently. "I imagine that is the twuth of the mattah. Was that person goin' to shove that beastly tar-bwush on me, deah boy?"

"I'm afraid so—it was his idea of a joke, you know."
 "Bai Jove, if he had spoiled my clothes, I should have given him a feahful thwashin'!" said the junior from St. Jim's.

Harry Wharton grinned at the idea of the slim and elegant stranger bestowing a fearful thrashing upon the burly Bulstrode. He did not betray his thoughts, however, but conducted the junior towards the house.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked about him with considerable interest. There was nothing shy about the swell of St. Jim's. He had the gift of self-possession to a remarkable degree.

"Wathah a decent place you've got here," he remarked. "This reminds me of the quad. at St. Jim's, but it's not quite so big. Vevy pleasant old twees. I like old twees. It gets dark beastly early now, doesn't it?"

"Yes; one expects that in November."
"Yaas, but it's wathah annoyin' all the same. Bai Jove, who's that? We've got a chap a good deal like him in the New House at St. Jim's—chap named Wynn."

D'Arcy had turned his eyeglass upon Billy Bunter, who was just scuttling into the house with a basket full of excellencies for the coming repast.

Wharton smiled.
"That's Billy Bunter—he's in our study. We call him the Owl. I'm jolly glad to see you here, D'Arcy, and I hope you'll have tea with us in the study."

"With pleasuah, deah boy! As a mattah of fact, I'm wathah hungwy. It is wathah a long way fwom St. Jim's, and I haven't had anythin' since dinnah. I shall be vevy pleased indeed to have tea with you, if it won't be any bother."

"On the contrary, it will be a pleasure."
"Vevy good! Then it's a go, deah boy. If tea isn't weady yet, I'd like to have a look wound Gweyfwiahs before it gets quite dark."

"Rather!" said Harry, inwardly much relieved, for the feed was far from ready in Study No. 1. "I shall be very glad to show you round. By the way, are you coming over with the team to-morrow afternoon?"

"Yaas, wathah! The team could hardly come over without me, I suppose."

"No? Are you secretary, or what?"

"I am inside-wight."

"Inside what—oh, inside-right! You—you're playing?" gasped Wharton.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Wharton could not help looking a little surprised. He had not imagined the elegant junior to be a footballer. If the rest of the St. Jim's team were on the same lines, the match would be something like a walk-over for Greyfriars, he thought. He was too polite to say so to Arthur Augustus, however. They strolled round the old school, Harry pointing out the objects of interest—the ruined tower, the ancient Cloisters, the chapel, dating from the reign of Henry III. Arthur Augustus looked at it all with much interest.

In the thickening November dusk a little figure in a strange, loose garb came towards them, and D'Arcy turned his monocle upon it.

"Bai Jove! Is that a fwiend of yours?"

"That's Wun Lung, our Chinese chum."

"Bai Jove!"

"Tea is leady," said Wun Lung, in his peculiar Chinese-English, in which many of the "r's" were changed into "p's." "Quite leady, Whalton."

"Good! This is D'Arcy—D'Arcy—Wun Lung."

"Flom the Yangtse-Kiang," murmured the Celestial.

"I am vevy pleased to make your acquaintance, deah boy," said D'Arcy, extending his hand, and shaking that of the Celestial.

The next moment he gave a startled jump. As he pressed Wun Lung's hand there came a sudden "bang!" from the Chinese junior's palm, and there was a slight smell of gunpowder.

"Oh, bai Jove! What was that?"

"No savvy," murmured the Celestial, looking greatly puzzled. "Shakee hand two time."

D'Arcy shook hands with him again, rather gingerly.

Bang!

The swell of St. Jim's stepped back quickly.

"Bai Jove, have you a lot of cwackabs in your hand, or what?" he exclaimed. "This is weally most surpwisin'."

"Wun Lung solly," murmured the Chinese youth. "Velly strange. Shakee other hand."

"Weally, I'd wathah—"

"Shakee othel hand."

Arthur Augustus was too polite to refuse. He shook the left hand of the Chinaman, and there was a louder bang than before, and a stream of blue sparks shot off with a fizz. D'Arcy jumped back in alarm.

"Bai Jove! I shall uttably wefuse to shake hands with you any more!" he exclaimed.

Harry Wharton gave Wun Lung a warning glance. He knew that the Chinese youth was a past master of the art of making fireworks—an art very much cultivated in the

Flowery Land. The curious result of the handshake was one of Wun Lung's little tricks.

"Tea's ready," said Wharton. "Come on, D'Arcy."
And Harry Wharton conducted the junior from St. Jim's into the House.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

D'Arcy is Surprised.

STUDY No. 1 presented a very cosy appearance when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of St. Jim's, entered it. There was a nice white cloth on the table, and a cheerful fire burning in the grate. The kettle was singing on the little hob, and there was a fragrant scent of freshly-made tea. The chums of the Remove were there, all with clean collars and expansive smiles. Study No. 1 was putting its best side foremost in honour of the stranger.

D'Arcy took in the scene through his eyeglass. The eyeglass brought a glimmer of fun to Bob Cherry's eyes, but his face remained grave. Harry Wharton presented D'Arcy to his chums, the visitor going through the ceremony with Chesterfieldian grace. Then he accepted a chair, and trusted his silk hat—a little doubtfully—to Nugent, who deposited it in a safe corner.

"Bai Jove, you know, this is wathah wippin' of you," D'Arcy remarked, as he glanced over the well-spread table. "I am a twifle hungwy. Yaas, I will have some sausage and chips, deah boy. Thank you vevy much."

"I can recommend the sausages," said Billy Bunter. "I cooked them myself."

"Did you weally? Yaas, they are wippin'."

"The rippingfulness is terrific," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "But I will trouble my honourable Bunterful chum for the banana fritter."

"Here you are, Inky."

D'Arcy looked rather curiously at Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh. Perhaps the nabob's variety of English surprised him. The swell of St. Jim's was really hungry, and he made an excellent tea. There were both quantity and variety in the feed, and even a fastidious young gentleman like Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was satisfied. The tea being under way, so to speak, the juniors came to the subject of D'Arcy's business at Greyfriars. The envoy from St. Jim's explained over his third cup of tea.

"We shall be havin' a Guy Fawkes celebwtation on the evenin' of the Fifth," he explained. "I wathah think there is goin' to be a competish—"

"A what?" asked Nugent.

"A competish."

"What is that, Wun Lung?"

"No savvy."

"Oh, come, you ought to know—it sounds like a Chinese word."

"It is not a Chinese word," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I said competish—commonly called competition."

"Oh, I see! My mistake!"

"Yaas, wathah! As I was wemarkin', I wathah think there is goin' to be a competish between the School House and the New House, as to which can make most wow on the evenin' of the Fifth. I dare say you know we have two Houses at our coll., and they are always at daggahs dwawn. There will pwobably be a fight at some stage of the pwocceedin's. We should like to fix the footah match to-morrow as early as poss., so as to get home before dark."

"Good," said Harry Wharton. "We shall be doing some firework business ourselves in the Close, and we should like the match over early, too."

"As a mattah of fact," said D'Arcy, "we ought to have two half-holidays this week—the usual Wednesday one, and an extwa one for the Fifth. I wegard it as wathah inconsiderate of the powahs that be, to give us only one, and make us play Wednesday's match on Novembah 5th. Howevah, it cannot be helped. If agweeable to you chaps, we will fix the kick-off for half-past two."

"Agreed!"

"Othahwise, leave it at thwee as awwanged for Wednesday."

"Half-past two will be ripping. I suppose you chaps will be coming by railway to Friardale?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then we'll come down and meet you with a brake," said Harry, "and bring you on here. I suppose you'll be in the train that gets in at a quarter-past two?"

"Yaas, I suppose so."

"Then we'll have the brake outside the station to meet that train. That suit you?"

"Yaas, wathah! And I wegard it as extwemely obligin' of you, I am sure," said D'Arcy, looking round the table through his eyeglass—"I am quite sure that we shall enjoy our visit to Gweyfwiahs, and I weally hope we shall have a wippin' match. I warn you, howevah, that St. Jim's Juniors are in good form."

"So are we," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "The Remove Eleven is in pretty good condition. We are stronger than the Upper Fourth, so you are really meeting the best junior team Greyfriars can put in the field. We will give you a good game, anyway."

"I suppose you are football captain at St. Jim's, D'Arcy?" said Bob Cherry innocently.

Arthur Augustus shook his head.

"Certainly not, deah boy. Tom Mewwy is captain of the juniah team, though, as a mattah of fact, I am wathah inclined to think that I should fill the post bettah. What is wanted for a footah captain is a fellow of tact and judgment, and I weally think I have those important qualifications. But Tom Mewwy is the next best. He is wathah a good footballah, and so is Blake, and Figgins."

"I suppose you play in an eyeglass?" resumed Bob.

Wharton stamped on his foot under the table.

"Not at pwesent," said D'Arcy. "I used to do so, but it led to wuctions. Tom Mewwy always called me names, and Blake sometimes took the thing away and hid it, which I wogarded as feahfully impertinent of him."

The chums of the Remove could not help grinning. Levison looked into the study, and nodded to the tea-party.

"I understood you had a chap from St. Jim's here," he remarked.

"So we have," said Harry Wharton, looking rather distrustfully at Levison. Levison was a youth with a turn for conjuring and practical jokes, and the glimmer in his eyes hinted that he was thinking of Arthur Augustus as a suitable victim. "This is Levison, D'Arcy, who is keeping goal for us to-morrow."

Arthur Augustus rose from the table, and bowed.

"I am vewy pleased to make your acquaintance, deah boy," he remarked.

"The pleasure is on my side," said Levison gravely. "By the way, have any of you seen anything of my white mice?"

"Aren't they in their cage?"

"No. I thought they might have got in here somewhere. I'm looking for them," said Levison, with the blandness that meant that a trick was coming. "Ah, excuse me, D'Arcy, I think there is one on your shoulder."

Arthur Augustus gave a jump.

"Bai Jove, the howwid thing on my jacket! Pway take it off!"

Levison swept his hand over D'Arcy's shoulder, and showed a white mouse in his palm. D'Arcy dusted his shoulder carefully with his handkerchief.

"Hallo, there's one up your sleeve, too!" exclaimed Levison, apparently drawing a white mouse from under D'Arcy's immaculate white cuff. "My only hat! And here's another in your waistcoat-pocket, and one in your collar. By Jove!"

The junior drew a white mouse from each of the places named, or seemed to do so. At all events, there were the white mice, as large as life, looking lively enough. The chums of the Remove grinned hugely, but D'Arcy was horrified. He stared at the white mice in blank amazement.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped. "How did the howwid little bwutes get about me? I weally uttably fail to compwehend this! Bai Jove!"

"Better let me see if there are any more," said Levison seriously. "You don't want to go home with your clothes full of white mice, do you? Hallo, there's a little beggar peeping out there."

He snatched a white mouse from D'Arcy's sleeve. In a second more the swell of St. Jim's had his jacket off, and was shaking it wildly. No mice dropped to the floor, however, but Levison snatched one from his necktie, and one from the back of his neck. The junior from St. Jim's tore off his waistcoat, and shook it. Curiously enough, in spite of the number of white mice Levison discovered about the person of D'Arcy, there never seemed to be more than five in all, but the swell of St. Jim's was too confused and excited to notice that little circumstance.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped. "Bai Jove!"

"Curious," said Levison, while the Removites, unable to restrain their merriment, roared. "Perhaps I'd better look into your hat and see if there are any there."

"Yaas, pway do, deah boy."

Levison took up D'Arcy's silk topper. He looked into it, and gave a start.

"Bai Jove, is there anythin' in it?" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"Well, look here," said Levison.

He dived his hand into the hat, and brought out a variety of things. First came a white rabbit, then a bunch of bananas, then an apple, and after those a variety of smaller articles of various kinds. D'Arcy's eyes almost started from his head as the junior went on drawing article after article from the apparently inexhaustible stores in the silk hat.

"Bai Jove! I am weally astounded! Bai Jove! Gweat Scott!"

"That's about the lot," said Levison. "Lucky I thought of looking into your hat. You wouldn't have liked to shove it on your head with all that in it."

"Bai Jove, you are wight!" D'Arcy took the silk topper,

and looked into it. "Thank you vewy much! It's all wight now."

"Sure there's nothing else in it?" said Bob Cherry, shrieking with laughter.

"No, nothin' now, deah boy. I suppose it is wathah funny that all those things should be in my hat," said Arthur Augustus, looking at the convulsed Removites. "I hope you fellows do not suspect for a moment that I knew anythin' about it?"

"Ha, ha! No," said Wharton. "We're quite certain you didn't! Ha, ha!"

"The certainfulness is terrific."

"I'll take these things away," remarked Levison, who had remained perfectly serious all the time. "Bye-bye!"

He carried off the various articles he had extracted from D'Arcy's clothes and hat. Arthur Augustus looked into the topper once or twice again as if to make sure that there were no white rabbits in it. When he took his leave a little later, all arrangements having been made, Wharton walked down to the gates with him. A trap was calling to take him to the station.

"Well, good-bye, deah boy!" said D'Arcy, shaking hands warmly with Wharton. "I shall see you to-morrow. Bai Jove, though, wasn't it wemarkable about those things in my hat?"

"Very remarkable."

"Somebody must have shoved them in, you know."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"And the cuwious thing is, that they didn't damage the lining of the hat at all," said the swell of St. Jim's. "Not even the white wabbit, you know."

"Ha, ha! The fact is, they never were in the hat," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You must forgive Levison for a little joke. He is a conjuror."

"Bai Jove!"

The trap rattled up. D'Arcy took his seat in it.

"It's all wight," he added, over the side. "I don't mind a little jape, though I was wathah surprised at the time. I weally think I shall have to get Levison to come ovah to St. Jim's and show us some of his twicks. Well, au wavoir!"

And the swell of St. Jim's drove off to the station.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Little Ventriloquism.

THE next morning there was considerable suppressed excitement at Greyfriars. The Fifth of November was always celebrated there, especially by the juniors. A huge bonfire in the Close, and the letting off of innumerable crackers, squibs, rockets, Roman candles, catherine-wheels, and other fireworks, made night hideous every Fifth.

Even the high and mighty members of the Sixth usually condescended to take a hand in the commemoration of the Gunpowder Plot; and as for the juniors, they went into the thing whole-heartedly. They celebrated the plot of Guy Fawkes by cramming as much noise as possible into a single evening, and it was wonderful what they could do in that line when they really tried.

But beside the Guy Fawkes celebrations, there was the football match with St. Jim's to be thought of. That was a matter of intense interest to the Remove. For the team that was to meet St. Jim's Juniors was wholly selected from the Remove, without any recruits from the Upper Fourth. And although Temple, Dabney, & Co., and other members of the Upper Fourth, shook their heads compassionately over the Remove's prospects in the match, nevertheless Harry Wharton had very high hopes of pulling off a victory.

"We've got to lick St. Jim's," said Bob Cherry, as they went into class that morning. "You see, if we were licked, the Upper Fourth would never leave off crowing. St. Jim's

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Juniors play Upper Fourth and Shell fellows, and it will be a feather in our cap for the Remove to wipe them up."

"It means a jolly hard pull for us, anyway," said Nugent.

"As a matter of fact, they're above our weight."

"All the more glory in licking them," said Bob Cherry, who was too keen a footballer to admit that any match was really beyond the powers of the Remove eleven. "We're in good form, too. Hazeldene is turning out well as a half, and Levison has shown that he can keep goal. To do him justice, he's a ripping goalkeeper, and the Saints will have to shoot well to get past him."

"I say, you fellows—"

"And there's Inky, too; he's as fast a forward as you could want."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Did you speak, Billy?"

"Yes, I did, Cherry, and I really think—"

"No objection to your thinking, Billy, if you know how; but don't speak, old chap. As I was saying, with Inky in the front line, with us—"

"I say, you fellows, it's about the football match—"

"Oh, dear! Get it over, then, quick."

"That's hardly a polite way of putting it, Cherry."

"Then dry up."

"But it's important. I say, you fellows, we ought to do the St. Jim's chaps down in good style this afternoon."

"Do you want a place in the team, Billy?" asked Nugent, laughing.

Bunter blinked rather indignantly.

"Oh, really, Nugent, Wharton might do worse than play me, you know. I've always said that it was only jealousy that kept me out of the junior eleven. Mind, if the Remove doesn't play me, I am thinking of offering my services to the Upper Fourth."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. When we have a Form match, and you find me playing against you, you may alter your tune."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it wasn't about that that I was going to speak. I was thinking that after the match the St. Jim's fellows will very likely be hungry."

"Trust you to think of that, Billy."

"Well, it's a rather important matter, isn't it? I suppose you want to be hospitable and do the decent thing. As I sha'n't be playing, I could give practically the whole of the afternoon to preparing a really ripping spread. The weather is going to be decent, and we could have it in the open air if you like—al fresco, you know. I would willingly make all the arrangements, if you fellows liked to attend to the less important details, such as finding the money, for instance."

"Better leave it till your postal-order comes."

"I'm afraid there may be some delay in the post over that, Nugent."

"The delayfulness will be terrific," purred the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"It may not come till Saturday now. There's the pound a week I am going to have—"

"Silence!" said Mr. Quelch.

Billy Bunter relapsed into silence. But he soon found an opportunity of whispering to Harry Wharton.

"I say, Wharton, you'd better think that over about the feed. There's absolutely no grub in the place except my bladders."

Harry laughed silently.

"Haven't they walked away yet, Billy?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! They're all right, you know. I didn't need them last night, as we had something else in the study, and they're in Wun Lung's cupboard. They're all right when they're cooked. But they won't do to feed a hungry football eleven."

"You are talking, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Take fifty lines."

"Oh, really—"

"Silence!"

Billy Bunter was silent at last, but he was wrathful. The cloud on his brow and the gleam behind his spectacles showed that he was meditating vengeance. Levison leaned over, when Mr. Quelch's back was turned, and tapped the fat junior on the shoulder.

"Bunter, old chap, why don't you give him some of your ventriloquism, and make him sit up?"

"That's just what I was thinking of, Levison," whispered Bunter. "Suppose I made a voice come out of his desk? It would make him jump."

"Ha, ha! Ripping!"

Mr. Quelch had gone to his desk. He was closing down the slanting lid when Bunter, clearing his throat with a preliminary grunt, started his ventriloquism. Billy had

been practising for quite a long time now, and had fully mastered the ventriloquial drone, with which he had been deafening the chums of the Remove ever since he had taken up his new hobby. He had several times tried throwing his voice, but the voice was somewhat obstinate when it came to that, and declined to be thrown. But Bunter had a vivid imagination. If he wanted his voice to proceed from the chimney, he tried to throw it there, and was satisfied that it sounded all right. Some of the Removites, too, were in the habit of starting him throwing his voice, for the fun of the thing. Billy's unconsciousness of the fact that everyone knew the voice was proceeding from his own throat was extremely diverting.

"Go it!" whispered Levison.

Billy Bunter "went it." He felt just a little trepidation, for if the joke did not come off, it was very probable that a licking would come off, for Mr. Quelch was not the kind of master to take kindly to fun in a class-room. But Billy had great faith in his own powers.

Mr. Quelch closed down the lid of his desk. In a faint, far-away, ventriloquial voice, supposed to proceed from the desk, Bunter started operations.

"Let me out!"

Every head in the class-room turned towards Bunter; every eye was fixed upon him. He had expected Mr. Quelch to stare at the desk, imagining that somebody was shut in it. But he didn't; he stared at Bunter.

"Let me out! I'm suffocating!" went on the ventriloquial voice.

There was a faint giggle in the class. Mr. Quelch's face was a study. Wharton pulled Bunter by his jacket.

"Quiet, you young ass!" he muttered.

Billy did not even hear him. His whole mind was concentrated in the work in hand. The effort of producing the ventriloquial voice made his face the colour of a beetroot. He went on undauntedly.

"Let me out! I'm choking!"

Mr. Quelch made a stride towards the class.

"Bunter?"

The fat junior's jaw dropped. Short-sighted as he was, he could see now the expression on the Form master's face, and realised that there was something wrong.

"Ye-e-es, sir," he stammered.

"What are you doing?"

"I, sir? Nothing, sir."

"You said you were suffocating."

"I—I—I—did I, sir?" gasped poor Billy, overwhelmed by this proof that his voice had not been thrown so far as he had intended. "I—I think you're mistaken, sir."

"I am not mistaken," thundered Mr. Quelch. "You said that you were suffocating, and asked me to let you out. Your face certainly is very red, as if you have been undergoing some strain. What is the matter with you?"

"N-nothing, sir."

"Come, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, more kindly; "if there is anything the matter with you, pray tell me at once, and it shall be seen to."

"I—I am all right, sir."

"Then why did you say you were suffocating, and why did you speak in such a strained and unnatural voice?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I—"

"Answer me!" thundered the Form master.

"I—I—if you please, sir, I—I was ventriloquising," gasped out Billy Bunter.

"Oh, you were ventriloquising, were you?" said Mr. Quelch. "I understood that ventriloquism consisted in making the voice appear to proceed from another place, not in simply speaking in a strained and artificial tone. However, that may be your system of ventriloquism. But, in any case, the class-room is not the place for it. You will take two hundred lines instead of fifty, Bunter, and you will write them all out this afternoon, immediately after dinner, before you leave the House."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"And now," said Mr. Quelch, "we will proceed with the lesson, if Bunter has quite done ventriloquising. You are quite done, Bunter?"

"Ye-e-es, sir," stammered poor Billy.

"Then we will proceed."

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Levison Lends a Hand.

BUNTER was looking gloomy when the Remove was dismissed after morning lessons. Bob Cherry gave him a slap on the back as they went into the passage.

He meant it for encouragement, but it knocked nearly all the breath out of the fat junior. Bunter clutched at his glasses to hold them on.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, is it you, Cherry? I wish you wouldn't punch me like that. You nearly made my glasses fall off, and if they had got broken, I should have expected you to pay for them. It's rotten, isn't it? I sha'n't be able to come to the village with you chaps now, having all those lines to do. Do you think I could risk leaving them?"

"Yes, if you want a licking."

"Of course, I don't want a licking. I'd rather do the lines than that. But how are we to manage about going to the village?"

"We shall have to contrive to do without you somehow," said Bob Cherry gravely. "If we weep, we shall console one another, and—"

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know! I mean, I was going to get the things for the feed at the village shop, and now—"

"What feed?"

"The feed you fellows are going to stand after the football match."

"We shall have to make your bloaters do, I think," said Nugent, grinning. "There's not going to be a feed; we're all stony, my son."

"If you're going to be mean—"

"It's all right," said Harry Wharton, "I've fixed that with D'Arcy. The Saints want to get off immediately the match is finished, and the brake is going to be ready for them at the gates. They're going to have some sandwiches in the pavilion, and the housekeeper is going to provide the grub."

"If you've arranged that for the sake of doing me out of a feed, Wharton—"

"I haven't, really, Billy," said Harry, laughing. "It's the most convenient arrangement. It's all right, and you can do your lines without bothering about coming down to the village."

"That's all very well."

"Then don't grumble!" said Bob Cherry.

"I don't want to stick indoors on a fine day doing lines. I think some of you fellows might help me out."

"Well, we would," said Wharton; "but it's no good. Quelch always looks at the lines, and he knows our hands. If it were Capper or Prout we could lend a hand."

"I don't see how I can write two hundred lines. Don't slap me on the shoulder like that, Bulstrode, please! It disturbs my nerves, and—"

"It isn't Bulstrode, ass," said Levison. "I say, about those lines. It was I got you in for them, and I'll do them for you if you like."

"Well, that's decent of you; though, of course, it's only what you ought to do," said Billy Bunter. "By the way, can you lend me five bob?"

"No, I can't," said Levison, who never made any bones about refusing a request of that sort. "I'll do the lines if you like."

"Make it half-a-crown, then— You might stand me something after getting me into a scrape," said Bunter, with an indignant blink. "You can have it back with interest, if you like, out of my postal-order to-morrow."

"Rats! I'll do the lines."

"It's risky," said Wharton. "Quelch knows your hand, and knows Billy's, and he's certain to spot the difference." Levison grinned.

"Not if I have a copy of Bunter's handwriting to work from," he said. "I can imitate almost anybody's hand. Come on, Billy, and give me some of your scrawl, and I'll get the lines done before dinner."

And Levison linked his arm in that of the fat junior, and dragged him away. Harry Wharton looked after them with a slight frown on his brow.

"Jolly dangerous gift of Levison's," Bob Cherry remarked. "A chap who can do those things is the kind of chap to find himself in chokey some day."

Wharton nodded without replying. Some thought of the same kind was passing through his mind. Levison was a strange fellow in many respects, and in his breast generosity and ill-nature seemed to be mingled in equal proportions. He was fond of playing unfeeling practical jokes, and yet he was always willing to take the blame, if necessary, or to get his victims out of the scrapes he had got them into. A cynical suspicion of everyone's motives was the leading trait in his character—a character Wharton did not much like. But Wharton had saved Levison's life, on a well-remembered rainy night on the summit of the Black Pike, and ever since then Levison had been as friendly to him as he could be to anybody.

When the Remove went in to the juniors' midday dinner, Bunter and Levison were there, the latter with a smear of ink on his fingers, and a satisfied expression on his face. He nodded cordially to Wharton.

"It's done," he remarked. "I made Billy write the first few lines, and I did the rest, and I'd defy anybody to tell where Billy's leave off and mine begin."

"It's true enough," assented Billy Bunter. "You can always write my lines in future, if you like, Levison."

"Thank you," said Levison. "I'm likely to, I don't think."

After dinner, Wharton went up to the study, and there he saw the sheets containing the imposition. Bunter's large and ungraceful writing sprawled over the foolscap, and, as far as Wharton could tell, it was all Bunter's. Levison had picked up the handwriting in a single attempt, and written the majority of the lines so exactly like Bunter's own that the difference could not be detected. Levison was grinning over the joke on the Form master, but Wharton did not smile. He was thinking that, as Bob Cherry had remarked, Levison's gift was a dangerous one, and the discovery of it gave him a vague feeling of uneasiness.

But he had no time to think about the matter then. The chums of the Remove were to walk down to the village, where the brake was in readiness to convey the visiting team from the station to the school. Wharton had written overnight to engage it, and it was to be outside Friardale Station at a quarter-past two. The Famous Four went along the Remove passage together with their caps on, and Wun Lung came to the door of his study.

"Gooe walkee?" he asked.

"Yes; we're going to the station."

"Me comee."

Wharton would rather have left the Chinese junior behind on that particular day. It was the Fifth of November, and Friardale was in a buzz with Guy Fawkes celebrations. Of late, whenever Wun Lung had appeared in the village, a crowd of urchins had followed him about with remarks on the subject of guys. The Chinese garb of the junior was rather striking in a quiet village where a Chinaman had never been seen before. The pigtail, too, seemed to exercise a sort of fascination upon the Friardale boys. Harry knew there was to be a Guy Fawkes procession in the afternoon, and all Friardale would be out to see it.

"Me comee walkoe," said the Chinese junior.

Wharton could not refuse, and he did not care to wound the little Chinese. He nodded and Wun Lung grinned expansively, and joined the Famous Four. They walked quickly from Greyfriars, as there was no time to lose.

Harry's expectations were quite fulfilled. There were a great many village lads in the old High Street of Friardale. Feeling between them and the Greyfriars' boys was always somewhat strained. There was a yell as soon as the Chinese was sighted, and a crowd gathered round to stare.

"Hallo!"

"Here's another guy!"

Wun Lung looked over the urchins with a bland smile. He was not hurt. In fact, he seemed to be rather pleased with the impression he was making. From a side street came a fresh crowd, with shouts and yells, and in their midst was a hideous-looking "guy," mounted upon an old chair, and carried in the procession. The Greyfriars' boys stopped out side the tuck-shop while the crowd passed. Wun Lung glanced into the shop.

"Me gooe in here," he said. "You gooe on; me waitee here."

"Good," said Wharton, rather relieved in his mind. "The brake will pass here, going to Greyfriars, and we'll pick you up."

"Light-ho!"

And the Famous Four hurried on to the station, leaving Wun Lung to make his purchases, whatever they were, in Uncle Clegg's shop.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

St. Jim's to the Rescue.

THE brake was standing outside the railway-station, when the Famous Four arrived there, but the train was not yet in. As was not uncommon on the local line, it was delayed several minutes, and at a quarter-past two there was no sign of it. The Greyfriars chums waited outside the station till they should hear it come in.

The Guy Fawkes procession had passed on its way, but a renewed shouting and yelling of laughter caused the Greyfriars lads to look down the High Street in the direction of the tuck-shop. A crowd of village boys were coming along, with a figure upon a chair in their midst, and yelling with merriment. Wharton looked at them keenly, trying to make out in the distance what the figure was.

"Only another procession," said Nugent.

Wharton shook his head.

"It's not a guy! That's a boy they've got on the chair, and I believe— My hat, I'm sure it's Wun Lung!"

"Wun Lung? By Jove, you're right!"

There was no mistake about it. The Chinese, coming out of the tuck-shop, had been collared by the village boys, and forced to mount upon the chair, and was being carried on the shoulders of half-a-dozen fellows, the rest whooping and laughing round him.

"Holler, boys!" roared Stokes, the blacksmith's son, and

the valiant leader of the village boys in their forays against the Greyfriars lads. "Another guy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here's another guy!"

The chair swayed forward with the little Chinese clinging to it. Wun Lung was very much alarmed. His position was extremely dangerous, for his bearers were laughing so much that it appeared that at any moment he might be hurled to the ground, and the fall would have been a nasty one. He clung to the chair, his almond eyes wide with affright.

Wharton's brow darkened.

"We've got to get him out of that," he said briefly.

Bob Cherry gave a whistle. There were fifteen or sixteen fellows in the crowd, and there were only four of the Greyfriars chums. They were not used to counting odds, but this was what Bob called a "big order."

The village boys stopped outside the railway-station, catching sight of the Famous Four there, and sent them a yell of defiance.

"Another guy!" roared Stokes. "Holler, boys!"

The boys "hollered" with a vengeance. Then they struck up the well-remembered ditty:

"Please to remember the Fifth of November!"

"Helpee!" squeaked Wun Lung. "Helpee! Me fallce, bleakee bonee!"

"Come on!" muttered Harry.

Where Harry led, his chums were always ready to follow. They rushed after him in a desperate charge. It was an unexpected break, for Stokes and his merry men had not expected them to tackle odds of four to one. The charge carried the Greyfriars chums right up to the unhappy guy, the processionists being knocked right and left. Harry caught Wun Lung in his arms as the bearers, hurled aside, allowed the chair to fall. He set the shaking Celestial on his feet.

"Keep close to me, kiddy!"

"Me keepee closee."

"Shoulder to shoulder, lads!"

The Famous Four stood shoulder to shoulder round the little Chinese. All four were famous in the Greyfriars Remove for their powers as fighting men, and they needed all their pluck and all their powers now. The enraged processionists swarmed round them, attacking them on all sides.

"Give 'em socks!" roared Stokes, and he led the rush bravely enough, only to roll over with Harry's fist crashing on his nose.

The Famous Four hit out right and left, and the attack recoiled; but it came on again, and such odds were bound to tell.

Bob Cherry went down, with two or three clinging to him, and Nugent was soon sprawling on the ground, desperately wrestling with a couple of foes.

Hurree Singh was surrounded, fighting valiantly against odds, and Wharton found himself striving against five or six foes.

The excitement was terrific.

A crowd of village people gathered round, looking on, laughing, and it was evident that all their sympathies were with Stokes and his party.

The Greyfriars four fought desperately, but in vain!

The odds were too great! Hurree Singh joined Bob and Nugent on the ground, and Harry, with his foes clinging to him as thick as bees, was unable to shake himself free.

"Collar 'em!" yelled Stokes, as he rubbed his swollen nose. "We'll carry 'em round in the procession, and tie 'em back to back! Collar the beasts!"

"We've got 'em!"

Harry Wharton was down at last, his assailants swarming over him. He made a final effort, hurled them aside, and, for a moment, gained his feet. They were upon him again at once, clinging to him like cats, and his glance swept round almost wildly in the hope of seeing a Greyfriars cap in the street. His eyes fell upon a dozen fellows who had just issued from the railway-station, and who were looking on at the scrimmage curiously. He recognised the slim figure and aristocratic features, the shining topper and high collar of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, and he knew whom the dozen must be.

"Rescue!" he shouted. "Rescue, St. Jim's!"

The next moment he was down again, and Stokes was sitting on his chest. But his cry had been heard by the strangers.

"Rescue!" shouted a sturdy, sunny-faced junior, whom Wharton knew to be Tom Merry, the captain of the St. Jim's juniors. "Come on, kids! Sock it to them!"

"Yaas; wathah!"

The juniors from St. Jim's rushed to the rescue.

There were twelve of them in the party, but only eleven came on. The twelfth was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, but it was not want of pluck that kept him back. He stayed behind only to place his silk hat in safety in the brake, and then he followed Tom Merry and his comrades.

The charge of the "Saints" settled the matter. Stokes and his party had already had nearly enough fighting. They were in no condition to stand the charge of a dozen fresh foes.

The charge scattered them right and left. Wharton and his chums jumped up and joined in the brief fray. Very brief it was. The village party were defeated and chased off the scene under a minute, and then the Famous Four were shaking hands with their rescuers.

"Thanks!" gasped Harry Wharton breathlessly. "We're awfully obliged, Merry. We were in a bad way, with that lot against us."

"By Jove, you were!" said Tom Merry. "What was it all about?"

"They had Wun Lung——"

"Eh?"

"They had Wun Lung——"

"Who had one lung?" asked Tom Merry. "The general allowance is two for every person, I believe. I should like to see a chap with one lung."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"The Chinese kid's name is Wun Lung," he explained. "They had him, and were treating him as a guy, and we tried to rescue him."

"And wanted rescuing ourselves," said Bob Cherry, mopping a stream of "claret" from his red and swollen nose. "You fellows came along in the nick of time."

"Yaas; wathah! We are extremely pleased to be able to wescue you, deah boys!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It is a weal pleasuah to us!"

"You didn't come up till it was all over," said one of the St. Jim's juniors.

"Weally, Blake——"

"Oh, dry up! No time for any of your Chesterfield-Grandison speeches now, Gussy," said Blake. "Let's get off."

"I wefuse to dwy up——"

"Come on," said Harry Wharton. "The brake's ready. You're not hurt, Wun Lung?"

"No muchee."

Wharton lifted the Chinese junior into the brake. Wun Lung was very much shaken up, but he was more scared than hurt.

The brake was a roomy one, and there was ample room for the passengers. The vehicle drove off from the station, and the village party, gathering round, sent yells and jeers after it; to which the St. Jim's party replied with hoots and cat-calls; and the brake drove out of Friardale in the midst of a terrific din, and took the road to Greyfriars.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

On the Football Ground.

BEFORE the brake arrived at Greyfriars, the Famous Four and their visitors were as well acquainted as if they had known one another for ten years at least.

Tom Merry had brought a very fine junior team to Greyfriars. The list read as follows, in the proper order: Wynn; Herries, Reilly; Kerr, Manners, Digby; Figgins, Lowther, Merry, D'Arcy, Blake.

Wynn the first-named, goalkeeper for the junior team—was a youth whose plumpness of face and figure rivalled those of Billy Bunter. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn belonged to the New House at St. Jim's, and the rest of the team to the School House.

As the brake rolled on its way, the Famous Four heard from their new acquaintances more than one anecdote of the various "House" rows with which the rival juniors made matters lively at St. Jim's. According to their own account, both parties constituted the "cock-house" at St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy did not take part in the talk. He had a paper on his knee, and a pencil in his hand, and was evidently in the throes of composition. The Famous Four glanced at him curiously once or twice, and he caught Bob Cherry's eyes at last.

"Do you happen to know of a whyme to 'fair,' deah boy?" he asked.

"A what—to what?"

"A whyme to the word fair."

"Lots," said Bob Cherry. "Writing a poem?"

"Yaas."

"My hat! I didn't know we had a poet here," said Nugent, with a grin. "I should like to hear the poem."

"It's not finished yet, deah boy; but when it is published I shall be vewy happy to send you a copy."

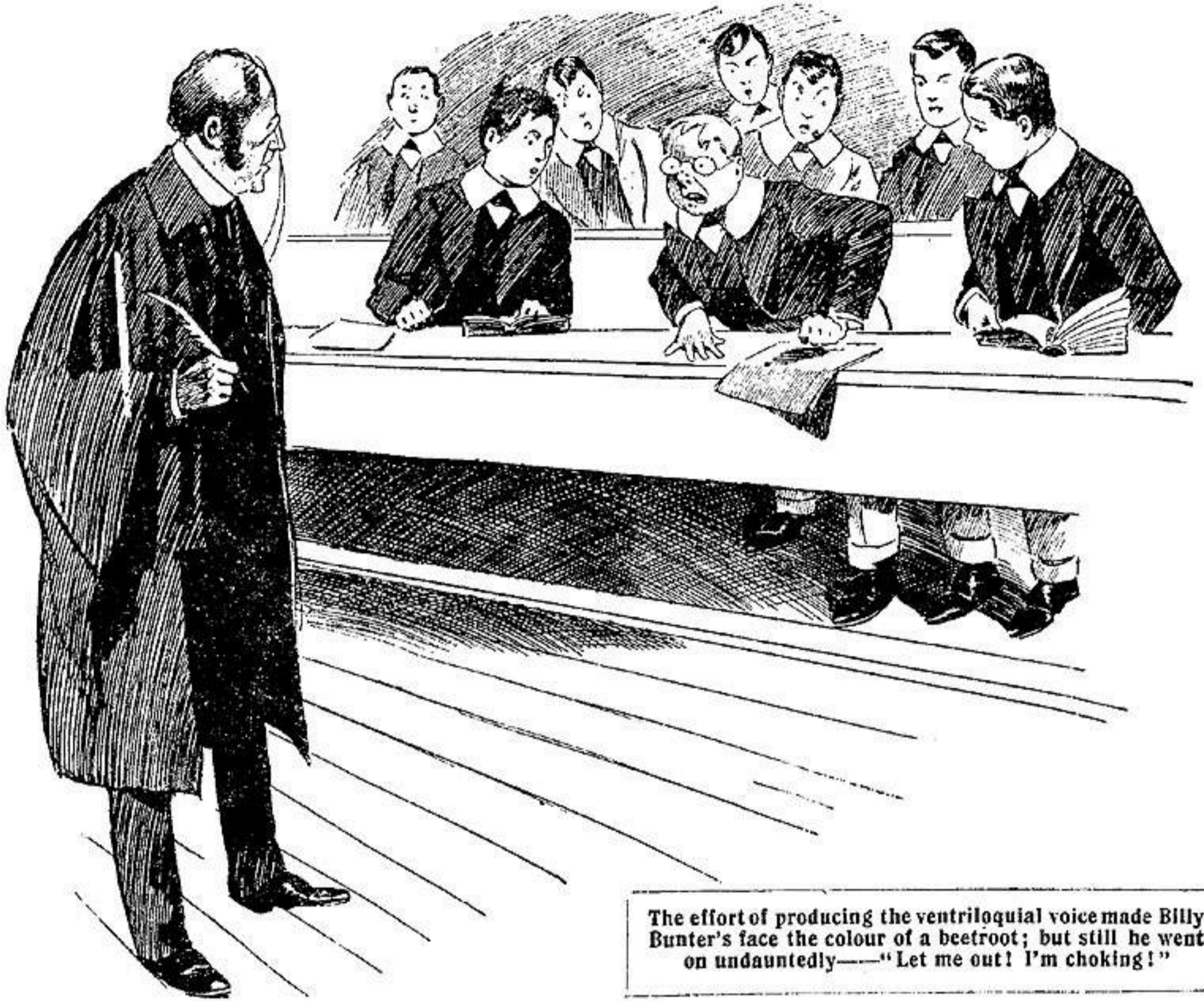
Nugent stared.

"You don't mean to say you have your poems published?"

"Yaas; wathah!"

Nugent looked puzzled, but Tom Merry came to the rescue with an explanation.

"The stuff is published in the school magazine," he explained. "'Tom Merry's Weekly,' you know—the junior's



The effort of producing the ventriloquial voice made Billy Bunter's face the colour of a beetroot; but still he went on undauntedly—"Let me out! I'm choking!"

paper, founded and edited by myself. We sometimes shove Gussy's poetry in to fill up space."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"It wouldn't get published anywhere else," said Jack Blake.

"You are weally quite mistaken, Blake. I have offered some of my poetwy to the editah of the local paper in Wylcombe, and he offered to publish it."

"Why didn't you let him, then?"

"Well, he wanted to charge ordinawy advertisement wates, so I couldn't agree! It wasn't the money, you know, but my dig. as a poet."

"Your dig.?" said Nugent. "What do you mean? Why do you dig as a poet? Poets don't dig, do they?"

"You misappwehend me, deah boy. I mean my dignity as a poet."

"Oh, I see! And you are allowed to put it into 'Tom Merry's Weekly' gratis?"

"Weally, deah boy, my poetwy is the only stuff of any value in the papah," said D'Arcy—"with one exception, I mean."

"Ah! You mean my Red Indian story?" said Figgins.

"Rats!" said Blake. "He means my poetic serial."

"Not at all, deah boy! I mean the fashion column, written by myself!" said D'Arcy severely. "But, to come back to our topic, can any of you suggest a whyme for fair?"

"Well, I should say there were lots," said Bob Cherry. "But let's hear the rest of it. What's the preceding line?"

"It's an ode to a lovely gal," explained D'Arcy. "I'll wead it fwom the vewy beginnin'—"

"That you won't," said Jack Blake. "I'll chuck you out of the brake if you do!"

"I should uttably wefuse to be chucked out of the bwake. There are only two hundwed lines so far—"

"There'll be less when it appears in the mag.!" chuckled the youthful editor of "Tom Merry's Weekly."

"I should wefuse to have my work of art mutilated, Tom Mewwy!"

"That won't make any difference, old chap. But get on. We're in sight of Greyfriars now, so you can't read it from the beginning, unless we postpone the football match till another occasion."

"I should have no objection to that, Mewwy."

"But everyone else would, I think."

"Vewy well, I will wead only a few lines. Listen.

"And I wegard you as a stah,
And worship humbly fwom afah;
I gaze upon your features fair,
And think—"

"That's as far as I've got, deah boys. I want a suitable whyme for fair."

"Good!" said Bob Cherry. "How will this do? 'I gaze upon your features fair, And think it's time you cut your hair.'"

"Weally, deah boy—"

"I can go one better than that," said Nugent. "'I gaze upon your features fair, Although it's rather rude to stare.'"

"Weally—"

"Faith, and it's a better line I could give ye, Gussy!" said Reilly. "'I gaze upon ye're features fair, And think their shape is rather quare.'"

"Weally, Weilly—"

"Here we are!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Put the brake on your poetry, Gussy. We've got to think about footer now."

"I shall have to leave that line unfinished," said D'Arcy, carefully putting away his paper and pencil. "It will be a weally wippin' poem by the time it's done, and will take up about a quartah of the whole magazine."

"More like a quarter of a page, after I've finished with it!" grinned Tom Merry.

"Weally, Mewwy—"

"Jump down!"

"I wefuse to move in a huwwy. Pway don't twead on my

feet, Blake. Hewies, keep your wotten elbow out of my wibs. If you shove against me again, Dig, I shall give you a feahful thwashin'. Oh!"

D'Arcy was bundled off the brake. The vehicle had halted near the porter's lodge. The great clock of Greyfriars was indicating a quarter to three. Time had been lost, after all, but the rival teams were agreed on getting started as quickly as possible.

The Saints hurried into their quarters in the little pavilion, and were soon engaged in changing their clothes for the match. The Remove eleven, with the exception of the Famous Four, had already changed.

The four chums hurried into the dressing-room, and were quickly in their football garb. They changed so quickly that they were out before Tom Merry's team appeared. Temple, Dabney, & Co., of the Upper Fourth, were lounging outside, and they at once came up to Harry.

"So you're going through with it, Wharton?" Temple remarked.

"With what?" asked Wharton.

"This footer match."

"I imagine so."

"The go-throughfulness is terrific, my worthy fathead!" purred the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"We'll lend you a player or two if you like," said Temple magnanimously. "A Remove eleven isn't much weight against players from the Fourth and the Shell, you know. St. Jim's is above your weight. We'll put in a few men if you like."

"We'd be glad to accept your assistance, but we want to win the match," said Wharton.

The chums of the Remove chuckled, and the Upper Fourth fellows turned red.

"Well, go ahead," said Temple. "I expect we shall see you wiped up."

Tom Merry and his men came out of the pavilion. A fine set of lads they looked, in the red jerseys of St. Jim's. Figgins, of the New House, certainly looked very slim, the footer shorts showing his scanty calves off to great advantage. But some of the Greyfriars' fellows who grinned at the thin calves were destined to ruefully note how quickly those long, slim legs could get over the ground.

Fatty Wynn presented a marked contrast to Figgins. He was short and plump, and his ample form filled out his jersey to bursting-point, though it was of very generous size.

The two captains tossed for choice of goal. It was a fine, keen afternoon, with a somewhat sharp breeze blowing over the ground. The advantage of the wind counted for something, and it was Tom Merry who won the toss—and chose the goal from which the wind was blowing.

Fatty Wynn walked towards his goal, and then turned and made a sign to Figgins, with an anxious look on his face. The long-limbed forward hurried towards him.

"What is it, Fattp?" he said anxiously. "Don't say you're not fit!"

"It's not that, Figgins; but—"

"What are you looking worried about, then?" grunted Figgins.

"You see, I haven't had any grub since dinner."

"Well, you young cormorant, it's less than an hour and a half since dinner!"

"I get so hungry this November weather," said Fatty Wynn plaintively. "You see—"

"You should have had some sandwiches!"

"I brought a half-dozen sandwiches from St. Jim's."

"Well, you should have eaten them in the train!"

"I did," said Fatty Wynn. "But now I feel rather empty. I suppose you haven't a sandwich about you?"

"Lots!" said Figgins. "I usually go on a football-field with my clothes stuffed full of sandwiches, pork-pies, and plum-puddings!"

"Look here, Figgins—"

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"You can get a bite in the interval. Don't keep on like that, or you'll make me feel hungry myself."

And Figgins walked away, leaving the fat Fourth-Former to rather discontentedly take his place between the posts.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton's attention had been arrested by Billy Bunter, who had come breathlessly down to the ground, and was waving his hand excitedly to the captain of the Remove. Harry ran quickly towards him, thinking there was something wrong.

"I say, Wharton—"

"What is it—quick?"

"Have you changed your mind about that feed? If you have, I could cut off and get the stuff now, and—"

"You young ass!"

Wharton turned round and walked away. Bunter blinked after him in great indignation.

"Well, of all the rotters!" he murmured. "Fancy treating a chap like that who's willing to take a lot of trouble to do him a favour! Of course, I never expect gratitude; but, really, Wharton takes the cake!"

And Billy Bunter watched the commencement of the match with a very dissatisfied expression upon his fat face. Rogers, of the Fifth was refereeing the match. The whistle went, and the ball rolled from the foot of Wharton.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The First Half.

HARRY WHARTON kicked off against the wind, and the memorable match of Greyfriars v. St. Jim's commenced. The ball was at once sent back over the line by Figgins, and the Saints followed it up, and the first tussle was wholly in the home half.

The beginning was watched with intense interest by a very considerable crowd. All the Remove were there, eager to see how the Form eleven would play up against an older team, and most of the Upper Fourth had come along to see the Removites licked.

Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, honoured the match with his presence at first, knowing full well that the Remove team would "buck up" all the more under the eye of the school captain.

More eagerly than anyone else, perhaps, the Chinese chum watched the conflict. Wun Lung's almond eyes were seldom off the stalwart figure of Harry Wharton. The youth from the Yangtse-Kiang took a deep interest in the great game, and, under Wharton's instruction he was becoming well acquainted with it. His ambition was to play in the Remove eleven. Not a turn of the game was lost upon the Chinese junior, as he stood at the ropes, his eyes ever on the field.

But at first the home eleven seemed to be getting far from the best of the tussle. The ball was on their side of the line from the beginning, and in spite of their efforts they could not shift it.

Tom Merry and his comrades kept it there, and several times it was rushed up to the home goal, but the backs succeeded in clearing.

But now a determined attack was made by the St. Jim's forwards, and they came up the field in beautiful style, the ball passing from foot to foot as if by clockwork. Right up to the goal they came, leaving forwards and halves nowhere, and scattering the backs, and the goal was at their mercy—except for the goalie.

Levison stood there keenly on the watch.

The ball came in from the foot of Tom Merry. The goalkeeper was seen to spring into the air, and his hand smote the leather, and out it went again. And the Remove breathed once more.

But the outgoing ball met a hard, round head, and Figgins drove it in again, like a stone from a catapult.

This time the goalie kicked, and the ball went out with a whiz, with nothing to stop it this time. It dropped among the home halves, who sent it spinning forward, and the forwards bore it up the field.

It was a chance for Harry Wharton at last! He was "on the ball" in a second, and he dribbled it right up the field against the wind, eluding his foes almost by magic.

Right up the field, with the Saints panting after him, Tom Merry and Figgins close enough to touch him if they had stretched out their hands, Reilly and Herries closing up in his path.

His comrades were not near enough for a chance of passing, and he knew he could not get through. All depended upon a running kick.

He kicked! Right into the goal the ball went; but Fatty Wynn was there!

He jumped, and the ball smote him upon his plump chest and bounced away again, and in a second Reilly had cleared.

Wharton's bold attempt had almost materialised, but not quite. The struggle was transferred to midfield, and the goalkeepers had a rest again.

But Wharton's essay brought a ringing cheer from the

Remove. He had not succeeded, but it was luck as much as anything else that had saved the goal.

"Muchee good!" murmured Wun Lung. "Plenty good!" "Jolly good!" Wingate observed to another Sixth-Former who was standing beside him. "But it won't be easy to pass that goalie. He fills up most of the space between the posts, doesn't he?"

This was a libel on Fatty Wynn. But certainly his girth was ample. But it did not interfere with his activity, as he had shown.

The game had lasted twenty minutes, and the score on either side was still blank. But the play was lively enough, and there was plenty to satisfy the spectators, although there were no goals. It was, in point of fact, the excellent play on both sides that kept the score-sheet blank.

Several times the Saints came very near scoring, but when the Greyfriars defence failed in other respects, they could always rely on their goalkeeper.

Levison seemed born to keep goal. His somewhat spare figure was always just where it was wanted. Nothing took him by surprise. The fastest shot or the slowest, high or low, long or short—all seemed the same to him. He stopped them all, and generally saved in a way that gave the Removites a chance to get the ball away.

Thirty minutes had ticked away without result as far as goals went, and Harry Wharton felt his hopes rising.

If the Remove held their own with a keen wind in their faces, they might confidently expect to do better when it was behind their backs in the second half.

He would have preferred goals, of course, but he was quite content that the first half should end blank.

But it was not to be!

Tom Merry and his men were out for scalps, and though the Greyfriars team were giving them an unexpectedly hard tussle, they were only made more determined thereby.

The first half had ten minutes more to run when the Saints made a combined effort, led by Tom Merry, and at last succeeded in piercing the Greyfriars defence effectually.

It was Figgins who brought the ball right up to the goal, and he passed to Blake just as Desmond charged him over, and Blake let Tom Merry have the ball just in time, before Harry Wharton was upon him. Tom Merry kicked for goal.

Levison was on the look-out, ready for anything—but that shot baffled him. It slid past the tips of his outstretched fingers, and lodged in the net, and there was a shout:

"Goal!"

It was a goal at last!

"Goal!" roared Figgins—"goal!"

The crowd round the ropes shouted too, in admiration of the splendid play even of a rival team.

Levison looked black for a moment. He did not like defeat. He tossed out the ball. The footballers were breathing hard. The game had been fast and furious. But the Saints looked very pleased with themselves. Figgins gave Tom Merry a thump on the shoulder that made him stagger.

"Good for you!" he exclaimed. "It's time it came, and it's come at last!"

Tom Merry laughed breathlessly.

"Well, don't bust my backbone, Figgy! Moderate your transports."

"Bai Jove, it was weally good, you know!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked. "You weally ought to have let me have the ball then, Blake!"

"Rats!" said Jack Blake cheerfully.

"Weally, Blake, I insist that you ought to have let me have the ball! Didn't you see me make a sign to you to pass to me?"

"Blessed if I did! But I shouldn't have passed to you, anyway. Merry was the only chap who had a chance."

"Yes, rather!" said Figgins.

"If you wottahs know more about footah than I do——"

began D'Arcy, with dignity.

Jack Blake chuckled.

"Well, rather!" he said. "I should hope so, Gussy! What you don't know about football would fill the Encyclopædia Britannica."

"Weally, Blake——"

"Line up, chaps!" said Tom Merry.

"You are intewwuptin' me, Mewwy!"

"I know I am, Gussy. Line up. This is a football match, not a conversazione."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

Jack Blake took the swell of St. Jim's by the neck and ran him to the centre of the field. D'Arcy had no chance of escaping that iron grip, and so he went. When Blake released him, the swell of St. Jim's groped for his eyeglass, jammed it into his eye, and stared at Blake with a withering stare.

"Blake, you uttah wottah——"

"Line up!"

"I wefuse to line up till I have expressed the uttah contempt I feel for this wuff wottah!" said D'Arcy.

"Line up, or get off the field!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"None of your rot, you young ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass——"

Phip! went the whistle. D'Arcy ceased, perforce, and the game restarted. There were only five minutes to play out of the first half, and no one expected the score to be altered. So it proved. The juniors played up well, the Saints attacking vigorously, the Remove defending as vigorously, and after five minutes' of hard tussling, the whistle went, and found them neither better nor worse for it.

The phip of the whistle came as a welcome relief to both sides. The game had been so hard and fast that even the toughest of the young footballers was in need of a rest. Their faces were glowing as they poured off the field to take what repose they could in the brief interval.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Finds a Kindred Spirit.

HARRY WHARTON towelled his glowing skin, and sucked a lemon, as he sat in the dressing-room. The Removites were mostly similarly engaged round him. They were glad of the rest, but keen enough for the second half of the great match.

A fat face adorned by a pair of big spectacles came peering round the door.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, there's Bunter!" said Nugent. "Lend me that lemon when you've done with it, Harry, and I'll see if I can get a bullseye."

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What do you want? There's nothing to eat here excepting lemon-skins."

"I wish you wouldn't hint that I'm always thinking about grub, Cherry. You wound me, and you know it isn't true. I'm not greedy, but I like a lot. I've come round now to do you fellows a favour."

"Go ahead, then."

"Wharton has arranged a cold collation——"

"A which?"

"A cold collation for the visiting team——"

"Some cold grub, you mean."

"A cold collation," said Billy Bunter. "Wharton has arranged a cold collation for the team, but a cold collation on a cold afternoon isn't comme il faut."

"Isn't whom?"

"Comme il faut?"

"Who's that?"

"You know perfectly well that it isn't anybody at all, Cherry, and that it's an expression meaning that it isn't as it should be."

"Then why can't you talk English?"

"Well, I ought to have remembered that French is rather above your intellect. But as I was saying, a cold collation on a cold afternoon isn't comme il faut, and if you fellows like, I'll get a good feed ready during the second half."

"No objection to that," said Bob Cherry. "If you want to stand us a feed, you're at liberty to go ahead with all steam on."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I am planning a series of extensive feeds to take place when I receive that football prize of a pound a week, but that will not be for some little time yet. I am stony at present, as I have been disappointed about a postal order. If you fellows like to stand the tin, I'll put in the time."

Bob Cherry held up the lemon he had been sucking, and took careful aim at Bunter.

"Where will you have it?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I may as well admit that, besides my desire to give the St. Jim's chaps a good feed, I am rather hungry myself. You needn't chuckle; that is quite a secondary consideration with me. Still, you know I'm delicate, and have to be kept up by having plenty of nourishing food. I've got nothing but those bloaters——"

"My hat! Haven't they escaped yet?"

"Those bloaters are all right, Cherry; they'll keep a long time in this weather, especially after being cooked," said Billy Bunter. "Wun Lung has gone up to the house to fetch them for me now."

"You young rotter! Why couldn't you fetch them yourself?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I wanted to come and speak to you fellows in the interval; and, besides, I'm so faint from want of nourishment that I really shouldn't have had strength to go," said Billy Bunter. "Wun Lung is a very obliging chap. He offered to go. It's about time he was back with them, too. I say, you fellows, have you quite decided about the feed?"

"Where will you have it?" demanded Bob Cherry, flourishing the lemon.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"



WHAT IS GREED?

It is the canker spot which, spreading, will eventually eat away a man's soul, rob him of his conscience, and cause him to be hated and despised even by the meanest of his fellow creatures. Here is a little picture which tells the whole story of Greed and its work. It shows us a father, his arms closed on the bag of gold for which he has sold his soul, turning away from wife and children to pursue the phantom shadow which lures him to his destruction.

You can begin the wonderful story
entitled "GREED" in

ANSWERS

TO-DAY. ONE PENNY.

Biff! The lemon squashed under Bunter's fat chin, and the plump junior gave a yell, and promptly disappeared. Bob Cherry laughed.

"So much for Bunter," he remarked.

"The Bunterfulness of our esteemed fat friend is terrific," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur, "and the obligefulness of the honourable Chinese chap is worthy of suspicion. I have observefully noted that the obligefulness of the esteemed Wun Lung is generally the leader to some practical jokefulness."

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, if that greedy young bounder finds that there's anything wrong with his bloaters, it will serve him right."

"The rightfulness will be terrific."

As a matter of fact, the nabob's surmise was very near to the truth. Billy Bunter did not suspect the cause of the Chinese chum's obliging offer, and there was certainly nothing in the Celestial's bland looks to awaken suspicion. He brought a couple of bloaters wrapped in paper, with a couple of forks and a tin plate under his arm. He met Bunter as the latter was coming from his unsatisfactory interview with the Greyfriars footballers.

"Me blingee bloatee," murmured the Celestial.

"Good!" said Bunter, taking the bloaters, plate, and forks. "I'll get into some quiet corner, and these will keep me up till the cold collation. Look here, you can have part of one if you like."

The Chinese shook his head, with a lurking glimmer in his eyes.

"No likee!"

"You're fond of bloaters, Wun Lung."

"Me no lubbee, Bunter. No likee."

"Just as you like. Hallo! I wish you wouldn't tap me on the shoulder so suddenly, Levison."

"Eh?" said a voice. "I'm not Levison, whoever he may be. I'm Wynn—Wynn of the New House at St. Jim's."

Billy Bunter blinked at the fat Fourth-Former. There was something about Fatty Wynn that recommended him to Bunter at once. His plumpness, his evident relish for good living, made a certain passport to Billy Bunter's favour.

"I'm hungry," explained Fatty Wynn. "I don't usually get hungry. I really haven't much of an appetite, but I generally get peckish in this November weather. I see you've got some bloaters there, and they smell ripping."

"Rather!" said Bunter. "Come along, and you can have one of them; we can eat them under the tree behind the pavilion without being noticed. It's only just some bread and bloaters, but—"

"My dear chap, they're ripping! It may save my life!"

"That's just how I feel," said Bunter. "I don't eat much myself, but I'm of a delicate constitution, and I require plenty of nourishing food to keep me up. But I say, won't you be late for the second half?"

"I don't see why they shouldn't wait a few minutes," said Fatty Wynn. "They're bound to look for me before they start, and that will be time enough for me. No good trying to keep goal on an empty tummy! I've finished all my sandwiches, and Figgins never thought of bringing any."

The two plump juniors hurried round the pavilion, Wun Lung's glance following them.

The Chinese junior was grinning. Perhaps he had an idea that the two juniors would not enjoy those bloaters.

Billy Bunter and Fatty Wynn sat down under the tree, and Bunter opened the paper. They had to eat from one plate, armed with a fork each, but little difficulties like that were nothing to hungry juniors. Fatty Wynn's eyes glistened as he scanned the bloaters.

"They're nicely done," he remarked. "Did you cook them?"

"I started them," said Bunter, "Wun Lung—that Chinese chap—finished them. He's a good cook—pretty nearly as good as I am."

"Well, they look stunning."

"Go ahead, then."

The juniors started. Each of them helped himself to a good mouthful of bloater.

Fatty Wynn's jaws closed on his mouthful, and then a sudden and terrible change came over his plump face.

"Ow! Gr-r-r! Ow! Oh!"

"Ow!" gasped Billy Bunter. "Gerrooch! Gr-r-r-r!"

"Atchoo-oo-ooo!"

"Gr-r-r-r-r!"

Fatty Wynn jumped up. The portion of bloater was expelled forcibly from his mouth, and the fat junior from St. Jim's fairly danced, coughing, choking and sneezing. Billy Bunter followed his example, coughing spasmodically, his fat face crimson and streaming with perspiration.

"Oh!" gasped Wynn. "You—you beast! I'll teach you to doctor a bloater with cayenne pepper and then give it to me!"

Do not fail to commence "Answers" great new serial, "GREED," to-day.

"I—I didn't!" gasped Billy Bunter, retreating from the furious Fatty. "I—I have had the same stuff on mine. Can't you see for yourself?"

"Then who did it?" howled Fatty Wynn.

"Gerrooh! Gr-r-r! Ow! I don't know!"

"Gr-r-r! Ugh! Ug-g-g-gh!"

"It must have been that Chinese beast!" yelled Billy Bunter. "He's always playing some trick. That's why he offered to fetch the bloaters."

"Where's Wynn?"

It was Tom Merry's voice, calling for the missing goalkeeper. It was time to line-up for the second half. Fatty Wynn rushed round the pavilion in search of the Chinese junior, coughing and spluttering as he went, the water streaming from his eyes. Billy Bunter followed him, gasping and grunting.

"Where's Wynn? Oh, here you are! Where have you been, you fat ass? Are you ready? What the dickens is the matter with you?"

"Gr-r-r-r! Ug-g-g-g-gh!"

"My only hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry, in amazement.

"Are you ill? What's the matter?"

"Where's that—gr-r-r-r-r!—that Chinese beast?"

"What's the matter?"

"He's been doctoring my bloater with cayenne pepper—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll pulverise him!" yelled Fatty Wynn. "I'm—gr-r-r-r!—choking! I'm—atchoo-choo-ooo!—coughing and sneezing like anything. Where is he?"

"Where is he?" roared Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, where is that yellow beast? My bloaters are wasted, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to cackle at. Where's that beast?"

Wun Lung was conspicuous by his absence. As a matter of fact he was on the roof of the pavilion, secure there from reprisals. Both the teams were laughing heartily, and the two fat juniors received little sympathy. Wharton brought a glass of cold water and a lemon for Fatty Wynn, and the St. Jim's goalkeeper succeeded in washing away some of the flavour of the pepper.

"I opined beforefully that the Chinese chap was practically joking," murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The jokefulness is terrific."

"Here, hurry up!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "We're two minutes late now. What the deuce do you mean by devouring bloaters in the interval, Wynn? Get on the field!"

"I'm nearly choked—"

"You'll be quite choked if you don't buck up. Get on!"

And Fatty Wynn went on the field with the rest, still spluttering at intervals. Billy Bunter cut off to the house to wash his mouth under a tap. And then Wun Lung ventured to descend from the roof of the pavilion, with a sweet and amiable smile upon his face.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Second Half.

THE change of ends brought the wind behind the backs of the Greyfriars juniors, and they were not slow in feeling the advantage. The wind had risen a little, too, and was blowing harder. Tom Merry kicked off, and the Saints followed up the kick off with a rush; but this time they did not get matters so much their own way. The ball went through to the home halves, and Hazeldene was on it in a moment. He gave a kick that cleared the leather two-thirds of the way to the St. Jim's goal, and there was a rush down the field after it.

The St. Jim's backs found it impossible to clear. The Greyfriars attack was steady and pressing, and the ball was kept in the visitors' half. Two or three of the Saints were rolled over, and the Greyfriars forwards came on in fine style. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh had the ball, and he passed to Wharton. Harry sent it in, and there was a quick drawing of breath round the field. But the leather bounced back from a goalpost, and Herries cleared at last, sending it into midfield.

It had been a close thing, and though it had not come off, it encouraged the Remove. The wind in their favour made a great difference. A protracted struggle in midfield followed, the ball many times going into touch. For a quarter of an hour the game was lively enough, but the outcome was nil. A great deal of the "vim" of the first half was wanting. All the juniors were feeling the effects of three-quarters of an hour of hard, incessant play.

"Bai Jove," Arthur Augustus D'Arcy murmured, "I am gettin' quite out of breathe! I regard this game as a wathah exhaustin' one!"

"Buck up, Gussy!" said Tom Merry, passing him on the run.

"Yaas, wathah, but— Oh, you wuff wottah!"

The last remark was addressed to Bob Cherry, who had charged past the swell of St. Jim's to deprive Tom Merry

of the ball. D'Arcy being in the way, he had the benefit of Bob's shoulder, and he went sprawling to the ground. It was too much for the dignity of the swell of St. Jim's. He was up again in a second, and rushing after Bob Cherry; not to get to the ball, but to get to Bob. Figgins yelled to him.

"Hold on, Gussy!"

"I wefuse to hold on!" panted the swell of St. Jim's. "I uttably wefuse to be wuffly knocked ovah by a wotten boundah!"

Figgins dashed across to intercept him, just before he clutched at the unconscious Bob Cherry. They were within the dreaded penalty area, and a yell of "Foul!" from the Greyfriars players might have resulted in a penalty goal against the visitors. Figgins reached the swell of St. Jim's just in time, and dragged him back.

"Hold on, you young idiot!"

"I wefuse to be addresssed as a young idiot!"

"Keep your wool on! Do you want to give them a penalty goal?" howled Figgins.

"Bai Jove, you know, I nevah thought of that!"

"You'd better think of it, if you don't want to be jumped on!"

"I should uttably wefuse to—"

But Figgins was not listening. The Greyfriars juniors were rushing the ball forward again, and the defence was broken. Figgins dashed into the fray, but he was too late. All depended upon Fatty Wynn.

The Welsh junior was ready. The Greyfriars forwards dashed up to the goal in line, driving the backs to right and left, and Monty Lowther kicked.

Whizz went the leather, right between the posts, but biff came Fatty Wynn's ready fist, and out it came again. It came to Manners, who kicked it clear, and the Greyfriars' chance was lost. Figgins slapped D'Arcy on the shoulder as he came near him.

"Lucky for you it didn't come off," he said grimly. "It would have been your fault, and you would have been jumped on, you young ass!"

"I wefuse to admit—"

But Figgins was off again. The struggle was in the home half now, and Tom Merry & Co. were making a desperate effort to drive their way goalward.

In spite of Wharton's splendid leading, and the good backing he received, it looked as if the Saints would succeed. They went steadily on, and a sudden break brought them up to the goal, and Tom Merry kicked. But the wind deflected the flight of the ball, and it struck a post and rebounded. Tom Merry had no second chance. Hazeldene cleared, and the whole field rushed off again. But one player was left gasping on the grass. It was Monty Lowther, who had received a kick on the ankle during the melee by accident, and whether from friend or foe it was impossible to ascertain. He rose and limped after his comrades, and the whistle went as he fell to the ground again. The play stopped, and the referee gave Lowther a hand up.

Tom Merry ran towards him anxiously.

"Hurt, old chap?"

"Only a bump on the ankle," said Lowther, trying to grin. "It's all right, but I can't go on."

"Can't be helped," said Tom Merry bravely. "You can't go on, anyway, and we must do the best we can. Manners, you take Lowther's place, and we'll play two halves."

Lowther was helped off the field. His injury was not serious in itself, but it would make him limp for an hour or two. The play was resumed with St. Jim's playing a man short. The tide had turned more than ever in favour of Greyfriars now. They pressed the Saints hard, and there was a stern struggle in front of the visitors' goal. But again Fatty Wynn saved his side, stopping three or four successive shots that had seemed certain to get home.

There was a quarter of an hour more to play, and the score remained unchanged. With a man off the field, Tom Merry did not expect to increase the score, but he was determined that the Removites of Greyfriars should not equalise.

The odds were on the Greyfriars' side now, but it was not for long. In a rush up the field, Nugent was charged over, and received a painful twist in the leg which compelled him to join Lowther in the pavilion. Both sides were now a man short, and pretty well fagged by the hard game. Ten minutes remained to play, and the spectators had almost given up the hope of seeing the score changed. It looked like a victory for St. Jim's.

But Harry Wharton did not give up hope. Every minute that remained was full of possibilities. From a melee in midfield the home forwards got away with the ball, and brought it up to the Saints' goal. The referee had glanced

up at the clock in the tower of Greyfriars, visible from the football field. There were three minutes more to play.

The players knew it, too. Three minutes more, but each minute was to be crammed with excitement!

Again and again the Saints cleared, but each time the ball was rushed goalward again, and at last it came whizzing in from the foot of Bob Cherry. Fatty Wynn fisted it out in fine style, but Hurree Singh's dark head was ready, and he biffed the ball in again in a twinkling. Fatty Wynn was almost taken by surprise, but not quite. He clutched the ball, caught it, and advanced to fling it far—and incautiously advanced a step too much for safety—and Harry Wharton hurled himself forward. Back into the goal went goalkeeper and ball, and, as Harry reeled from the charge, the whistle blew.

"Goal!" yelled all Greyfriars, mad with delight.

It was the equalising goal!

Wharton had charged Fatty Wynn, ball and all, to the net, and the goal was taken—on the stroke of time!

Greyfriars had equalised. The match was a draw, and honours were divided.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Night of the Fifth.

THE great match was over, and the juniors rubbed down their wearied limbs and changed their clothes in a mood of considerable satisfaction. The match had ended in a draw, but both sides had the satisfaction of not being defeated, and that was something.

In spite of Billy Bunter's misgivings on the point, the "cold collation" was heartily enjoyed by the footballers from St. Jim's, and when it was over they prepared to start for home.

The brake came to the gates of Greyfriars, and the Saints took their bags and walked down to meet it. With them went most of the Remove eleven. There was plenty of room in the brake, and they wanted to see their visitors off at the station.

The brake drove on through the village, and the St. Jim's team were in good time for their train. Harry Wharton & Co. accompanied them to the platform, and there was a general handshaking. The juniors had learned to like one another very well, and Tom Merry's invitation to Harry Wharton to return the visit had been heartily accepted.

"Bai Jove, we'll give you a good weception!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "We shall be honahed and delighted if you come ovah! Good-bye, desh boy!"

The train buzzed off. The juniors shouted good-bye, and a last glimpse of Arthur Augustus was caught, standing up in the carriage and arguing excitedly with Blake.

The Greyfriars juniors grinned as they turned away. It was dusk in the village street as they left the station. They were to walk home, and the brake was already gone. The juniors strolled down the village street, exchanging chipping remarks with the youth of Friardale, but they were too numerous to be tackled. Stokes and his friends were busy with a Guy Fawkes procession, and had the Greyfriars' fellows been only two or three in number, they would probably have figured in that procession against their will.

It was dark in the lane; quite dark when the juniors arrived at the gates of Greyfriars. There was a crowd in the Close, and a buzz of excited voices.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's the matter?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"What is it? Any of those bloaters got loose?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

A roar of laughter interrupted the fat junior. A group of Removites were parading the Close, carrying a chair to which a diminutive form was clinging. The chaired figure had his face blacked with soot, but Harry Wharton knew whom it was, and his eyes flashed with indignation.

"Wun Lung!"

He knew now what had happened. Bulstrode was at the head of the procession. The bully of the Remove had taken advantage of Wharton's absence to carry out the long-deferred ragging of the Chinese chum. Wun Lung, smothered with soot, was being carried in procession round the Close, the followers of Bulstrode letting off crackers round him, and yelling out the old rhyme of the Fifth of November.

Wharton ran quickly towards the Removites.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed. "Stop that at once!"

Bulstrode glared at him.

"Mind your own business!" he exclaimed fiercely. "Come on, boys! Holler, there! Here's another guy!"

"Hurrah!" roared the Bulstrode party. "Holler, boys! Another guy!"

"Please to remember, the Fifth of November—"

"Hurrah!"

"Stop!" said Wharton, planting himself in the path of the procession.

There was a general hesitation among Bulstrode's followers. They were ready for a rough lark, but they did not care to face the captain of the Form when his temper was roused, and his blazing eyes showed that it was roused now.

"Stand aside, or we'll march over you!" shouted Bulstrode.

"Oh, hold on, Bulstrode," said Trevor. "It's all right. We've done enough processing. Let's get to the bonfire; it's time it was lighted."

"Let the Chinee go."

"I won't! Wharton's not going to dictate to me!"

"Put him down!" said Wharton savagely.

The Removites who were carrying Wun Lung set the chair down. Bulstrode sprang at Harry Wharton, and rolled away before a heavy right-hander. Wun Lung squirmed out of the chair, and plumped upon Bulstrode as the bully attempted to rise.

"Me gottee!" he murmured.

Bulstrode struggled furiously, but Wun Lung had him pinned down. The Chinee turned a grinning face to the chums of the Remove.

"Baggee of sootee on chair," he murmured. "Bulstlode blackee my facee, me blackee his facee, allee samcee."

Bulstrode yelled and squirmed. But he could not escape, and his friends did not care to interfere, with Harry Wharton & Co. ready to take Wun Lung's side at a moment's notice. The soot was emptied from the bag upon Bulstrode's face, and Wun Lung's hand rubbed it well in. The bully's mouth was half-filled with it as he opened it to yell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "You're a giddy nigger minstrel now, and no mistake, Bulstrode."

"Groo! Lemme gerrup!"

"Me finish!" said Wun Lung. "Now stickee in chail and cally lound Close. 'Nother Guy!"

"Good wheeze!" exclaimed Nugent. "And if we shoved him on the bonfire afterwards, it wouldn't be much loss to Greyfriars."

"Lemme gerrup! Groo—groo! Leggo!"

Bulstrode struggled free at last. His face was black as the November night, and his clothes were thickly spattered with soot. He was in a raving temper, added to by the fact that his own friends were laughing as loudly as anyone else.

"Well, of all the sights," said Bob Cherry, with the tears running down his cheeks, "I think you take the cake, Bulstrode. Talk about guys!"

"You—you—you—" spluttered the enraged bully of the Remove.

"Ha, ha, ha! Better go and get a wash!"

Bulstrode thought so, too. Followed by a howl of laughter, he started off towards the house.

The bully went in, with feelings that may be better imagined than described. His ragging of the Chinese chum had ended worse for him this time than on previous occasions, though he had not been very lucky in that line at any time.

The Removites were flocking to the bonfire in the Close, which was soon lighted, and the juniors gleefully watched the flames mounting to the black, November sky.

A guy—which bore a strong likeness to Gosling, the porter, much to that individual's indignation—surmounted the pyre, and was thrown into relief by the flames that soared round it. The roar of the flames mingled with the cracking of crackers, the squibbing of squibs, and the flare and fiz of Roman candles. All sorts and conditions of fireworks added to the excitement and the din, but the success of the evening was due to Wun Lung. The Chinese junior had been hard at work preparing for the celebration of the Fifth, and his fireworks were a great success, especially one which, exploding in the black sky overhead, burst into words of fire that brought a ringing cheer from the Greyfriars fellows. Painted in fiery letters against the black sky appeared the legend, "Good old Greyfriars!"

Bob Cherry slapped the Chinese junior on the shoulder with a force that nearly hurled him into the bonfire, but fortunately Harry Wharton caught his pigtail and pulled him back.

"Jolly good!" exclaimed Bob heartily.

"Velly good!" gasped Wun Lung. "But no knockee to piecee."

"Good old Greyfriars!" faded from the sky, and at last the celebrations were over, and the juniors trooped indoors. The most exciting Fifth of November in the history of Greyfriars was over.

THE END.

(Next Tuesday's long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled "Billy Bunter's Raid." Please order your copy of THE MAGNET LIBRARY in advance. Price One Halfpenny.)

The greatest story of the year. "Answers'" new serial, "GREED," starts to-day.

GRAND TALE OF ARMY LIFE.



READ THIS FIRST.

On the death of his father, 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, and he then hears that he has been transferred to the Ploughshires—an infantry regiment. Jack is soon reinstated favourite, and becomes once more full corporal. Just as the irksomeness of Indian service in peace time is setting somewhat heavily on the men a frontier war breaks out, and the 25th receive orders to mobilise for the front. On their way to the scene of war the 25th are continually "sniped" at by rebels, and Tom has many exciting adventures. Sligo is bribed by Dashwood to drug Tom Howard one night while the young corporal is on duty with a picquet of the 25th, at the base of some low foot hills where an attack is expected. (Now go on with the story.)

Asleep at His Post!

"We must keep a sharp look-out, men!" said Corporal Tom Howard. "No dozing, mind you, for if the rascals get between us and the camp they might play the very mischief, to say nothing of cutting us off!"

Even as he spoke he opened his mouth with a great yawn, and a feeling of unusual drowsiness began to creep over him, which he tried hard to suppress.

He strolled a little distance away from the picquet, and sat down with his back against a rock, and took a pull at his canteen.

"That will wake me up, I hope. I feel as sleepy as a boiled owl."

He had not sat many minutes, when he got up again and paced to and fro; but, do what he would, his eyelids began to droop.

"What the dickens is the matter with me?" he said, thumping his chest. "I suppose the work has been a bit stiff, but I've never felt so dog-tired in my life."

He lifted the canteen to his lips again, and took a long drink. Cold tea is a very excellent reviver, but on this occasion it seemed to Corporal Howard to do more harm than good.

His eyelids felt as heavy as lead, and, struggle as he might, his chin evinced an unconquerable tendency to settle on his chest.

He pulled himself up suddenly with a jerk, finding that he was swaying a little on his heels.

"Confound it, this won't do!" he muttered, tearing his eyes open with a great effort, and looking anxiously round.

Some distance away the stars twinkled on a small stream, and, with a glance in the direction of his men, whose helmets could be seen outlined against the sky, Tom stole away towards the water.

It was about fifty yards off, and to reach it he had to wind his way through a mass of grey rocks, the remains of some winter avalanche that had come tearing down the mountain side.

On the bank he laid down his carbine, took off his helmet, and, flinging himself prone on the ground, plunged his head into the cool water.

Again and again he bent down, and then, drawing his handkerchief from his sleeve, dried himself hastily, resumed his arms, and turned to rejoin the picquet.

The moon sailed out above the mountain-peaks, bright silver against a background of blue-black sky. The tramp of feet made the men of the picquet turn their heads, and a clump of shadowy figures approached from the direction of the camp.

The men of the picquet had been very much troubled, and had been whispering among themselves for a long time. As the relief approached, one of them rose to his feet, and, without waiting to challenge, went quickly towards the approaching party.

"That you, Clavering?" said the man, in a low voice.

"That's me!" said the sergeant, recognising an unusual ring in the man's voice. "Something wrong?"

"Yes; Howard's missing!"

"What do you mean?"

"He went off into those rocks yonder. We saw him moving about once or twice, then lost sight of him. It was half an hour ago, and he has not yet come back. We've hunted for him, but we can't find any trace."

"The dickens you can't!" said Jim Clavering, frowning.

"Which way did you say he went?"

"I will come with you," said the man.

And, guiding the relief party, he strode quickly towards the boulder against which Tom Howard had leaned. It was on the edge of a little ridge which curved in a semi-circle away from the picquet-post, and they spread out and searched every cranny, with no result.

"Have you heard anything else?"

"Not a sound!"

Jim Clavering paused a moment, and tugged at his moustache.

"There's water down yonder," he said at last, his eyes catching sight of the moonbeams dancing on the little stream. "Two of you come with me!"

And he went down the ridge on to the plain. The man who had guided him went with him, and the other trooper who followed was Alf Sligo.

As Tom Howard had done, they also threaded their way through the boulders, and came out into the full light of the moon on the bank of the rivulet.

"There he is!" said Clavering, extending his hand triumphantly.

Then he checked himself, and something very like a groan escaped the good fellow's lips. Tom Howard, his helmet pulled over his eyes, his back comfortably settled against a fragment of rock, and his carbine lying on the grass beside him, lay stretched out, with his arms folded across his chest, not twenty yards away from them.

Sergeant Clavering blessed himself in his own heart that he had not come alone, but it was too late now.

"He's asleep at his post!" said Alf Sligo. "Hanged if I should 'ave thought that of 'Oward!"

"You keep your tongue between your teeth, young man!" said Clavering, turning on him savagely.

"All right, sergeant; but it ain't no fault of mine. I suppose a man can say what he thinks!"

Sligo's remark was unanswerable, and Jim Clavering was at his wit's-end. If there was one offence more heinous than another, it is for a soldier to be asleep at his post in front of the enemy.

It is a crime which may be punished with death, though that is rarely inflicted in our Service; but the slightest penalty, Clavering well knew, would be two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

For the life of him he could not see any way out of it. Had he discovered Tom when alone, it would have been another matter; but there were witnesses, one of whom, he knew, bore no good-will towards the sleeping corporal.

He had just drawn a deep sigh, and was about to step forward to arouse the sleeper, when the air became suddenly alive with shots and shouting, and over the boulders streamed a howling mob of tribesmen, who had crept unseen across the streamlet towards the British outpost.

Sligo felt a shot in his left arm, followed by a numbness and a warm sensation, which he knew was blood trickling in his sleeve.

"Back to the picquet!" shouted the sergeant, raising his voice, and calling Howard by name.

There was no time to run forward, for the enemy was within ten yards of them, and they found themselves hand to hand with the wild fanatics, and had to fight their way every inch back to the post.

When the men of the picquet and those of the relief joined them, they took up a position behind a huge boulder, and opened fire with their carbines.

More than one turbaned tribesman echoed the crack of the Lee-Metfords with his death-yell, and after a very hot five minutes, the followers of the Mad Mullah retreated, and scampered away with loud cries.

"Where the dickens is Howard?" said Jim Clavering. "Surely to goodness they have not cut him off! That first volley of theirs was enough to wake the dead. Come on, you fellows! We must go back and look for him!"

And, nothing loth, the men streamed after the sergeant muttering vengeance—all but Sligo, who remained behind the boulder nursing his wounded arm, with a leer on his face that would have cost him his life had any of his comrades seen it.

Tom Howard's helmet lay by the rock where they had seen him sleeping, and one of them picked up his half-filled canteen, the strap of which had been cut in two.

The grass was trampled by the tread of many feet, but that was all they found. There was no doubt about it, the corporal had been carried off, but whether dead or alive they could not tell.

With a very sad heart, Sergeant Clavering returned to the picquet-post, and met half a company of the Ploughshires, who had been hastily despatched to the scene of the firing.

"No good going forward, sir," he said to the officer, who was none other than Leonard Dashwood. "We have driven them back over the river, and killed half a dozen of them."

He had no love for their former lieutenant, and turned abruptly away to the rock against which Sligo was still leaning, while a sergeant of the Ploughshires bound his arm up with a handkerchief.

"Did you get hit?" said Clavering.

"Yes; and I'm feeling pretty bad!" said Alf Sligo, through his set teeth.

The pain in his arm was intense, though his wound was not a serious one. Sligo certainly looked very pale and ill.

"Take a swig of this," said the sergeant. And, placing a canteen to the man's parched lips, Alf Sligo drank greedily, and leaned back against the rock with a gurgle of relief. "Have another pull," said Clavering, noting the white face and the state of collapse into which Sligo had fallen, for, like all physical cowards, pain was very abhorrent to him. "It's poor Howard's; but I don't suppose he'll want it again. The enemy have carried him off."

If Sligo's ugly visage had been ugly before, it grew doubly so at these words. A sickly green colour spread over his

face, and he pushed the canteen roughly back with his unwounded arm, and straightway went through the extraordinary manœuvre of thrusting two fingers down his throat, with the obvious intention of making himself sick.

"What the dickens is the matter with you, man?" said the sergeant sharply.

"Ugh, I do feel that bad!" said Sligo, groaning.

"Bad! Great Scott, man, there are no bones broken! A flesh-wound won't do you any harm!"

But Sligo, whose hand had slipped, and who knew that he had far exceeded the ten drops that he had intended to put into poor Tom's canteen, was seized with the terrible fear that he might die, and suddenly seizing the bottle, poured its contents out on to the ground.

"I can't drink after a dead man, sergeant!" he said huskily.

And then catching sight of Leonard Dashwood's eyes, which were fixed on him from behind Clavering's back, Sligo pulled himself together with a mighty effort. If Leonard's look could have killed, Alf Sligo would have lost the number of his mess at that moment; and the clumsy fool realised that he was making a mistake, and shot an appealing glance at Dashwood as he pulled himself together.

Clavering intercepted the glance, and, stooping down, took possession of the canteen as Sligo made a clumsy attempt to place his foot upon it, and Leonard Dashwood's hand reached out for it simultaneously.

"Well, you had better get back into the lines," said the sergeant sternly. "I suppose you can walk; or shall we get a barrow and wheel you?"

"I'll try," said Sligo, breathing hard through his nose, and wishing he was back in Hoxton, and out of it all.

And then he went away through the darkness, Jim Clavering looking after him, still holding the canteen in his hand.

"Well, I'll relieve my picquet, sir," he said, after a little pause. "Then I must report the matter. Your sentries are over there, on the right."

And, saluting, he turned his back on Leonard Dashwood, and proceeded with his duties.

"I have met some fools in my time," muttered Dashwood to himself, "but I begin to think that I'm the greatest that ever breathed, trusting anything to yonder idiot! I wonder whether it's merely coincidence, or whether Clavering suspects anything? There was something in his eye that I don't quite like!"

Then he gave an order to his men, and they marched off to perform their duties.

It was half an hour before Sergeant Clavering got back into camp, and seeing a light burning in the doctor's tent, and one or two men moving about the doorway, he looked in, to see Alf Sligo with his jacket off and his shirt ripped up to the shoulder, and the surgeon dressing the wounded arm.

"What is wrong with this man, Clavering?" said the doctor, looking up from his work. "Has he got at some of the native spirit, I wonder? He's gone sound off to sleep!"

Then Jim Clavering looked at the trooper lying on the doctor's cot. His mouth was wide open, and he was breathing curiously.

"Do you notice anything peculiar about this, sir?" he said, handing the canteen to the surgeon.

The surgeon took it from him, and held it to his nose.

"What has it held," he said sharply.

"Cold tea, I fancy, sir."

"And the rest!" said the doctor. "Has this man had any of it?"

(To be continued next Tuesday.)

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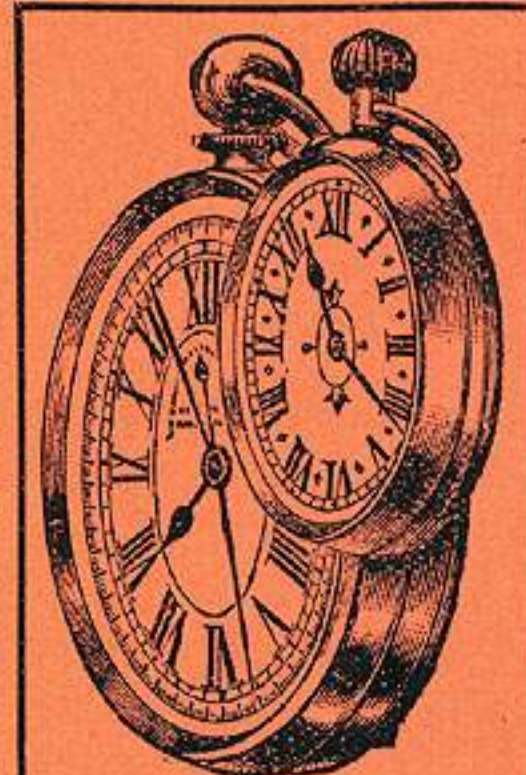
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