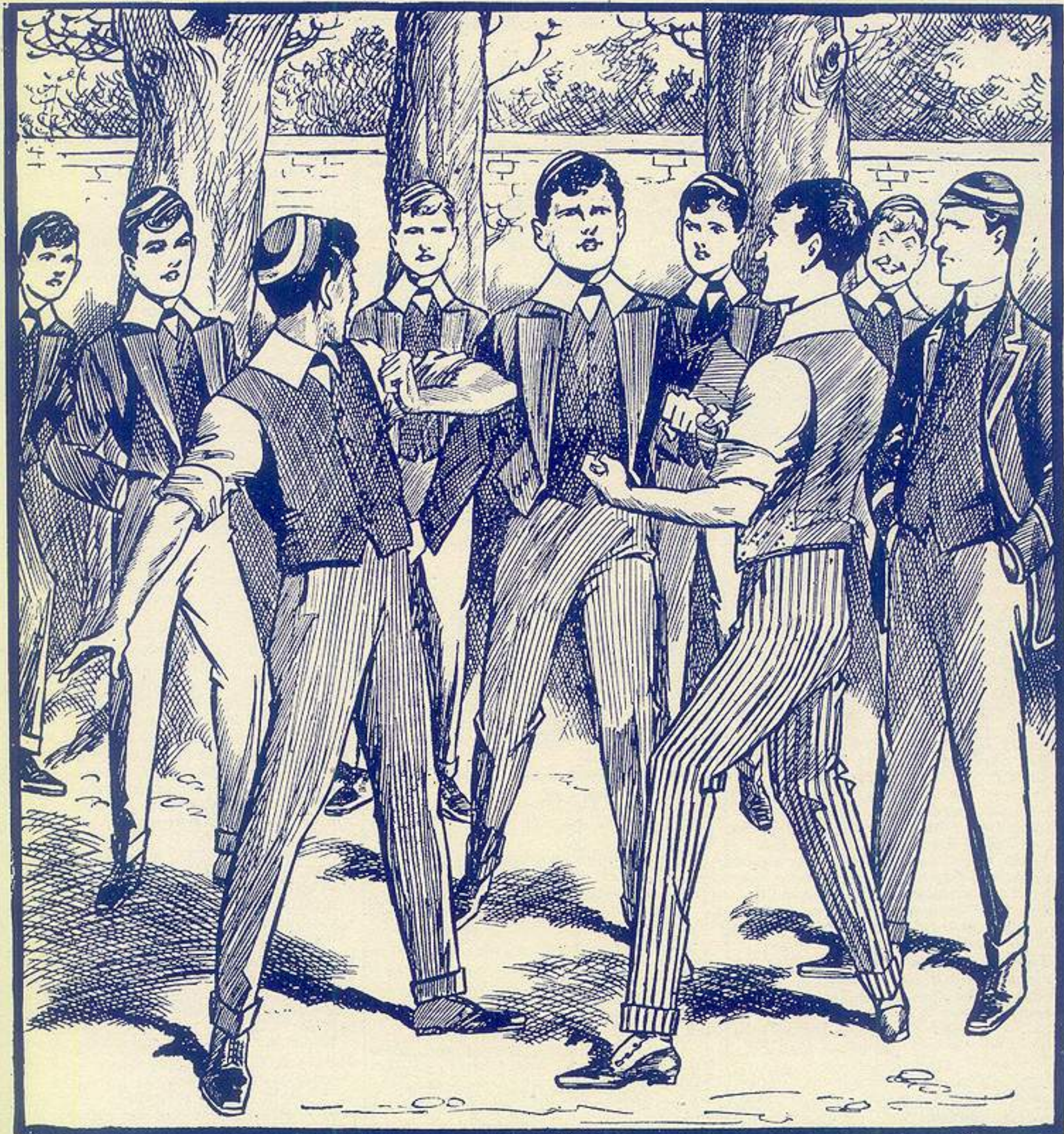


# PARTED PALS!

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## JOHNNY BULL INTERFERES!

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A Magnificent New  
Long Complete Tale  
of  
Harry Wharton & Co.  
at  
Greyfriars School.

# PARTED PALS!

By  
Frank  
Richards.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### At Loggerheads!

**T**HE big oaken door of the Remove Form-room swung open, and the Lower Fourth Form of Greyfriars marched out.

The wide corridor swarmed with cheery juniors.

Harry Wharton & Co.—the Famous Five of the Remove—generally came out together. But on the present occasion, as Wharton, Nugent, and Bob Cherry walked down the passage, Johnny Bull diverged in one direction and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh in another.

Some of the Removites noted it, and grinned.

There was a rift in the lute. The Famous Five, inseparable as they had always been, had a division in the ranks at last.

Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh were no longer on speaking terms, or even terms of recognition.

They ignored one another's existence in the most elaborate way, creating quite an awkward situation for the other three members of the famous Co.

As the two juniors moved away Harry Wharton frowned, Frank Nugent made a grimace, and Bob Cherry snorted.

"Hallo! Still on scowling terms—what?" grinned Skinner.

"Oh, shut up!" growled Bob Cherry.

Bob strode after Johnny Bull, and linked an arm with his. He marched Johnny Bull across the corridor, and linked the other arm with Hurree Singh.

"Come on!" he said affably.

And Bob marched the two out into the quadrangle, with Wharton and Nugent grinning behind.

Bob Cherry's opinion was that the rift in the lute had lasted long enough. This was his way of bringing the parted pals together.

Johnny Bull grunted emphatically, and Hurree Singh wriggled in Bob's hold.

"Leggo, you ass!" growled Bull.

"Release me armfully, my esteemed Bob!" murmured Hurree Singh.

Bob Cherry only tightened his grasp and walked them onward.

"Look here, you two," exclaimed Wharton, "this has gone on long enough! It's time you chucked it!"

"Br-r-r!" came from Johnny Bull, in a growl very much like that of a caged lion.

"The chuckfulness is not possible, my esteemed chum!" said Hurree Singh quietly. "The honourable dignity of my noble self makes it impossible for me to extend the rightful hand of friendliness to the ludicrous and disgusting Bull!"

"Fathead!" said Nugent.

"Look here," said Bob Cherry. "I tell you there's been enough of it! Why can't you make it up?"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Bull.

"The esteemed jawfulness of the honourable Bob is superfluous."

"Leggo my arm, you ass!"

"Knock their heads together!" suggested Nugent.

"Good idea!" said Bob heartily. "I

wonder I never thought of that before!"

He shifted his grasp to the collars of his two unwilling companions.

"Will you leggo?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Release me armfully, you esteemed idiot!"

Bob did not reply. He was making an effort to drag the two heads together.

Johnny Bull wrenched himself away, giving Bob a powerful shove that sent him staggering against the nabob. Johnny walked away with a grim brow. Hurree Singh staggered as Bob reeled against him, and they fell to the ground together.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

"Oh! Ah! Yah! Gerrof, you terrific chump!" howled the nabob.

Bob Cherry picked himself up, his eyes gleaming with wrath. If Johnny Bull had still been on the spot there would probably have been another rift in the lute. Fortunately, Johnny Bull was gone.

Bob dusted his jacket and frowned.

"I've a jolly good mind to——"

"No, you won't Bob!" said Harry Wharton. "Easy does it! Now, Inky——"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh rose, breathing hard.

"The enoughfulness is terrific!" he exclaimed. "The jawfulness is superfluous, and I will never again speakfully address the honourable and ridiculous Bull! That is statful!"

"Look here, Inky——"

"Bosh!"

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Wharton, in angry perplexity. "You're as big a silly idiot as Bull!"

"Rats!"

"What?"

"The ratfulness is terrific!"

"Look here! You can't keep on cat-and-dog terms with Bull! You're both playing in the Redclyffe match on Wednesday."

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh shook his head at once.

"I cannot playfully enter the eleven if the disgusting Bull plays!" he said decidedly.

"You howling chump!" roared Bob Cherry. "Do you think we are going to leave out our best bowler?"

"You can't be spared, Inky," said Wharton. "You've got to play!"

"Not if the esteemed Bull is in the team!"

"Look here——"

"I am terrifically sorrowful, but the dignity of a Nabob of Bhanipur is at stake!"

"Oh, blow your dignity, and blow Bhanipur!" said Bob Cherry crossly.

"What is Bhanipur, anyway—a one-eyed place, about as big as Friardale, I suppose?"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh gave his chum a quiet look, and walked away without a word. Bob snorted.

"Easy does it, Bob!" said Nugent.

"You'll be quarrelling with Inky next."

"I've a jolly good mind to quarrel with both the silly asses!" growled Bob

Cherry. "I can tell you I'm getting fed-up with this rot!"

"It's dushed awkward!" said Harry, knitting his brows. "They've both got to play in the Redclyffe match. They're both booked to come over to Cliff House with us in a few days, too, and they can't let Marjorie see them scowling at one another. Let's go and talk to Johnny, as the other silly ass won't listen to reason."

The three juniors found Johnny Bull on the cricket-ground. He gave them rather a grim look as they came up.

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, came down with his bat under his arm, and glanced at them curiously. The chums of the Remove did not notice him.

"Look here, Johnny," said Wharton, "something's got to be done! There's the Redclyffe match on Wednesday!"

"What about it?"

"You'll have to make it up with Inky before then."

"Hang Inky!"

"It's got to be done. The silly ass says he won't play if you're in the team, so you've got to make it up. See?"

"He says that, does he?"

"Yes; so you see——"

"I've got something to say, too," said Johnny Bull, in his slow, deliberate way.

"I won't play if Inky's in the team!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Getting deaf?"

"Look here, you silly fathead——"

"Bow-wow!"

Johnny Bull drove his hands deep into his pockets and stalked away. Wharton, Nugent, and Bob Cherry looked at one another in dismay.

"Well, what a merry pair!" ejaculated Bob, in great exasperation. "Serve them right to boot both of them out of the eleven!"

"And get licked by Redclyffe!" said Nugent.

"It may come to it, all the same," said Wharton, knitting his brows. "Private rows can't be allowed to interfere with cricket. If they both stick to that, they'll both go out of the team, if we're licked ten times over by Redclyffe!"

"He, he, he!"

The chums of the Remove glared at Billy Bunter, as he interjected his unmusical giggle into the discussion.

"What are you he-he-ing about, you fat chump?" demanded Bob gruffly.

"He, he, he! It's rather funny, you know!" chortled Bunter. "The whole Form's tickled to death by this game! Skinner says you chaps ought to be on the front page of 'Chuckles'! He, he, he!"

Wharton coloured with annoyance. Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh took their quarrel seriously enough; but there was an element of the ridiculous in it, as in most quarrels. It was not agreeable to Harry Wharton & Co. to furnish merriment for a fellow like Bunter.

"So you think it's funny?" growled Bob Cherry. "Do you think this funny, too?"

He lifted his boot, and Billy Bunter dodged in time.



"I say, you fellows— Keep off, you beast! Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter fled, with his sense of humour checked for the time. But the dispute in the camp of the Famous Five was regarded humorously by most of the Remove fellows, and it made Harry Wharton & Co. very restive. Something had to be done—that was certain; but what was to be done was a question to which at present the Co. could find no answer.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Skinner is Disgusted!

VERNON-SMITH dropped into Study No. 1 that afternoon when Wharton and Nugent were finishing their frugal war-time tea. Bob Cherry was there, but Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh were in their own studies. Since the quarrel the Famous Five had not had a study tea in company.

"Hallo! Come in, Smithy!" said Wharton, cordially enough.

The ways of Wharton and those of the black sheep of Greyfriars were as wide as the poles asunder, but somehow there was a friendly feeling between them. They did not, and could not, associate; but that fact had not wholly banished mutual regard.

"There's a shrimp left," said Nugent hospitably; "and if you bring your own bread-and-butter and sugar—"

"Thanks! I haven't come to tea!" said the Bounder, laughing. "I've dropped in to speak to you chaps. If you don't mind—I don't mean to be interfering, of course—but it's all over Lower School that you've got trouble in the happy family!"

"I suppose it is," assented Wharton. "Two heads are better than one," suggested the Bounder. "If I could help to straighten things out in any way—"

Wharton gave him rather a curious look. The Bounder in the role of peace-maker struck him as rather odd. It did not seem to consort with Smithy's hard, rather cynical character.

"If you'd rather I minded my own bizney, I'll travel," said Vernon-Smith. "But I'm really sorry to see you fellows at loggerheads. It may interfere with the cricket, too!"

"Not at all," said Harry. "I don't see what's to be done, and you may be able to give us some good advice. It was about that affair of Inky's Indian pal, Kuri Din, last week. You discovered how the fellow got mixed up with some shady sharpers, and he wrote to Inky to help him out—in confidence, of course. Inky couldn't explain, as it wasn't his secret; and, you know, a lot of the fellows concluded that he was playing the giddy ox himself!"

"It did look like it," said the Bounder.

"You got out the truth, Smithy, and it was jolly decent of you," said Harry. "Then we thought it was all over; but it wasn't. Inky had given us his word, as Nabob of Bhanipur and General High Panjandrum, that he wasn't mixed up in anything shady, but without explaining what it all meant. We took his word. It wanted some swallowing, considering how matters looked. Johnny Bull wouldn't, unless he explained the whole bizney!"

"I see!"

"Of course, Inky had no right to put himself in suspicious circumstances, and ask fellows to take his word against all evidence. At the same time, he considered that his friends were bound to take his word. Rights and wrongs on both sides, you see. Johnny told him he was sorry he hadn't taken his word; but Inky was on the high horse, and that wasn't enough. So Johnny got his

back up next. So now they've both got their backs up," concluded Wharton ruefully; "and if either would make an advance, the other won't accept it. And neither will, anyway!"

"They came jolly near a fight, but we stopped that," remarked Nugent.

The Bounder smiled.

"That's what I should suggest—a good scrap. They'll both feel better when they've hammered one another!"

Wharton shook his head decidedly.

"There's not going to be any hammering. Besides, Inky's a good man, but he's no match for Johnny. It wouldn't be a fair scrap. And it wouldn't do any good—I'm sure of that!"

The Bounder looked very thoughtful. He took a case from his pocket, and selected a cigarette.

The grim stare of Wharton and Nugent recalled him to himself, and he laughed, colouring a little, and put away the smokes.

"Sorry! I forgot where I was," he

chaps, only a bit obstinate. I'll put on my thinking-cap!"

The Bounder, with a nod, quitted the study. He almost ran into Skinner, and gave him a suspicious look. Skinner had been very near the study door.

"Listening!" sneered the Bounder.

Skinner followed him to his own study without replying. There the Bounder lighted his cigarette, and Skinner gave him an eager look.

"I heard you talking to those chaps in No. 1," said Skinner. "It was a good dodge—quite your old style, Smithy. Get Bull and Inky to fisticuffs, and they won't make it up again in a hurry!"

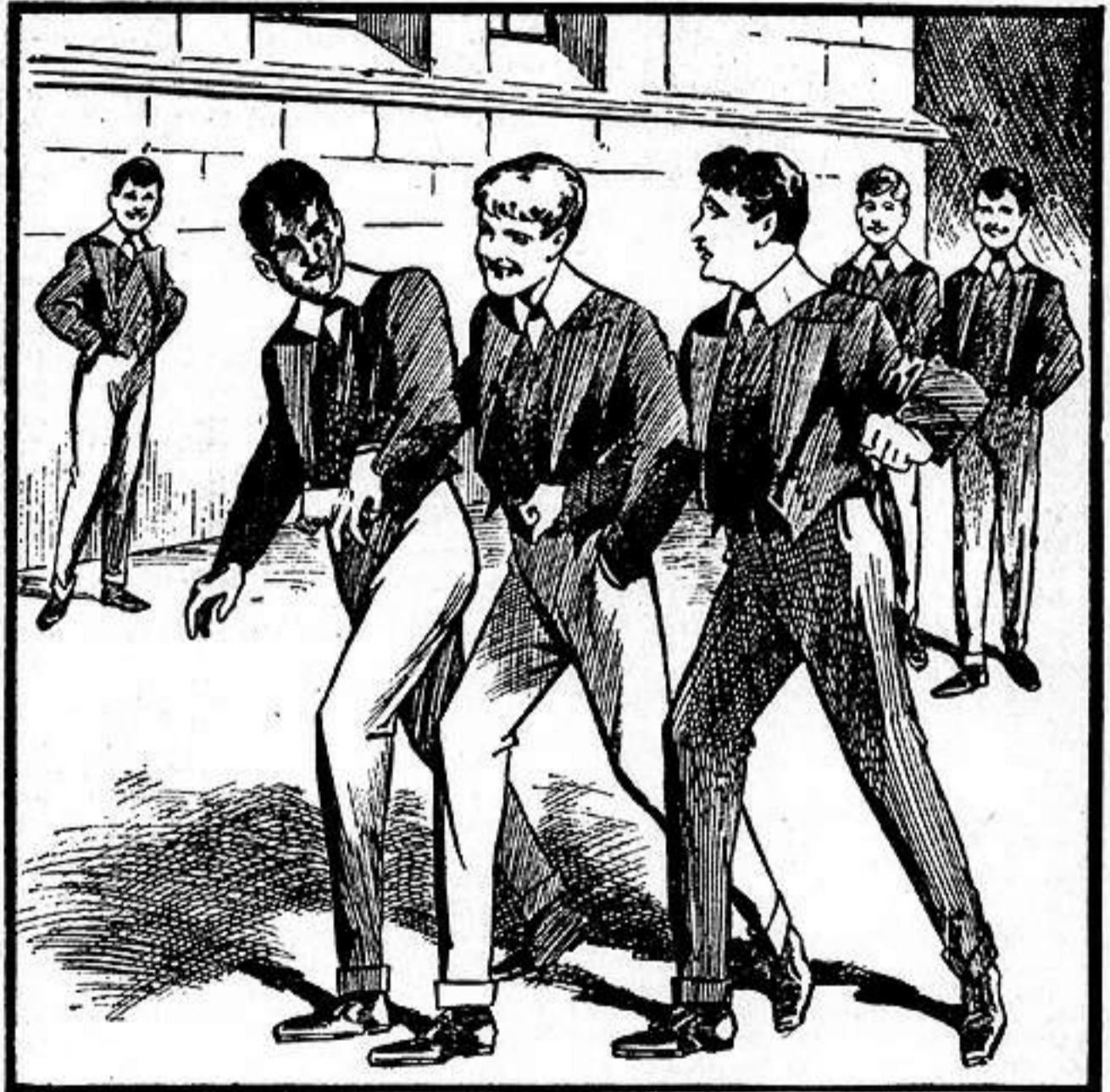
The Bounder looked at him coolly through little puffs of smoke.

"Did you think that was my object?" he asked.

"Well, wasn't it?"

The Bounder laughed, and did not answer.

"Look here, Smithy, don't you see your chance?" said Skinner eagerly. "If



Bob does his best! (See Chapter 1.)

said, with a touch of his old, sardonic grin. "Nothing of that kind here. Sorry I've shocked you!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bob. "Put that rubbish in the grate, and set a match to it!"

"That would be a waste in war-time, wouldn't it?" said the Bounder, laughing. "What are you going to do about the match on Wednesday, Wharton? Can those two duffers pull together well enough to play in the same team?"

"It appears not."

"That will be awkward."

"Dashed awkward!" growled Wharton. "It will mean more trouble. I'm not going to have the cricket mucked up, I know that. But—but I'd be glad to get over this blessed quarrel, and see them on the old terms. If you could think of a dodge, Smithy—I know you're jolly deep, and you might—"

"I'll try," said the Bounder simply. "There's a way out of every difficulty, if you can find it; and they're both good

you work it, you can easily manage to see that those fools don't make it up again. And if they're left out of the eleven on Wednesday, there's a place for you for the asking. In fact, you won't need to ask; Wharton will ask you. The fellows will make him if he doesn't!"

"By gad! That's quite keen of you, Skinner!"

"And there's a chance for you to squeeze in as captain of the Remove, now that gang is split up," said Skinner. "You could manage it, Smithy, if you played your cards well!"

The Bounder laughed.

"I believe that's your game, anyway!" growled Skinner. "I don't see why you can't trust me. I'm backing you up. We've had our differences, but that was your fault. I'm backing you up now!"

"You're rather an unreliable backer, old sport," said the Bounder; "and I'm not ambitious. Wharton makes a better Form captain than I should!"



"I don't see what that's got to do with it."

"You wouldn't!" assented the Bounder.

"Oh, come off!" growled Skinner. "I'd be glad to give those lofty rotters a fall, and you're the only chap in the Remove who could make a stand against them. Field might, but he won't; and Toddy tried it, and gave it up, like an ass! It would be ripping to bring them down off their perch, and now's your chance. A house divided against itself cannot stand, you know!"

Vernon-Smith looked oddly at his study-mate.

The black sheep of Greyfriars had gone back to the old, dark ways that had first earned him the title of the "Bounder." But he had not gone all the way. His conduct in many respects was utterly reckless and rotten; in others he showed scruples and a sense of honour that puzzled and exasperated Skinner.

It was really something of a temptation to the Bounder. It was, as Skinner said, a chance, and at one time he would have welcomed that chance, and made the most of it.

But if the temptation to evil moved him for a moment, it was only for a moment. He laughed lightly.

"I'd help you all I could," said Skinner.

"Good!" said the Bounder. "Put your thinking-cap on, then, old scout, and help me think it out—what I'd better do to—"

He paused.

"To what?" asked Skinner eagerly.

"To make it up between Bull and Inky!"

Skinner stared.

"Is that a joke?" he demanded.

"Not at all!"

"You silly ass!" roared Skinner. "If you're pulling my leg—"

"Not in the least. That's the job on hand at present," said the Bounder coolly. "Now, Skinney, old chap, what would you say was the best way of getting those two chaps to make up their little differences?"

Skinner did not reply to that question. He gave the Bounder a look of utter disgust, and quitted the study, slamming the door after him with a terrific slam.

Vernon-Smith chuckled, and lighted another cigarette.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Bunter's Luck Is Out!

SQUIFF and Fisher T. Fish looked at Johnny Bull rather curiously when he came into Study No. 14 for prep.

Johnny's face was grim; he had looked grim almost continually since the breaking off of his friendship with Hurree Janset Ram Singh. Sampson Quincy Iffley Field made no remark; but Fisher T. Fish, who was not famous for tact, indulged in a chortle.

"Still keeping up that stunt?" he inquired.

"That what?" growled Johnny Bull.

"Stunt!"

"What do you mean, fathead?"

"I guess I mean what I say."

"Can't you talk English?" demanded Johnny Bull. "Or, if you come to that, can't you keep off talking at all?"

"Oh, don't you go off on your ear!" remonstrated Fisher T. Fish. "I guess you tickle me some. I reckon I'm really on your side, you jay! I never could stand niggers!"

Johnny Bull glared at him. As he was no longer on friendly terms with Hurree Singh, it certainly did not matter to him if Fishy called the Nabob of Bhanipura a nigger. But he looked as if it did.

"You silly, bony, scarecrowy chump!"

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said Johnny Bull, in measured tones.

"Do you want me to rub your bony nose in the carpet?"

"Nope!" said Fisher T. Fish, in astonishment.

"Then dry up!"

"But I calculate—"

"Dry up!" roared Johnny Bull, so ferociously that Fisher T. Fish dried up on the spot.

Squiff indulged in a grin. Johnny Bull sat down to his work with knitted brows. The three juniors were still busy when Billy Bunter's big spectacles gleamed in at the study door. The Owl of the Remove bestowed a friendly nod upon them.

"I say, Bull—"

"Oh, get out!"

Johnny Bull did not seem to be in a good temper.

"Oh, really, Bull! I've got something to tell you."

"Go and eat coke!"

"The fact is, old chap, I'm on your side!" said Bunter, blinking at him.

"Buzz off!"

"I never could stand Inky," continued Bunter, unheeding. "What do you think the black beast did to-day? Actually refused to cash a postal-order for me, though he's had a remittance. Refused me, you know!"

"Did you have any postal-order?" grinned Squiff.

"I'm expecting it first thing in the morning," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "That black beast—Hullo! Leggo my neck, Bull!"

Johnny Bull had taken hold of Bunter's fat neck, and he did not let go. Without a word, he lifted Bunter's solid weight, carried him into the passage, and dumped him down, with a heavy bump. Then he went back into the study and closed the door with a bang.

The Owl of the Remove sat and gasped for some moments. Then he put his glasses straight on his fat little nose, and scrambled up.

"Beast!" he yelled through the key-hole. And he fled before the door could be opened again.

He hurried into the next study, and closed the door behind him. That study was No. 13, and Bob Cherry, Hurree Singh, Mark Linley, and Wun Lung were at work there. They did not seem glad to see Bunter. In fact, they did not look up from their prep, and Bunter blinked from one to another without succeeding in catching an eye.

"I say, you fellows!"

Stony silence.

"I say, Inky, I've come in to speak to you."

The Nabob of Bhanipur went on sedately with his task.

"As a pal of yours, Inky, I felt bound to tell you," said Bunter, "that fearful cad, Bull—"

Hurree Janset Ram Singh looked up then.

"Will the esteemed beastly Bunter clearly buzz out of the study?" he asked politely. "Otherwise, I shall have to take him by his estimable neck."

"Oh, really, Inky! As a pal, I was bound to tell you," said Bunter. "If you could hear the way Bull's talking about you—calling you names, and running you down, you know. I—I say, Inky, what are you going to do with that stump?"

"I am going to lick a fat rotter thrashfully," said Hurree Singh.

"I—I say— Yaroooh!"

Whack, whack, whack!

The nabob's left hand grasped Bunter's collar; the right applied the stump, and William George Bunter squirmed and roared. He had not the remotest idea why Inky had made this unexpected assault upon his podgy person.

"Yaroooh! Leave off, you black

beast!" roared Bunter. "I'm on your side, you silly ass! Yarooop! I'm backing you up, old chap! Yah! Oh! You black rotter! Yooooop!"

Billy Bunter jerked himself away, and dodged out of the study. He fled as far as Study No. 1 before he discovered that he was not pursued, and then he stopped to pump in breath.

"Yow! The black rotter!" he gasped. "Yow-ow-ow! What did he go for me for, the dangerous maniac? Yow-ow!"

Billy Bunter opened the door of No. 1, and blinked in. Wharton and Nugent were working, and the former looked up for a moment, to point at the door.

"I say you fellows—"

"Buzz off, and get your prep done," said Wharton. "You'll have Quelchy on your track in the morning!"

"I've done all the prep I'm going to do," growled Bunter. "I don't believe in overdoing it. Quelchy mayn't want me to construe, either. Blow Quelchy! Look here, Wharton, I've been brutally assaulted—"

"You'll get another dose if you don't let a chap work, you fat slacker!"

"That disgusting nigger, Inky went for me with a cricket-stump!"

"Didn't he give you enough?"

"Eh? Yes!"

"Then what have you come here for?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I think you ought to take it up, as captain of the Remove. I'll hold your jacket!"

"I'll hold your ear, if you don't buzz off!"

"If you heard what Inky's been saying about you—"

Wharton jumped.

"About me?"

"Yes," said Bunter, encouraged. A strict regard for the truth was not one of William George Bunter's weaknesses. "He don't like you keeping friendly with that beast Bull, you know?"

"Oh!" said Harry, looking very grimly at the fat junior.

But the Owl of the Remove was too short-sighted to see the danger-signal in his eyes, and he rattled on.

"I felt bound to remonstrate, as your pal, you know, when Inky was running you down, and he went for me with a stump—"

Billy Bunter got no further.

Wharton was diving for his bat, which stood in a corner. Bunter was not specially keen, but he knew what that meant, and he made a jump for the door.

The end of the bat prodded him forcibly behind as he fled, and he landed in the passage on his hands and knees, roaring.

"Yah! Beast! Yow!"

Slam!

Bunter picked himself up, in a fury.

"Yah! Come out here, and I'll lick you!" he roared.

There was a movement in Study No. 1, and Bunter sped away. By the time the door opened he was in No. 7, his own study. Harry Wharton laughed, and went back to his prep.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were at work in No. 7, and Bunter ought to have been. Bunter had a little way of neglecting his prep, and chancing it with the Remove-master in the morning. Peter looked up as Bunter stood pumping in breath.

"Hullo! Been in the wars, fatty?"

"Beasts!" gasped Bunter. "It's that rotter Wharton, Toddy!"

"Oh, Wharton's a rotter, is he?" said Peter.

"Yes. He went for me like a mad Hun, because—because"—Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his glasses—"because I wouldn't stand him calling you names, Toddy."



"Calling me names?" said Peter Todd, fixing his eyes upon Bunter.

"Yes; running down my pal, you know," said Bunter. "Calling you a skinny scarecrow, and a poor rotter of a solicitor's son—"

"I can't quite imagine Wharton using those delicate and tactful expressions," remarked Peter Todd. "But I can imagine you trying to make trouble between two fellows, Bunter. I keep a cricket-stump for such occasions. Where will you have it?"

"Yarook! Keep off, you beast! Yow-ow-ow!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Billy Bunter dodged frantically round the table, and Peter sat down calmly to resume his prep. Bunter glared at him with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"Ow! You rotter!"

"Shut up!"

"I say, Dutton"—Bunter grabbed his deaf study-mate by the shoulder, and Tom Dutton gave him an inquiring look—"Dutton, old man!"

"Eh?"

"You back me up, old chap!"

"I don't see why I should crack you up, Bunter! More likely to run you down. I don't think much of you!"

"Oh, you deaf chump!"

"Yes; I saw the stump! I dare say you asked for it, or Peter wouldn't have lammed you! You're always asking for it!"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"Look here, Dutton—"

"Eh?"

"Peter Todd's a beast!" roared Bunter. "You can lick him! I'll hold your jacket if you will—see?"

"No; I don't see any packet! What packet do you mean?"

"Oh, my hat! Will you lick him for me?"

Dutton stared at Bunter in astonishment.

"Sure you want me to?" he asked.

"Yes, yes!"

"I'll do it, if you want me to!"

"Go it!"

Tom Dutton spun the fat junior round with a sudden grasp, and planted a heavy boot behind him. The surprised Owl stumbled over, and rolled on the carpet. He sat up and glared at the deaf junior.

"You—you—you idiot! What did you do that for?" he shrieked.

"Eh? You asked me to kick you, didn't you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.

"You—you—you—" spluttered Bunter.

He did not address any more remarks to Tom Dutton. Bunter suspected sometimes that Tom was not quite so deaf as he made out; and he did not want to be misunderstood again in the same way.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Bob Cherry Thinks It Out!

"I'VE got it!"

Bob Cherry made that announcement as the Remove came out of the Form-room on the following morning.

Bob had been thinking during lessons.

Bob was not much given to thinking. And his Form-master ought really to have been pleased to see him in a thoughtful mood. But as Bob was thinking about the dispute between Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, instead of the more ancient dispute between Julius Cæsar and Orgetorix, Mr. Quelch was not pleased. Bob had earned fifty lines in class as a consequence.

But fifty lines could not dash Bob's cheery spirits. Besides, as he announced triumphantly, he had "got it."

"Got what?" asked Nugent.

Wharton did not speak. He was glancing after his two estranged friends. Johnny Bull had gone out into the quadrangle with Squiff and Tom Brown; and Hurree Janset Ram Singh was bestowing his company upon Wun Lung, the little Chinese.

The Famous Five were never together now. As Johnny carefully avoided Hurree Singh, and the nabob carefully avoided him, they had to keep away from the other three members of the Co., or they would always have been coming into contact.

Indeed, Skinner had suggested a new name for the diminished Co.—the Mournful Three, instead of the Famous Five.

"I've got the idea," said Bob—"I've been thinking it over in class—"

"Oh! That's why you told Quelch that Orgetorix saved the life of Julius Cæsar?" grinned Nugent.

"Never mind Quelch, and blow Julius Cæsar, and bless Orgetorix! Come where we can talk quietly, and I'll let you in."

"But what's it all about?"

"About those two silly asses, of course."

"Oh, all right!" said Wharton, not very hopefully.

It did not seem to him probable that Bob had thought of a way out of the difficult situation.

But Bob was evidently brimming with satisfaction. He led his chums to a bench under the elms, where they could not be overheard, and proceeded to explain.

"You see, they've got to be dealt with tactfully," Bob began.

"And you're famous for tact!" Nugent remarked, in a thoughtful sort of way.

"Look here, you ass—"

"Oh, get on with the washing! How are you going to treat them tactfully?"

"They've both got their silly backs up, and won't come round," said Bob.

"But suppose something dramatic happened?"

"A performance of the Remove Dramatic Society, do you mean?"

"Of course I don't!" roared Bob.

"I don't see how it would improve matters, anyhow."

"If you're going to be funny, Nugent—"

"I'm not! I'm leaving that to you. Go on!"

"Something dramatic!" repeated Bob.

"Suppose Johnny were to save Inky's life?"

"Eh?"

"Or Inky were to save Johnny's life?"

"My hat!"

"It doesn't matter which," said Bob.

"But that would work the oracle, you know. Suppose Inky was attacked by—by footpads, or—German spies, or something, and Johnny rescued him, then there would be a reconciliation, of course. Suppose the school caught fire, and Johnny carried Inky down from a high window on his back, why, they'd make it up at once!"

"You're thinking of setting fire to the school?" asked Nugent blandly.

"Oh, you ass! No!"

"I think the Head would object, if you did."

"Or suppose," said Bob, with a glare at Nugent—"suppose a runaway horse were rushing down on Inky, and Johnny jumped in the way—"

"My hat! He would get hurt, I think!"

"Johnny would do it!" said Bob.

"Yes; I dare say he would. But we haven't any runaway horses here. And we're not allowed to bring horses inside the gates."

"You're such a practical beast, Nugent! I said 'suppose'!"

"Oh, I see! Suppose Bull saved Inky from a runaway horse, and suppose they made it up on the strength of it; and suppose everything in the garden was lovely!" assented Nugent. "And suppose the sky should fall! Then there would be catching of larks, wouldn't there?"

"There'll be catching of thick ears if you don't stop being funny!" growled Bob Cherry. "I think it's a ripping idea myself!"

"But what's the idea exactly—setting fire to the school, or getting a horse to run away in the Remove passage?"

"You silly ass!" roared Bob.

"Well, as for the German spies, I don't see how we're to arrange for them to chip in. We don't know any German spies—we're not naturalised Britons."

"Look here—"

"Or footpads?" Nugent shook his head. "I don't know any footpads who would oblige us. None on my visiting-list."

"Cheese it, Frank!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Look here, Bob, what are you driving at? Inky or Johnny would play up like anything if the other silly idiot was in danger. But he isn't. Dramatic things don't happen, you know. It may be a hundred years before a runaway horse comes along, and then they mayn't both be on the spot at once, you know."

"Of course, my idea is to wangle it," said Bob gruffly. "But if you don't want to hear the wheeze—"

"But we do! Pile in!"

"Well, we've got to fix up some danger for Inky to fall in. Not a real danger, of course. I was only putting a case. We wangle it for Inky to be in some imaginary danger—see?—and for Bull to be on the spot and rescue him. Then Inky would be grateful, and Johnny would be bucked, and both of 'em in a good temper, and—and there you are!"

Wharton and Nugent looked at one another. Bob seemed so pleased with his remarkable scheme that his chums did not like to express their opinion of it.

"Well?" said Bob huffily.

"Ahem!"

"If you can think of a better wheeze, get it off your chest!"

"Well, we can't!" admitted Wharton.

"Suppose it fails?" said Bob. "Well, that only leaves matters where they were before. No harm done."

"That's so!" agreed Nugent.

"We'll give it a trial," said Wharton, smiling. "Give us the details. What danger is Inky to fall into?"

"Well, there's the river," said Bob, more amiably. "Suppose you take him out in a boat and drop him overboard somehow?"

"Inky swims like a fish."

"Might knock him on the head with a boathook," remarked Nugent. "But I don't believe that would make Inky feel grateful, or put him into a good temper either."

"I suppose the river's barred, as the silly ass can swim!" said Bob, taking no notice of Nugent's remark. "What about a couple of hooligans attacking him?"

"Where are your hooligans?"

"Well, Smithy knows those rough rotters at the Cross Keys. You know, he got two or three of them to collar Ogilvy and me one day—"

"That's ancient history!" said Harry.

"I'm not raking it up, fathead—only illustrating. Suppose we ask Smithy to give us an introduction to some of the scoundrels he knows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A couple of them would take it on



for a few bob—they're awfully short of beer these days," said Bob. "Well, they set on Inky. Johnny Bull comes by—"

"But if you tell Johnny, he'll know it's all spoof."

"I'm not going to tell Johnny, you howling ass!"

"Then he won't come by at the right time."

"Oh, you make me tired!" said Bob. "Of course, that will have to be wangled, too. One of us will be taking a walk with Johnny Bull about the same time in that direction—see?"

"H'm!"

"I think it would work like a charm," said Bob obstinately. "Johnny's a good sort, though he's got his silly back up. If he saw a couple of Huns going for Inky, he would chip in at once. Well, after that, how could they go on scowling at one another? They couldn't!"

"If it worked!" said Wharton doubtfully.

"Oh, it would work!"

"Ahem!"

"Well, I'm going to try it," said Bob. "You two silly asses can help me or not, just as you like."

"Oh, we'll help!" said Nugent. "It won't do any harm, and it will be fun—"

"It won't be fun—it's jolly serious!"

"Right-ho! We'll help, and be as serious as we can. Shall we go down to the Cross Keys now and see Smithy's scoundrels?"

"H'm! On second thoughts, we'd better keep clear of that gang," said Bob, after a moment's thought.

"Well, there are lots of scoundrels," said Frank. "You find 'em everywhere. Let's take a trot out now and look for some scoundrels."

Bob gave him a suspicious look, but Nugent was quite grave. Bob rose from the bench.

"We've got time before dinner," he said. "Come on! Some tramps would do, or—or anything!"

The three juniors walked out of the school gates in search of scoundrels. Unless they found some scoundrels, Bob's great idea could not be worked.

Nugent remarked that there were a good many scoundrels about, but they were mostly engaged on war-profiteering, and were not likely to be met in Friardale Lane. Bob paid no heed to that remark. He marched on, keeping his eyes well about him, as if he expected to find some scoundrels taking the fresh air in the lane that morning.

He halted suddenly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There they are!"

"Eh? Who?"

"The chaps we want! Come on!"

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Job For Two!

**T**WO gentlemen were leaning on the stile in Friardale Lane. They were rather seedy and dirty gentlemen, with unwashed and beery faces. They were sucking at black, smelly pipes which were empty of tobacco.

The Greyfriars juniors had often seen tramps in the lanes about the school; but they did not remember having seen two more beery, dirty, unkempt specimens than these two.

Wharton and Nugent had a very natural hesitation about approaching them; but Bob, full of his splendid idea, marched them on at once. The two tramps were a stroke of good luck just then, from Bob's point of view.

They looked up, wearily and beerily, as the three juniors came up. The three were glad it was a sunny day instead of

a dark night. The two gentlemen by the stile would not have been agreeable to meet on a dark night.

"Good-afternoon!" said Bob affably.

"Arternoon, sir!" said one of the tramps, blinking at him. "Ain't got a copper you could spare for a pore man, sir?"

"Looking for a job?" asked Bob.

The tramp blinked at him.

"Jest so, sir! Tramping the country in search of work," he said.

"I can give you a tip, if you like," said Nugent. "Farmer Johnson wants hands. He's hung up for labour since his last men were taken for the Army. Like me to show you the way?"

"Which I'm that weak with 'unger, sir, I couldn't do a stroke," said the seedy gentleman pathetically. "Arter a square meal, I'd be glad, sir, if you'd be so kind. Wouldn't we, 'Uggins?"

"We would, 'Arold," said the other tramp, licking his dry lips and casting a glance out of the corner of his eye at the red roof of the Cross Keys across the fields.

"Well, look here," said Bob. "I can give you two chaps a job, if you like—quite easy, and five bob for doing it."

Mr. Huggins and Harold eyed him dubiously. If their tramping was connected with work at all, it was probably their object to elude rather than to find it. The offer of a job did not evoke enthusiasm on their part.

"Wot's the job?" asked 'Arold, at last.

"It's a sort of practical joke, really," said Bob. "We want you to go for a chap—"

"Who's the chap?"

"A schoolboy."

"Oh!" said Mr. Huggins heartily. "I catch on! We're to knock a chap about?"

It was pretty clear that Bob had succeeded in finding a scoundrel.

"Not exactly," said Bob hastily.

"Not that. The fact is, it's a joke. We want you to hang about here till the chap comes along, and then pretend to attack him and rob him. Only pretend, you know. You're not to hurt him—not at any price. He's a pal of ours."

"Oh!"

"Then another chap will run up and pitch into you," said Bob.

"Will he?"

"Yes; part of the game, you know."

"Oh, it's a game, is it?" said Mr. Huggins.

"That's it—a sort of game. When the second chap rushes up, you buzz off, you see, and—and that's all. And I'll make it five bob."

Mr. Huggins and 'Arold looked at one another. Their impression seemed to be that Bob Cherry was a young gentleman who was not quite right in his head. But five shillings was five shillings!

"I reckon we could do that!" said 'Arold, after a pause. "Money down, sir."

He glanced across the field at the Cross Keys as he spoke.

Bob Cherry was not a suspicious youth. But he was not quite a duffer; and he could not help suspecting that if the two boozey gentlemen were paid in advance they were very unlikely to be on the scene to carry out the contract. Their looks did not inspire confidence.

"Money after the job's done," said Bob. "We'll meet you here, and square up."

The two tramps shook their heads simultaneously.

"Too thirsty—I mean, too hungry," said Mr. Huggins.

"Make it 'arf down, and 'arf arter!" suggested 'Arnold.

"That's fair!" said Wharton.

Bob Cherry nodded.

"Right-ho! Half-a-crown down," he said. "Come here at six this evening and then there's the other half-a-crown."

"Right you are, sir!"

The two tramps were evidently on. The job was so easy that even their disinclination to work of any kind was overcome. And they were impelled by thirst.

Bob felt in his pocket, and produced a shilling. Wharton added another shilling, and Nugent sixpence.

"There you are!" said Bob. "Now, in about an hour the chap will come here. You'll know him at once. He's an Indian—dark, you know."

"A nigger?" inquired 'Arold.

"No, no; an Indian—brown chivvy, and dressed in Etons," said Bob.

"We'll know 'im all right, if he's a darkey."

"Well, you rush on him, and—and shout, and—and collar him, and so on," said Bob. "When the other chap rushes up, you scoot. Not much trouble."

"Easy as moppin' up four-arf," assented Mr. Huggins. "We'll be 'ere, sir. We'll go and get somethin' to—to eat fust, sir."

And the two seedy gentlemen made a direct line for the Cross Keys.

Bob Cherry looked triumphantly at his chums.

"Well, what do you think now?" he demanded.

"I think we'd better buck up, or we shall be late for dinner," remarked Nugent.

"Bother dinner!"

The three juniors started for the school.

"Don't you think it will work?" demanded Bob.

"Ye-e-s, perhaps!" said Wharton. "I hope so. How are we going to get Inky on the spot, though?"

"Get him to go down to Friardale after dinner for something."

"And Johnny?"

"Bring him out for a walk as soon as Inky's started."

"But if we're on the spot, too, sha'n't we be expected to go to the rescue as much as Johnny?"

"Oh! I—I hadn't thought of that a bit!" confessed Bob Cherry. "Of course, it's no good our going to the rescue. Look here. We'll all rush to the rescue, and we'll stumble over something and fall down, and leave the bizney to Johnny."

"All serene! I hope it will work."

"Why shouldn't it?" demanded Bob.

"Ahem! Let's get in to dinner; I'm hungry."

And the chums of the Remove went in to dinner, Bob Cherry, at least, feeling quite satisfied with the scheme to bring about the much-desired reconciliation between Johnny Bull and the Nabob of Bhanipur.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### The Game of Spoof!

**I**NKY, old chap—"  
Bob Cherry collared the Nabob of Bhanipur when the fellows came out after dinner. Hurree Singh gave him a cheerful smile.

"What is the desirfulness, my esteemed chum?" he asked.

"I want a chap to go down to Friardale for me."

"I will go with terrific pleasurefulness, my worthy Bob," said the obliging nabob at once.

"Good!"

"What is the wantfulness in Friardale?"

"I—I want some stamps," said Bob.

"Sure you don't mind, Inky? Get me six stamps at the post-office, you know."

"It will be pleasurefulness, my worthy



chum," said Inky, looking a little surprised, however. It was not like Bob to ask a fellow to take so much trouble for so trifling an object, neither was there any very apparent reason why Bob could not go himself. Naturally, Inky had no suspicion that he was being inveigled to walk into the spider's parlour, so to speak.

"Well, here's the tanner," said Bob.

"Right-ho!"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh took the sixpence, and Bob hurried after Wharton and Nugent, who were in the quadrangle.

"All serene—Inky's going," he said. "He's going to the village to get me some stamps, see? I think that was rather deep." And Bob Cherry grinned, a grin of appreciation at his own astuteness.

"The deepfulness is terrific, as Inky would say if he knew," chuckled Nugent.

Keeping by the elms, the three juniors watched the gates, to see the nabob start on his walk. After he had gone, it would be time to begin with Johnny Bull. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh came out of the School House a few minutes later. He looked round the quadrangle, and to the surprise of the three juniors came up to them instead of starting for the gates.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob. "Just off, Inky?"

"The off-fulness will not be necessary under the respected circumstances," explained the nabob. "Here are the worthy stamps."

He held out a row of six postage-stamps to Bob Cherry.

Bob blinked at them.

"The—the stamps!" he stammered.

"Yes, my esteemed Bob."

"But—but—you—you haven't been to Friardale!"

"It occurfully came into my esteemed brain to ask the venerable Quelchy for the stamps," explained Hurree Singh. "The ludicrous and honoured sahib gave me the stamps, and saved me a long-walkfully."

Bob Cherry took the stamps mechanically.

It was not an uncommon thing for the juniors to get stamps from their Form-master, as the post-office was a mile away. Bob, with all his astuteness, had not considered a little detail like that.

"Now, shall we practice cricketfully?" asked the nabob, beaming with good-humour.

Wharton and Nugent chuckled—they could not help it. The expression on Bob Cherry's face was too much for them.

"N-n-never mind the cricket now," stammered Bob. "I—I—I—if you don't mind going down to Friardale, Inky—"

"Not at allfully; but there is nothing to go for now, is there, my worthy Bob?"

"Ye-e-s, there is." Bob Cherry cudgelled his brains. Messrs. Huggins and 'Arold were waiting by this time, ready to commit assault and battery, so there was certainly something to go for. "You—you might drop in at the—the station—"

The nabob raised his eyebrows.

"Why should I dropfully call at the station?" he inquired.

"To—to see about the trains," said Bob. "The—the train to Redclyffe, you know. We're going over there to-morrow afternoon. They—they may have altered the time of the train."

"Yes, do," chimed in Wharton, coming to Bob's rescue. "I wish you would, Inky."

"I shall be pleasefully gratified to oblige my esteemed friends," said the nabob. "I will buzzfully depart at once on my excellent jigger."

"Hold on!" ejaculated Bob, as the nabob turned away.

Hurree Singh turned back.

"You—you're not going on your bike, Inky?" stammered Bob. It was

another difficulty. A fellow on a bike was likely to be much too elusive for Mr. Huggins and 'Arold to get hold of. It was necessary for Inky to walk.

"Yes, that will be more quickful," said the nabob. "The stitch in time, as your English proverb says, saves the cracked pitcher from going to the well."

"I—I wouldn't bike it, Inky."

"Why notfully?"

"Because—because——" Bob Cherry looked helplessly at his chums. At the game of spoof Bob was hopelessly out of the running. He simply could not think of a reason why the nabob should not "bike it."

"I'm going to borrow your bike, Inky," said Frank Nugent, feeling that it was his turn to help Bob out. "You don't mind, do you?"

"But you have a bike yourself, my excellent Franky."

"Puncture!" said Frank, which was, happily, the case. He remembered the puncture just in time.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh gave Nugent a rather peculiar look. It was quite unlike Frank to borrow his bike when he was just going to ride it, and give him a walk for nothing. It was as odd as Bob having asked him to walk down to the village to buy stamps. The nabob was getting curious.

"Very well, I will proceed walkfully," said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, and, to the great relief of his chums, he went down to the gates at last.

Bob Cherry fanned himself with his straw hat.

"It doesn't come easy to spoof a chap, does it?" he said. "Skinner would have done it as easily as anything. Now come and find Johnny."

Johnny Bull, seeing his friends in talk with the nabob, had marched off by himself, but Wharton had kept one eye on him. Johnny was run down in the quad.

"Come for a walk?" said Bob.

"Better get some cricket practice."

"Never mind that now. We're going for a walk down to Friardale."

"What for?"

"Oh, a—a—a walk, you know."

"Waste of time," said Johnny Bull.

"Better get some cricket."

"Oh, come on!" said Wharton. "Bless cricket!"

"Is Inky going?" asked Bull.

"Inky's gone out."

"Oh, all right! I'll come."

Johnny Bull sauntered down to the gates with his chums. Bob's ruddy face was full of satisfaction again now.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh was only a few minutes ahead, and the rest would be just far enough behind to spot the assault and battery, and chip in. The wheeze was working like a charm—so far.

"Let's go across the fields," said Bull, breaking in upon Bob's agreeable meditations. "No good sticking to a dusty road."

"Oh, no—let's keep on!" said Bob hurriedly.

"What for?"

"We're going to—to Friardale, you know."

"Well, there's a short cut through the wood," said Bull, puzzled. "It's a good bit more agreeable than the road."

Bob Cherry jumped. The thought came into his mind for the first time that Hurree Singh might have taken the foot-path through the wood. In that case, Messrs. Huggins and 'Arold would wait in vain at the stile, and waste their sweetness on the desert air.

Instead of replying to Bull, Bob Cherry ran up the grassy bank beside the road and scanned the lane ahead. He was greatly relieved to see the nabob some distance in advance, strolling on towards the village. Johnny Bull stared at Bob as he came back to the road.

"What are you up to?" he demanded.

"N-n-nothing."

"Well, are we going through the wood?" asked Bull.

"Put it to the vote!" said Bob desperately. "You fellows like to go through the wood, or stick to the road?"

"Stick to the road!" said Wharton and Nugent loyally.

Johnny Bull grunted.

"I think you're duffers," he remarked.

"All right. Come on!"

Johnny Bull yielded to the majority, and came on. But there was rather a suspicious look on his stolid countenance. He could not help thinking it odd that his companions were so bent upon following the road.

"Buck up!" said Bob Cherry, as Johnny Bull paused a few minutes later to gather a wild rose.

"Any hurry?" asked Bull.

"Nunno!"

"Then what is there to buck up for?"

"Well, you see— Oh, come on!" said Bob. "What do you want blessed wild roses for? Don't slack about!"

Johnny Bull grunted again, and walked on. There was a sudden sound of shouting on the road ahead, round the bend of the lane.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" exclaimed Bob. "Come on!"

"Sounds like a row!" said Bull.

"Yes. Come on!" exclaimed Bob excitedly.

"What for? We don't want to see a row, do we?"

"Ye-e-es. There—there may be somebody in—in need of—of help——"

"What rot!"

"Come on, you ass, I tell you!"

"Oh, I'm coming! It looks to me," said Johnny Bull deliberately, "as if you've got sunstroke, or something, Bob Cherry."

Bob did not reply. He had lost patience, and he grasped Johnny Bull by the arm, and rushed him, expostulating warmly, up the lane. Wharton and Nugent followed.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### No Rescue!

**H**URREE JAMSET RAM SINGH sauntered along the lane without a suspicion of danger. As he came in sight of the stile he noticed two seedy figures leaning upon it, as if in need of support, but gave them no special attention. The two tramps were looking ruddy and bleary, and their appearance hinted that they had not spent Bob Cherry's half-crown in getting a square meal. It was pretty evident, in fact, that the sum of two shillings and sixpence had gone in support of the liquor traffic. Mr. Huggins and 'Arold were devoted supporters of that great industry, and the half-crown had afforded them an opportunity of proving their loyalty once more.

Earlier in the day Mr. Huggins and 'Arold had been contributing to the prosperity of the brewing fraternity. Their latest visit to the Cross Keys had fairly put the lid on.

They were at the stile to watch for the "darkey," according to agreement to earn the other half-crown, further to quench their thirst. But as Hurree Singh came along their dizzy eyes saw two or three darkies, and they were not in a state to tackle one of them.

"'Ere he is, 'Arold!" said Mr. Huggins, blinking at the Nabob of Bhanipur. "You collar 'im, 'Arold, and I'll punch 'im!"

"Right-ho!" said 'Arold.

He let go of the stile, but grabbed it again immediately. Curiously enough,



Friardale Lane rose almost on end as he let go, and in the presence of that extraordinary phenomenon 'Arold had no resource but to hang on to the stile with both hands. The stile itself was going round and round, which was a little confusing to 'Arold.

Mr. Huggins, however, lurched towards Hurree Singh.

The nabob swerved to the other side of the road, not desiring to come nearer to the aroma of gin-and-bitters and other things exhaled by the tramp.

"You stop, darkey!" hiccuped Mr. Huggins. "You 'ear me?"

As the junior strode quickly past, Mr. Huggins made a lurch at him, and succeeded in grabbing his arm.

"Let me go at oncefully!" exclaimed the nabob angrily. "You disgusting and ludicrous rascal, take away your ridiculous paws!"

"Come on, 'Arold!" shouted Mr. Huggins.

"I'm a-comin'," said 'Arold. "Wot's the matter with this blinkin' road, 'Uggins? Why don't the road keep still? That's wot I arsk you, 'Uggins!"

"Let go!" shouted the nabob.

Mr. Huggins held on, and Hurree Singh, loth as he felt to hit an intoxicated man, gave him a drive in the chest, which caused him to sit down suddenly in the dust.

"Oh, s'elp me!" gasped Mr. Huggins.

He sat in the dust and blinked. There was a sound of rapid footsteps on the road.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh looked back, and was greatly surprised to see Harry Wharton & Co.

Bob Cherry rushed Johnny Bull on at a breathless rate, Johnny protesting vigorously.

"Go it, Johnny!" gasped Bob, as he rushed his astonished companion on the scene.

Bob let go Johnny's arm, and stumbled over, according to programme, leaving the rescue to Johnny Bull.

Wharton and Nugent were a dozen paces behind.

Possibly the great scheme would have worked like a machine—if there had only been any rescuing to do!

But Mr. Huggins was sitting dazedly in the dust, trying to collect his scattered wits, and 'Arold was still clinging helplessly to the stile, with the solar system floating dizzily round him.

"Go it, Johnny!"

"What are you driving at?" roared Johnny Bull. "Where am I to go, you ass?"

"Oh, my heye!" murmured Mr. Huggins helplessly.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh looked very curiously at his friends, and walked away towards the village.

Bob Cherry got up again. There was no need to remain down, as there was no rescue to be effected by Bull.

Wharton and Nugent came up, with crimson faces.

Johnny Bull glanced after the nabob, and glanced at Mr. Huggins, and glanced at his comrades. He was mystified and annoyed.

"What did you rush me along like that for, you fathead?" he demanded.

"Oh, rats!" said Bob crossly.

Bob came near to testing his boots on Mr. Huggins. The whole scheme had been an arrant failure, after so much trouble, owing to that gentleman's weakness for the cup that cheers but also inebriates.

Huggins staggered to his feet.

"I've been pushed hover!" he said aggressively. "Where's that blinkin' darkey? I been 'saulted! 'Arnold, why didn't you 'elp a pal?"

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"I ain't lettin' go this 'ere stile," said 'Arold. "There's something wrong with this 'ere road. Wot I says is, why can't this 'ere road keep still?"

"You're drunk!" snorted Mr. Huggins.

"I ain't drunk!" said 'Arold. "Wot 'ave I 'ad this blessed day, 'cept gin-and-bitters, and three goes of beer, and one rum, and the whisky? You're a liar, 'Erbert 'Uggins!"

"Well, of all the sells!" murmured Nugent.

"Oh, 'ere you are!" said Mr. Huggins, turning a beery eye upon Bob Cherry.

"I'll trouble you for that hother 'arf-crown, sir!"

Bob gave him a deadly look.

"Go and eat coke, you boozy beast!" he said.

"Wot! You howe me 'arf-a-crown, 'cording to 'greement. Don't the young gent howe us 'arf-a-crown, 'Arold?"

"E do that!" said 'Arold.

Bob Cherry set his lips. He was willing enough to pay the other half-crown, though the job had not been properly done. But it was decidedly awkward to have the matter thrashed out before Johnny Bull.

"What on earth do you owe the fellow half-a-crown for, Bob?" exclaimed Bull,

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in utter astonishment. "Surely you don't know him?"

"Of—of course I don't, you ass!"

"He says you owe him half-a-crown."

"He do!" roared Mr. Huggins, warlike at the bare idea of losing the further reward for his exertions. "Ain't I carried out the 'greement?"

"Shut up!" whispered Bob hastily.

"I ain't goin' to shut up! Didn't I collar the darkey 'cordin' to 'greement?" demanded Mr. Huggins indignantly.

"Ain't I been pushed hover? You paid 'arf down, and now the hother 'arf's doo. Pay up!"

"Pay up!" echoed 'Arold. "We've done the job, ain't we? We've waited 'ere 'arf a hower for that there nigger, and blinkin' thirsty all the time, you take it from me. Pay up!"

Johnny Bull looked at the crimson faces of his chums.

"What's the game?" he asked quietly.

"Oh, bother!"

"You've been tipping these ruffians to lay for Inky. What the merry thunder do you mean by it?"

"Only a game, says the young gent," said Mr. Huggins. "Nother young gent comes up to the reskoo, and then we clears orf. I'm on, says I. But 'ere you are—the job's done, and where's the 'arf-crown?"

"I think I see," remarked Johnny

Bull. "You howling asses, what did you play this silly game for?"

Bob looked helplessly at Wharton and Nugent. They were grinning; they could not help it.

There was an element of the comic in the egregious failure of Bob Cherry's extraordinary wheeze, though Bob could not see it at present.

"So that's why you wouldn't take the short cut through the wood!" said Johnny Bull. "That's why you grabbed me and dragged me along when you heard this boozy bounder shouting! You had this silly rot going on all ready for me, you howling ass!"

"Oh, you're a silly chump!" growled Bob Cherry at last. "I was going to make you rescue Inky, if you want to know, you silly burbler! Anything else you want to know, you howling jabberwock?"

"Fathead!"

With that, and a snort, Johnny Bull turned and strode back to the school. Bob gave a growl of disgust. Mr. Huggins echoed the growl. He was still uneasy about the half-crown.

"Wot I says—" he began.

"Same 'ere!" chimed in 'Arold.

Bob Cherry extracted a half-crown from his pocket, and threw it at Mr. Huggins, catching him on the nose. Then he strode away towards Greyfriars, with Wharton and Nugent grinning on either side of him.

Mr. Huggins fielded the half-crown, and started for the Cross Keys. 'Arold detached himself from the stile and followed—though he met with repeated disasters before he finally reached the haven of refuge.

Bob did not speak till the three juniors reached Greyfriars. Then he paused, to bestow a glare on his grinning chums.

"Well, it was a frost!" he said.

"Looks a bit like it," agreed Wharton.

"It would have been all right if those two horrible rotters hadn't spent the money in drink."

"Awful result of the drink traffic!" murmured Nugent.

"Now that idiot Bull knows the game, and it won't be possible to work the wheeze any other way."

"Fraid not! Otherwise, it isn't too late to set fire to the school, or to hunt up some German spies somewhere to—"

"You silly ass!" roared Bob.

He strode in at the gates in great dudgeon, and Wharton and Nugent chuckled, and followed him in. They met Johnny Bull again when they went to the Form-room, and he grinned at them—the humour of the situation having occurred to Johnny by that time. But Bob Cherry did not grin. He snorted. His great wheeze had been tried; and although certainly it had done no harm, it was equally certain that it had done no good. The rift in the lute was as wide as ever.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Not So Easy!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH looked into Study No. 1 that evening with a beaming smile upon his dusky face.

"My esteemed Wharton—" he began.

"Trot in, Inky!"

Inky trotted in.

"I have been thoughtfully reflecting upon the respectable cricket-match at Redclyffe to-morrow," said the nabob. "I am fearfully anxious that I might cause you some ludicrous inconvenience, my worthy chum, by stickfully standing out of the match. I wish to remark that I am yours orderfully to command."

"Oh, all serene!" said Wharton. "We want you, Inky."



"The time of the train is 2.15."  
 "Eh? What train?"  
 "The train for Redclyffe to-morrow-fully."  
 "Yes; I knew that."  
 "That is what I went to Friardale to ask inquiringly, my esteemed Wharton."  
 "Oh! Ah! Yes! I forgot!" stammered Harry.

The nabob gave him a very curious look. It was probable that Inky's keen mind saw something of the facts regarding his curious adventure at the stile. But he did not touch on the subject.

"I have been reflecting furtherfully," went on the nabob, in his purring voice. "It is impossible for me to overlookfully forget an esteemed insult to the honour of a Nabob of Bhanipur. But I do not wishfully desire to cause the terrific trouble and infuriation to my respectable chums. Under the ludicrous circumstances, I am preparefully ready to accept the rotten and handsome apology of the idiotic Bull, and let bygones be bygonefully."

"Why couldn't you say that the other day, you ass?" growled Nugent.

"The esteemed honour of a Nabob of Bhanipur was woundfully damaged. But for the sake of my ridiculous chums I will donate the rightful hand of excellent fellowship and bury the bygones hatchetfully."

"Oh, good!" said Wharton, much relieved.

"If the esteemed Bull is prepared to meet me half-wayfully, the silver lining to the storm in the tea-cup will be terrific."

"I'll go and see Johnny," said Wharton.

Hurree Singh sat on the table, and Harry Wharton hurried along the Remove passage to the end study. He was feeling relieved, and grateful to the dusky nabob. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh's good nature had triumphed; and Wharton had a suspicion that he was quite aware of the facts as to the planned rescue. That incident, doubtless, had made the nabob realise the discomfort which the split in the Co. was bringing upon the other members more clearly than he had realised it before, and his placable nature had come to the rescue. Doubtless, too, now that the first resentment had passed, he realised that he still felt quite friendly towards his offending pal, and was willing for the breach to be healed.

Wharton tapped at the door of No. 14, and looked in. Johnny Bull was at work there, but Squiff and Fisher T. Fish had gone down.

"Nearly done," said Bull, without looking up.

"Let it rest a minute," said Harry. "I've not finished prep yet. I've just seen Inky."

"Bother Inky!"

"He's willing to play in the match to-morrow, Johnny, without making any conditions; so that's all right!"

"Oh! That's all right, is it?" said Bull grimly.

"Yes. He's come round."

"Oh!"

"And he's willing to make it up," said Harry. "So, for goodness' sake, let's have no more of it!"

"Does he want an answer to that?"

"I suppose so."

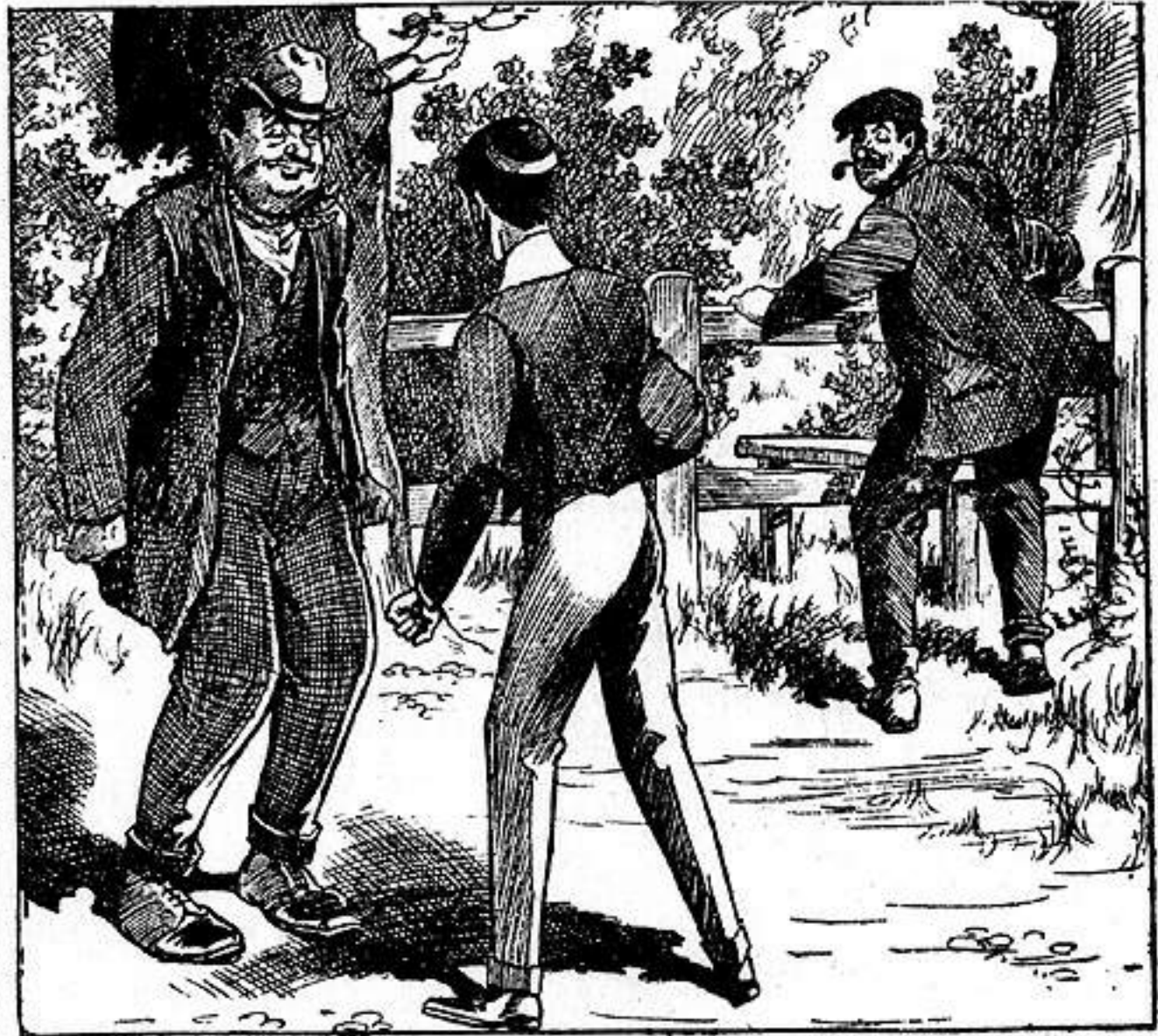
"Well, tell him to go and eat coke!"

"Eh?"

"Getting deaf?"

"Look here, Bull—"

"I wasn't in the wrong, in the first place," said Johnny Bull stubbornly. "Hurree Singh chose to put himself under suspicious circumstances. He asked a fellow to take his word that black was white; that's what it amounted to. When it came out that Inky was only



The nabob and Bob's scoundrels! (See Chapter 7.)

being a fool instead of a rotter, I told him I was sorry; and that wasn't enough for him. He chucked my apology back at me. Well, I don't keep apologies on hand. I'm done! He can go and eat coke, for a silly, sulky ass!"

"Look here—"

"That's all!"

Johnny Bull turned to his work again. Wharton compressed his lips. His anger was beginning to rise. It was too bad, when the originally offended party had come round, for the other party to the quarrel to keep it up like this. Johnny Bull prided himself upon being firm; and he did not realise that his firmness in this case amounted to obstinacy.

"That won't do, Johnny," said Harry quietly.

"It will have to do!"

"You ought to have taken Inky's word in the first place. I did!"

"That's because you were an ass!"

"Anyway, Inky's willing to overlook it. He's willing to play in the match with you—"

"I'm not willing to play in the match with him!"

"You silly chump!" shouted Wharton, quite exasperated.

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here, Johnny, you're in the wrong—"

"More rats!"

"If you don't make it up with Inky, you'll quarrel with the rest of us before long."

"Rats again!"

Wharton quitted the study. If he had remained, the split in the Co. would certainly have gone further. He returned, in a dismayed state of mind, to Study No. 1. He found Bob Cherry there, with Nugent and Inky.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! All serene now?" asked Bob.

"No. The other silly idiot's got his back up now," said Wharton dismally.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Oh, crumbs!" said Nugent.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh's dusky face hardened.

"My esteemed chums," he said quietly, "for the sake of the general peacefulness

and grateful comfort I have offered to let bygones drop bygonefully. The worthy and ridiculous Bull refuses the rightful hand of fellowship. I have no more to say. I shall regard him futurefully with complete ignorance!"

And Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh left the study. The three members of the divided Co. looked at one another.

"Nice kettle of fish!" growled Bob.

"Silly asses!" said Nugent.

"Johnny will come round," said Wharton. "I suppose a chap can't help being an obstinate mule if he's born one!"

"And by the time he comes round I suppose Inky will be off on his dignity again!" growled Bob. "Blow 'em both! I'm fed-up with 'em! Blow 'em!"

Bob found some relief in "blowing" his recalcitrant chums. When the trio went down to the Common-room they found the Nabob of Bhanipur there, chatting with Rake and Russell.

Johnny Bull came in a few minutes later, with a very thoughtful look on his stolid face. As a matter of fact, Johnny had been thinking, in his slow way, and he had come to a repentant state for his hasty reply to Wharton. He had resolved to accept the olive-branch. With that intention he moved towards the nabob.

Hurree Singh met him with a look like steel, and turned his back. It was too late!

Johnny Bull stared for a moment at the nabob's shoulders, and then, with a crimson face, walked out of the room. And the sun went down upon his wrath once more.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Two in Coventry!

"ARE you playing to-day, Johnny?"

Harry Wharton asked that question after breakfast on Wednesday morning.

"Is Inky playing?" was Johnny Bull's counter-query.

"Yes."



"Then I'm not!"

The captain of the Remove compressed his lips. He was very nearly out of patience with his obstinate chum. Bob Cherry, whose sunny temper was suffering from the bother of it all, broke out hotly:

"Don't be an ass, Johnny!"

"Yes, don't play the giddy ox!" said Nugent. "You're making us tired, Johnny!"

"Rats!" said Bull.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, here's Inky!" said Bob Cherry. "Come here, Inky!"

The nabob glanced towards them, and, seeing Johnny Bull, did not approach. Bob Cherry rushed at him, seized him by the arm, and dragged him up. Johnny Bull was striding away, when Wharton and Nugent collared him, one by either arm, and whirled him back.

"Let go!" shouted Bull.

"My esteemed idiotic chums——"

"Shut up, both of you!" said Bob Cherry gruffly. "Now, make it up, and shake hands at once, and stop playing the goat!"

"I'll see you blowed first!" said Bull.

"I regard the esteemed and disgusting Bull too despicably to take him shakefully by the hand!"

"Are you going to make it up?" roared Bob.

"No, idiot!"

"The answer is in the esteemed negative!"

"Then you're both dismissed, with a stain upon your character, from this Co.!" said Bob. "Both of you can sheer off, and don't speak to us again till you've decided to stop playing the ox! Savvy?"

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent heartily.

"Between the two of you, it's worse than war worry. You're sent to Coventry, both of you!"

"Passed unanimously!" said Wharton, with a nod.

Johnny Bull gave a snort, and Hurree Singh cast a mournful glance at his chums.

Both of them walked away, in different directions.

"Well, that's settled," said Bob Cherry. "If they must keep up that game, we won't be worried by it any more!"

"For this relief, much thanks!" said Nugent.

"My hat, though, we want Inky this afternoon for the cricket!" said Wharton. "I can't send him to Coventry and play him in the eleven at the same time!"

"H'm! I forgot that!" said Bob.

"Can't have two weights and two measures!" said Frank. "If Bull's going to be chucked, Inky's got to be chucked! It's a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other, and we must be fair!"

Wharton wrinkled his brows.

"We want Inky to bowl against Redclyffe!" he said.

"And Johnny to bat!" said Nugent. "He won't bat if Inky bowls. Give Rake and Ogilvy a chance instead. Ogilvy has been coming on toppingly with his bowling!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh came towards the three. There was a dubious expression on his dusky face.

The three juniors looked at him grimly.

The idea of sending the two disputants to Coventry till they got over their dispute really seemed the only way out of an awkward situation. But it had its difficulties, in connection with the cricket-match that afternoon.

"My esteemed chums——"

"Have you made it up with Johnny already?"

Hurree Singh shook his head.

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"Then you're in Coventry, so far as this select company is concerned!" said Bob. "We're fed-up!"

"Then the resignfulness from the eleven will be the proper caper!" said Hurree Singh, with a distressed look. "I cannot accompany my esteemed chums dumbfully!"

"It's the only way!" said Wharton decidedly. "We can't have the cricket fooled about by you and Johnny! If you can't be civil to one another, you'd better both keep out of the team!"

The nabob nodded, and walked away. Harry Wharton went in to dinner in a thoughtful frame of mind. He felt that he had taken the only possible step as cricket captain; but Inky's bowling was likely to be missed in the Redclyffe match.

Still, there were good reserves to draw upon, and Wharton remembered with satisfaction that Donald Ogilvy had been improving wonderfully at bowling of late. And he thought of the Bounder.

After dinner he discussed the matter with Nugent and Bob and Squiff and Peter Todd. Vernon-Smith was not a member of the eleven now. The black sheep of Greyfriars could not be relied upon to keep fit for the game. But that day he was fit enough, as could be seen at a glance, and there was no reason why he should not play.

Wharton's comrades agreed with his view, and he bore down on the Bounder when the latter came out.

Vernon-Smith was going down to the gates when the captain of the Remove joined him.

"There's a vacant place this afternoon, Smithy, if you'd like it," said Harry.

Vernon-Smith stopped.

"My hat! I wish you'd told me that sooner!" he said. "I'd like to play no end! Don't think I've still got my back up for being left out of the team; it's not that! But I'm going to see my pater. He's at Lantham, and expecting to see me!"

"Oh, in that case it can't be done!" said Harry. "All serene!"

"But who's standing out?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Inky and Johnny Bull!"

"Still on the war-path?"

"Yes, the duffers! They're both going to keep out of the cricket till they get over it. It's the only way!"

"I suppose so," assented the Bounder. "Then they'll both be staying back this afternoon?"

"Yes."

"I've been thinking about that," said the Bounder. "I might be able to help them make it up!"

"I wish you could," said Harry ruefully. "We've decided to send them both to Coventry till they make it up. It isn't pleasant!"

"Well, I hope you'll have good luck at Redclyffe. I wish I could come!"

With a nod, Vernon-Smith went out at the gates, and Harry Wharton rejoined his chums. Rake was called upon to fill the vacant place, which he was keen enough to do.

When the eleven left Greyfriars, it consisted of Wharton, Bob Cherry, Nugent, Field, Todd, Tom Brown, Rake, Ogilvy, Hazeldene, Bulstrode, and Mark Linley. It was a very good team, though not the best the Remove could have put into the field.

Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh were among the fellows who saw them off. Bull's face was grim and obstinate, and Hurree Singh's somewhat distressed. The Co. elaborately ignored their existence, hoping that Coventry would have the effect of bringing them to a more reasonable frame of mind.

When the train rolled out with the cricketers, Johnny Bull and Inky left the

station, without glancing at one another. Both of them had been looking forward to the Redclyffe match, and both of them missed it.

They left the station in different directions, but a couple of hours later both arrived at the gates of Greyfriars at the same time. They went in without a word or a look.

Johnny Bull was at the nets a little later, when Hurree Singh came down to Little Side. Johnny at once strolled away, and seated himself under the elms with a book.

He was there reading when the Bounder came home from Lantham. Vernon-Smith gave him a rather curious glance.

The Bounder smiled as he went into the House. Skinner was hanging about the hall with his hands in his pockets.

He nodded to the Bounder.

"Coming up to the study?" he asked.

"Smokes are off," said Vernon-Smith.

"I've got a scrap on."

"Who with?"

"Inky."

"My hat! I didn't know you'd rowed with Inky," said Skinner, raising his eyebrows.

"I haven't."

"You're going to scrap with him without having rowed with him?" asked Skinner in astonishment.

"Well, no. I'm going to row with him first."

Skinner chuckled.

"Good! I'll back you up. You could lick him with one hand—and it will be one in the eye for the Magnificent Five—what?"

The Bounder smiled. Skinner was greeting his intention with great satisfaction, believing it to be the first step towards a final break with Harry Wharton & Co. The Bounder's thoughts would have surprised Skinner if he could have read them.

"But I say, how the dickens are you going to quarrel with Inky?" said Skinner, after a pause. "He's such a good-tempered chap—and you don't want to get the whole Form down on you."

"I know a way. Come on! I want you to be my second!"

"Delighted, old scout!"

And the two juniors sallied forth—in search of a scrap with the unsuspecting Nabob of Bhanipur.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### The Bounder's Little Game!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH came off the cricket-field after half an hour's practice with the Remove fellows there. The nabob was not feeling very cheerful. He was not satisfied with things generally, or with himself. But he smiled a dusky smile as he met Vernon-Smith and Skinner in the quad.

"Hallo, Inky. I've got a bone to pick with you!" said the Bounder.

"Proceed with the pickfulness, my esteemed Smithy."

"Still on fighting terms with that ass Bull—what?"

"My esteemed friend, I begfully request you not to apply opprobrious epithets to the excellent and ridiculous Bull."

"Well, isn't he a worm?" said the Bounder calmly.

"The wormfulness is not terrific."

"And a rotter," added Vernon-Smith.

Hurree Singh gave the Bounder a quick look. Vernon-Smith's manner was aggressive, and Skinner was grinning. Skinner understood now the way in which Smithy intended to pick a quarrel with the nabob.

It seemed absurd enough to Skinner that Hurree Singh should care whether



anybody slanged a fellow he was on bad terms with. But the Bounder had evidently judged correctly. In spite of Inky's quiet manner, there was a gathering gleam in his dark eyes.

"A regular, bullying, rotten cad!" said Vernon-Smith. "Don't you agreed with me, Inky?"

"There is no agreefulness on my part, my esteemed and contemptible Smithy, and if you repeat those obnoxious and flattering remarks I shall hit you on the nose!" said Hurree Singh.

"A regular, bullying, rotten cad!" repeated the Bounder at once.

"I have spoken warnfully, Smithy!"

"A regular bullying, rotten cad!" said the Bounder, for the third time, mockingly.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh's dusky hand came up, and Vernon-Smith caught his wrist just in time.

"Order!" grinned Skinner. "You can't fight here, under all the windows. Get behind the gym."

"Come round the elms," said Vernon-Smith. "We sha'n't be seen there."

"I will come willingly, you disgusting and insulting rotter!" said Hurree Singh hotly.

"Hallo, what's the row?" asked Bolsover major, coming up.

"Only a scrap," said the Bounder coolly. "Inky doesn't like the way I talk about Bull."

"What the dickens does it matter to Inky?"

"The matterfulness is terrific, my excellent Bolsover. Penfold, my worthy chum, will you be my second?"

"Certainly," said Dick Penfold.

"But—"

"Come on!" said the Bounder, as several more fellows came up, attracted by the row. "I'm waiting!"

"Look here, Smithy, what are you picking on Inky for?" exclaimed Penfold hotly. "If you're spoiling for a fight, Bull's more your weight."

"Go hon!" said the Bounder, unmoved.

"Sure, it's a baste ye are to pick a row with old Inky!" said Micky Desmond.

"Lave him to me, Inky darling!"

"The thankfulness is terrific, my esteemed Micky, but I think I can bestow the honourable lickfulness upon the disgusting Smithy!"

Johnny Bull had risen from the bench under the elms, and was looking towards the group. The Bounder started towards the trees, and his steps led him directly past where Bull stood. The growing crowd of juniors followed him.

"A row?" asked Bull, as the Bounder strode by.

"Yes."

"You and Inky?"

"Yes."

"What about?"

"Oh, ask Inky!"

The Bounder strode on, leaving Johnny Bull biting his lip. Johnny could not very well ask Inky, but he caught Penfold by the arm as the scholarship junior passed.

"What's this about, Pen?" he asked.

Pen was looking savage.

"The Bounder's picked a row with Inky," he said. "Nothing at all—just marched up to him and picked a row. Inky can't stand up to the Bounder—but he'll stand up as long as he can, and get licked. It's a shame!"

Johnny Bull compressed his lips.

"I don't see why they should row," he said.

"He, he, he!" chimed in Billy Bunter.

"It's about you, Bull!"

Bull stared at him.

"About me?" he repeated.

"Yes. Smithy was running you down to Inky."

"Oh!"

"Blessed if I know why Inky wanted to punch him," said Bunter. "You ain't friends. These niggers are queer fish. Yaroooooh!"

Johnny Bull grasped Bunter's collar, and bumped him on the ground with one swing of his sinewy arm. Bunter sat there gasping, in a state of great surprise and indignation, while Bull strode after the crowd of juniors with Penfold.

Johnny Bull's face was very grim.

He joined the ring that was forming on the other side of the elms, which screened the spot from the view of the School House.

"All serene here!" said the Bounder.

"We sha'n't be interrupted."

"What about gloves?" asked Bolsover major.

"Oh, we don't want gloves!"

"Look here, you'd better have gloves," broke in Russell angrily. "Don't be such a beastly hooligan, Smithy!"

"Does Inky want gloves?" asked Vernon-Smith, with a sneer.

The nabob's eyes flashed.

"Not at allfully!" he exclaimed. "I refusefully decline to have gloves. I am readyful, you disgustful cad!"

Penfold helped the nabob off with his jacket, the juniors gathering round with dark looks at the Bounder. Inky was a slim and active youth, and as full of pluck as a Tommy in the trenches; and he knew something about boxing. But he was nowhere near a match for the hard-fisted Bounder of Greyfriars. The fight was quite unequal, and, as it was to be fought without gloves, it was likely to be brutal, too. The Bounder was a hard hitter, and if he chose to exert himself it was certain that Inky's punishment would be very severe. And some of the fellows suspected that Vernon-Smith had chosen his opportunity while the nabob's chums were absent at Redclyffe.

Johnny Bull drove his hands deep into his pockets, his face growing more and more morose and savage. Certainly, it was no business of Johnny's if a fellow he had quarrelled with should get badly knocked about. But Johnny seemed to feel, somehow, that it was his business.

"Who's going to keep time?" asked Skinner.

"Here's Temple! You keep time, Temple."

"Pleased, dear boys," said Cecil Temple of the Fourth. And Temple's handsome watch came out with a flourish.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Oh, quite!" yawned the Bounder, his eyes resting on Johnny Bull's mastiff face for a moment.

"The readyfulness is terrific!"

"Time!"

Johnny Bull strode forward at the call of time, and intervened between the two unequally-matched combatants.

"Hallo, what's the game?" asked the Bounder coolly. "You're in the way, Bull."

"This is my business," said Bull quietly. "You can tackle me instead, Smithy!"

The Bounder laughed.

Hurree Singh knitted his brows.

"You are in the way, my esteemed Bull!" he said. It was the first time he had spoken to Johnny for days. "Kindly step asidefully!"

Johnny Bull did not move. He seemed as firmly planted there as one of the old elms.

"You can shut up, Inky!" he said.

"I'm going to fight Smithy!"

"The ratfulness is terrific!"

"Good idea!" said Penfold at once.

"Leave it to Bull, Inky. After all, you were only rowing because Smithy was slanging Bull. It's Bull's affair."

"Rats! I'm going to lick the disgusting Smithy! Get asidefully!"

"Look here, Inky," said Johnny Bull,

apparently quite oblivious of the fact that he was not on speaking terms with Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, "leave it to me; I ask it as a favour!"

Inky gave him a very odd look. "My esteemed Johnny—" he murmured.

"I can lick him," said Bull. "You can't, Inky. You know you can't, old chap!"

"The tryfulness would be terrific, my worthy Bull!"

"Besides, it's my row," said Johnny.

"You're not going to take my scrap off my hands, you ass!"

"The rowfulness is mine!"

"Oh, rats! Keep off the grass!"

The nabob shook his head.

"I am terrifically obliged," he said, "but it is impossible to leave the scrapfulness to you. Step asidefully!"

"You won't leave it to me?"

"No."

"Oh, rats!"

Johnny Bull spun round towards the Bounder, and his knuckles rapped sharply on Vernon-Smith's nose.

"Oh!" gasped Vernon-Smith, starting back.

"Now come on!" said Johnny Bull, gritting his teeth, and he followed the Bounder up.

In a moment more they were fighting. Johnny Bull had not even removed his jacket.

Hurree Singh caught Johnny by the shoulder; but it was too late to stop him, and he let go. With a peculiar expression on his dusky face Hurree Singh stepped back.

The ring of juniors closed round, grinning. The Bounder and Johnny Bull were pretty well matched, and it was certain to be a mill worth watching.

The Nabob of Bhanipur had been reduced to the position of a spectator.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Something Like a Scrap!

"TIME!" Temple called time again, and there was a pause. Penfold—second to Johnny Bull instead of Hurree Singh—helped Bull off with his jacket.

Vernon-Smith sat on the knee Skinner made for him. Skinner was not looking so satisfied now.

"You were an ass to let Bull take it on!" he whispered. "You could have licked Inky, and made a regular picture of him!"

"That's why Bull took it on."

"Yes; but you needn't have let him."

The Bounder laughed, without replying. Skinner gave him a sudden look of amazed suspicion.

"Smithy, you utter idiot! Is this a game?" he exclaimed.

"Rather a painful game for me before I get through, I expect," said the Bounder calmly.

"Time!"

Vernon-Smith stepped up to the line again with alacrity. Johnny Bull was equally quick.

There was a mocking light in the Bounder's eyes. He was not at all averse from a scrap; he was in the pink of condition, and he was as hard as nails. And he was serving the secret purpose which only Skinner—with great disgust—had guessed at last.

The round was fought through, and another followed. The crowd round them grew thicker and thicker.

It was fortunate that the trees screened the scene from the School House, for fighting without gloves was very much frowned upon at Greyfriars.

Both the combatants were getting severe punishment.



In the fourth round the Bounder had one eye closed, and it was darkening rapidly. Johnny Bull's nose was swelling, and a stream of red ran from it.

But both the juniors were tough, and their damages did not affect them much so far.

They stood up to one another grimly for the fifth round.

The juniors looked on breathlessly, Hurree Singh with a concerned expression on his dusky face now.

The Bounder looked like getting the upper hand. He was not so strong as the sturdy, thickset Bull, but he was quicker on his feet, and perhaps a little more scientific. The fifth round ended with Bull down, for the first time.

Pen picked him up. Johnny Bull was breathing very hard as he sat on his second's knee.

But when Cecil Reginald Temple called time again he was quick to step up.

"Sixth round!" murmured Bolsover major. "Go it, Smithy!"

"Play up, Johnny!"

"My hat, he's down! I guess that jay's at the end of his tether!" remarked Fisher T. Fish.

Johnny Bull was grassed again, and Temple began to count. Bull jumped up before ten was reached; but at the finish of the round an upper-cut laid him on his back again.

"Time!"

Pen was moving forward, but Hurree Ram Singh ran quickly to Johnny Bull, and helped him to his feet.

Penfold dropped back—he was willing to leave the seconding to Inky.

Johnny gasped as he sat on Inky's knee.

"Pretty tough, that!" he murmured.

The nabob dabbed his heated brow with Pen's sponge.

"My esteemed Johnny—" he murmured.

"All serene, Inky! I'm going to lick Smithy!" said Johnny Bull stolidly. "I can last out Smithy!"

"I hope so terrifically, my worthy Johnny!"

"Time!"

Johnny Bull looked a little groggy as he toed the line again. Vernon-Smith was showing signs of wear and tear, too.

The Bounder had the best of the seventh round, though Bull did not go down again. The eighth seemed in his favour, too. But in the ninth round Johnny Bull's staying powers told.

The Bounder was beginning to have bellows to mend. Strong as his constitution was, the difference of habits told. Smithy's latest cigarettes were being paid for now.

The Bounder went to grass for the first time.

"Tenth round!" said Bolsover major, as Temple called time once more. "My hat! They're sticking it out! Good men both!"

"Last round, I guess!" said Fisher T. Fish.

The Bounder was fighting gamely, but Johnny Bull plainly had the upper hand. A terrific drive on Smithy's chest, which he could not stop, laid him on his back with a crash.

Temple counted.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine—out!"

The Bounder still lay prone.

Skinner picked him up when he was counted out.

Vernon-Smith leaned heavily on his second's shoulder. Johnny Bull was still standing firmly upon his feet.

The Bounder gave him a sardonic look.

"Done?" asked Bull quietly.

"I'm counted out."

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"I don't mind that. If you want to go on, I'm willing. I can stand another round or two."

"Thanks! I can't!" said Vernon-Smith, with a painful grin. "You're awfully good, but I won't impose on you! Where's my jacket?"

Skinner helped him on with his jacket, and Vernon-Smith moved away, leaning heavily on his study-mate's arm.

Johnny Bull dabbed his nose.

"Jolly good scrap!" said Bolsover major. "And jolly lucky for Inky he wasn't in it!"

"The luckfulness was terrific!" remarked the nabob. "My esteemed Johnny, how do you feel?"

"Rotten!" said Johnny Bull candidly. "As if I'd been under a lawn-mower! Smithy's a good man!"

"Come and bathe your august countenance!" said Hurree Singh, and he helped Bull on with his jacket, and led him away.

"Hallo! Those two silly asses seem to have made it up!" remarked Russell, looking after them with a grin.

It certainly seemed so. Johnny Bull was leaning heavily on Inky's arm, and Inky was taking excessive care of him.

Johnny Bull had been victor in the fight, but he was very near the end of his tether.

Mr. Quelch met them as they entered the House. He had spotted them coming in from his study window. His brow was like thunder as he glanced alternately at the Bounder and Johnny Bull.

"You have been fighting!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir!"

"Without gloves?"

"Only a little scrap, sir."

"Your faces are shockingly disfigured!" exclaimed the Remove-master.

"You are a disgrace to the school. I would cane you severely, but—" Mr. Quelch paused. It was only too clear that the delinquents were in no condition for a caning. "You will both be detained for two half-holidays, and will write out a thousand lines of the 'Æneid'!"

And Mr. Quelch rustled away, very angry and perturbed. The two juniors made their way upstairs. Vernon-Smith headed for a bath-room, and Hurree Singh led Johnny Bull to the Remove dormitory.

There he tended him.

But, after all that could be done to Johnny Bull's face, it remained a thing that was certainly not of beauty, or a joy for ever.

He sat on the bed at last, and blinked at the nabob.

"Well?" he said.

"Well, my esteemed chum?"

"I feel a blessed wreck. Still, you'd have felt worse."

"The probableness is great," said Hurree Singh softly. "I am terrifically obliged to my esteemed chum. I hope that the cloudfulness has rolled past the silver lining, and that the excellent Bull is preparefully ready to extend the rightful hand of friendship. I am sorrowful for the misunderstandfulness which has come betweenfully."

Johnny Bull grinned.

"Good old Inky! I'm sorry we've been rowing. I was to blame in the first place—"

"Not at allfully. The blamefulness was mine!"

"I was rather an ass, and so were you!" said Johnny Bull stolidly. "Why didn't you let Smithy slang me if he wanted to?"

"Why didn't you let Smithy hammer me fistfully if he wanted to?"

Johnny chuckled.

"All serene, Inky!"  
"The serenefulness is terrific!"  
That was all! The clouds had rolled by.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### The Clouds Roll By!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"  
"Great pip! Where did you get that face?"

Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh met the cricketers at the gates when they came home from Redclyffe. Harry Wharton & Co. regarded Johnny Bull's face in consternation.

"Only a scrap!" said Bull. "How did the match go?"

"We've beaten Redclyffe by fifty runs," said Harry Wharton. "Hallo, Inky! Have you two stopped playing the giddy ox?"

"The stopfulness is terrific!"

"Then, who've you been scrapping with, Johnny?" asked Nugent.

"Only Smithy!"

"Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes. A jolly good fight, too! I feel like a Hun that's been under a Tank."

"Serve you jolly well right, if you've been rowing with Smithy!" said Wharton. "What on earth did you want to fight Smithy for?"

"The esteemed Johnny was backing me up chumfully," explained Hurree Singh. "It was my rowfulness, but Johnny put his bestful foot forward, and tackled the worthy and ridiculous Smithy for me."

"Then you've been quarrelling with Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton, in surprise.

"The esteemed Smithy quarrelled with me," said the nabob mildly. "I was as gentle as the cooing pig, but the esteemed Smithy made despiseful remarks concerning our respectable chum Johnny—"

"Oh, you pair of asses!" said Bob Cherry.

"The expressiveness of the worthy Bob is just. But the assfulness is a thing of the bygone past."

Harry Wharton was very thoughtful as he went in with his chums. He remembered what the Bounder had said to him earlier in the afternoon, and a startling thought was in his mind. It seemed incredible, yet it would come. He went at once to Vernon-Smith's study.

Vernon-Smith, with a black eye, a swollen nose, and a cut lip, greeted him with a rueful grin.

"There's a merry picture for you!" he remarked.

"Smithy, you told me you had some wheeze for making it up between those two duffers—"

"Ha, ha! So I had! Hasn't it worked?"

"Then this was it?"

"Yes."

"I—I guessed, when Inky told me—"

The Bounder chuckled.

"It was entertaining," he said. "Inky flew out when I began slanging Bull, as I knew he would, and I marched him off under Bull's nose to fight—without gloves. I knew the other idiot wouldn't take that quietly. Neither of them had the least idea, of course! And—and this face is what I've got by way of a reward for playing peacemaker! Blessed are the peacemakers, you know!" grinned the Bounder. "In some cases they get rewarded with thick ears and black eyes."

"Smithy, I—I'd never have thought—" Wharton spoke with emotion in his voice. "It was decent of you, and the queerest idea I've ever heard of!"

"Well, it worked."

"Yes, it worked. But you look like a wreck."



"I dare say Bull doesn't look exactly handsome."

"He doesn't," said Harry, laughing.

"It was a good scrap. I'm not soft," said the Bounder coolly. "If you feel obliged, you can help me do my lines. I've got a thousand for getting this chivvy."

"We'll whack them out," said Harry. "I suppose Bull and Inky haven't guessed that you were pulling their leg?"

"Ha, ha! No!"

"I shall tell them."

"Do. It will be amusing to watch their faces."

Wharton left the study, and the Bounder grinned, and then dabbed his nose, and mumbled. He was hurt. Ten minutes later the door of the study was thrown open, and Johnny Bull looked in. There was an extraordinary expression on Johnny's disfigured face.

"You ass!" he said.

"Eh?"

"You silly ass!"

"Thanks!"

"You were pulling my leg this afternoon!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Just found it out?"

"Wharton's told me. You meant to fight me all along, and not Inky?"

"My dear chap, there isn't an easier leg to pull in the wide, wide world than yours!" said the Bounder calmly.

"I've a jolly good mind to punch your silly head!"

"Hardly worth while. We've had some."

"You're a howling ass!"

"I know that."

"And—and—and I'm glad you did it, as it turns out," added Johnny Bull. "But I think you're a silly ass, all the same!"

And with that, Johnny Bull retired; and Hurree Singh came in a minute later.

The Bounder gave him a grin.

"Well, what have you to say?" he asked.

"The worthy Wharton has enlightened me as to the whyfulness of the fatheaded Smithy's amazing conduct this afternoon," said the nabob. "I am sorrowful that your nose is so swellful."

"So am I."

"And I regret terrifically that your esteemed eye is the colour of the honourable and useful blacking."

"Same here!"

"But the oblige is terrific! I regard

the fatheaded and ridiculous Smithy with chumful esteem!"

"Thanks awfully!" yawned the Bounder. "Have a smoke?"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh quitted the study without answering that question. The Bounder laughed.

Smithy's extraordinary wheeze—much more successful than Bob Cherry's scheme—had worked the oracle.

The clouds had rolled by, and the celebrated Co. were united once more, both Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh sincerely repentant that they had ever allowed the sun to go down upon their wrath.

Everything in the garden, in fact, was lovely—excepting Johnny Bull's face and the Bounder's, which certainly were not likely to be at all lovely for a considerable time to come. But that, after all, was a light price to pay for the reconciliation of the Parted Pals.

(Don't miss "THE GREYFRIARS ORGANISER!"—next Monday's grand story of Harry Wharton & Co., by FRANK RICHARDS.)

## THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

No. 33.—CECIL PONSONBY.

The leader of the nuts of Highcliffe is a very complete rotter indeed.

There may be in him the possibility of better things. Mr. Frank Richards said once that he was probably the best of the nuts; but that is saying very little. Frank Courtenay has sometimes believed that he could see the germ of good in him; but he has usually found that at the precise time when he was vainly imagining this Pon had something particularly base up his sleeve!

The Caterpillar, who knows him as well as anyone, has no faith in him. One thinks that the Caterpillar's view is the true one.

Cecil Ponsonby is a villain, with trimmings—an aristocratic rascal, who drops his final "g's," and draws, and would rather be caught blackening anyone else's character than his own boots, who goes in for all the amusements that the man-about-town affects—in so far as a schoolboy can—and shirks cricket and football, though he could play both games well if he really chose to try. The toadying Form-master of the Highcliffe Fourth, Mr. Mobbs, regards Pon as a personage, because he is "so highly connected." But Norman blood is a very different thing in Cecil Ponsonby and in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Gussy may carry the theory of "Noblesse oblige" to an extent that sometimes seems absurd. "Noblesse oblige" means nothing to Pon. He does not even care about ordinary fair play!

Before Pon's coming Vavasour was a sort of leader among the nuts, though it is very difficult to imagine Vavasour leading anybody. We did not hear very much of them in those days. Highcliffe and Greyfriars stood where they now stand, of course; but since then the opening up of a new road has brought them much nearer together for practical purposes. And since Pon began to lead the nuts there has been feud unceasing between them and the Greyfriars Remove—and not with the Remove alone, for the Upper Fourth, Shell, and the Fifth have also been concerned at times.

When the Remove get home with special effect on Pon & Co., it is easy for the nuts to induce Mr. Mobbs to trot along and lay a complaint against them with Dr. Locke. When Pon & Co. score—and they have scored heavily at times—the Remove no more think of going to Dr. Voysey, the Head of Highcliffe, than they do of putting the matter in the hands of P.-c. Tozer; and as for asking the aid of Mr. Quelch—they would as soon think of applying to the War Office for a detachment of the military! That is the difference in the point of view. Pon & Co. want revenge, and are willing to stoop to any meanness to get it. The Remove want revenge, too; but it has no value for them



unless they can win it by their own craft or muscle.

It would be quite impossible here to give even a bare list of the numerous struggles between the nuts and the Remove. The victory has not always been to Harry Wharton and his followers. Pon scored heavily, for instance, when, as Mr. Bunn, he deputised for Gosling, the Greyfriars porter, though some of his methods were rather of the "below the belt" type. And no doubt Pon and his crew thought it was no end of a score when they rotted up the match with the Courtfield Council School one winter's day by snowballing the players. But they had to pay for that. Pon & Co. scored when they raided Fish's packing-case from Coker & Co. and Bunter; and this was the only occasion one can remember upon which a Remove fellow tried to complain to the Head of Highcliffe. Fishy tried; and the nuts sent him back on a donkey, tied with his face to the tail end!

And doubtless Pon and Gadsby thought it rare sport to "umpire out" the Remove fellows in their match at Shoremouth with Figgins' team. But they paid for that, too. Then there was the X.Y.Z. dramatic advertisement, which was meant to be an unholy jape on the Remove, but had only the smaller success of taking in most completely Coker and others.

Even in his japes Pon has recourse to unfair play. But many of his encounters with the Remove have been quite out of the japing line. He and his followers have

always cultivated the acquaintance of any Remove fellow of the blade type; and they have again and again taken in and done for—temporarily, at least—such as Hazeldene, too nervous and excitable to have any success as a gambler, and the fatuous Bunter. But Vernon-Smith is far too sharp a blade for them.

They may not have given up hope of getting the best of him some day; but if they ever succeed in doing so it will be because the Bounder lets them—because he has something bigger than the game at stake. Peter Todd, no gambler, has, in quest of vengeance, played them at their own game, and kept up his end. Skinner is no easy victim to them, and Stott and Snoop are not to be fleeced as readily as Bunter, though, for that matter, Snoop and Stott are not usually worth fleecing.

Cecil Ponsonby has taken many a good hiding at the hands of members of the Remove. Probably he has not forgotten one of them, for his is a nature that harbours malice. One of the bitterest defeats that ever came his way was from Esmond, whom Greyfriars held a funk—who certainly had funked. It seemed like a chance of earning glory cheaply to thrash Esmond; but it was Pon who was thrashed! And one of the worst lickings of all came from Temple of the Remove.

Out of rivalry with Wharton, Temple had fixed up a match between his team of the Upper Fourth and the nutty brigade, calling themselves the Highcliffe Frouth—a name and style really belonging to Courtenay & Co. The match was a fiasco, and Temple was so incensed that he forced Pon into a fight. Then there was trickery on the Highcliffe side, and the result was that Temple fairly let himself go, and gave the leader of the nuts a most thorough hiding. The sequel, unpleasant to Temple, will best be dealt with when his turn comes in this series.

Most of the Removes have tried conclusions with Ponsonby at one time or another. Wharton thrashed him well at Shoremouth, after the unfair umpiring. Johnny Bull went over to Highcliffe on purpose to fight him. Vernon-Smith, who has at times been very friendly with him, has given him more than one licking. Hazel licked him once.

Even yet the shadiest of Ponsonby's doings have scarcely been told. He sticks at nothing when betting is concerned. An attempt to induce players to sell a match is a mere incident to him; and he has more than once gone so far as to supply others with drugs, to the end that success for the side he has backed may be assured by the doping of the other side. Worse still have been his attempts to fix the stigma of theft upon fellows he has counted his enemies—Bulstrode, for one, and Frank Nugent, and Courtenay, whom he hates with a deadly hatred. But his dealings with Courtenay and the Caterpillar were touched upon when their careers were sketched here.

A very complete wrong 'un, Ponsonby!

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# Extracts from "The Greyfriars Herald."

## UNDER THE 'FLUENCE!

By EDWARD FRY.

POTTER and Greene were never surprised at anything Coker did; they knew him too well for that. A fellow who played cricket and footer as Coker did was capable of anything. But when Coker of the Fifth took up hypnotism even his study-mates were surprised.

Coker took it up enthusiastically, as he took up everything. He was convinced that he could do it—with practice—because he felt that if anybody could do it he could, being Coker.

He bought a shilling book on the subject, learned how to make passes with his hands and to hold you fixedly with his eye, and began to practice on Potter and Greene. They stood it patiently for some time, and then they struck. Since the grub regulations had come in it wasn't necessary to be so very polite to Coker—study spreads were things of the past. So Potter and Greene told him what they thought of him and his new wheeze, and went on strike.

After that Coker tipped Bunter of the Remove to go under the 'fluence, as he called it. Bunter went under the 'fluence, and, under it, he asked Coker to cash a postal-order for him which he was expecting shortly. When Coker refused, Billy Bunter came out from under the 'fluence with remarkable suddenness and cleared off.

Then Coker tried it on Bob Cherry. Bob submitted meekly, and Coker thought he was getting on famously, till all of a sudden Bob Cherry, under the mysterious influence, landed out and caught Coker on the nose. Coker left off making passes and sat down, and Cherry travelled before he could get up again.

Even that wasn't enough for Coker. He tried it on Wingate of the Sixth, his great idea being to hypnotise Wingate, and make him put him—Coker—into the Greyfriars First Eleven.

Wingate was simply astounded when Coker came into his study and began to make weird passes under his nose. Wingate didn't even know that Coker was a hypnotist. He thought Coker was being funny, and, instead of going under the 'fluence, he snatched at a cricket-bat, and drove Horace out of the study, yelling like a Hun.

"You'd better chuck it," Potter said, when Coker limped into his study. "You can't hypnotise, you know, any more than you can play cricket. Why not take up marbles or hopscotch?"

"Much more in your line, Coker," said Greene approvingly.

"You silly, blithering chumps!" retorted Coker. "I've got the strong and powerful will-power mentioned in the book; the clear, steady gaze also mentioned in the book; and I'm a born hypnotist, according to the description in the book. The only drawback is that the fellows know I'm a hypnotist, and they are on their guard; they summon up their will-power to resist, and that makes it difficult to put the 'fluence on. If I could take a chap really by surprise, I'd have him under my power in a jiffy, and the slave of my will. You wait till I tackle a chap who doesn't know my wonderful powers, and isn't on his guard against them."

"Try the Head," suggested Potter, winking at Greene. "He doesn't know."

"Do!" gurgled Greene.

"Put some exercise-books in your bags first, though," advised Potter.

"Oh, don't be funny asses!" growled Coker. "Clear off, and leave a chap in peace. I've got to practise. Shortly I shall be able to hypnotise anybody, and then you'll see what you'll see."

And Coker began making passes before the glass as if he were trying to hypnotise his own reflection, and Potter and Greene chortled, and left him at it.

Coker of the Fifth was still busy when Trotter came up to the study. Trotter was the school page, and he didn't know any-

thing about Coker's new wheeze. Naturally, they hadn't heard of it in the boot-room. Trotter came up to bring a letter. Coker generally tipped him for little services like that.

Coker's eyes gleamed as he saw Trotter. Trotter blinked at him, wondering what Coker had been grimacing into the glass for, and whether the Fifth-Former was off his rocker.

Coker's instant thought was whether Trotter would do to experiment upon.

As Trotter knew nothing about his being a hypnotist, Trotter couldn't be on his guard against the 'fluence. He would subject Trotter to the mystic power, and thus prove to all Greyfriars that he could do it. Thus Wingate would have to toe the line, because Coker could threaten to put the 'fluence on him and make him walk into the river or stand on his head in the Form-room. Coker even thought of trying it on Mr. Prout, his Form-master, when he'd had enough practice, and making Prouty let him off lessons.

"Letter for you, Mr. Coker," said Trotter, staring at him.

"Lay it on the table," said Coker affably.

"Come here, Trotter!"

"Yessir."

Trotter came towards him, expecting three-pence, or perhaps sixpence. But Coker wasn't thinking of tips.

"Sit down!" he said.

"Eh?"

"Sit there!"

"You're very kind, Mr. Coker!" gasped Trotter. He had never been invited to sit down in Coker's study before.

Coker pushed him into a chair, and Trotter fell, rather than sat, in it.

He was feeling a bit uneasy.

Having seen Coker grimacing at the glass and waving his hands when he came to the door, he couldn't help suspecting that the Fifth-Former was a bit loose in the upper storey; and when Coker made him sit down he began to feel quite alarmed.

"Sit quite at ease," said Coker.

"Ye-e-es, Mr. Coker!" stammered Trotter.

"Don't think of anything in particular," continued Coker.

"Nunno!"

Trotter couldn't help thinking about what Mrs. Kebble would say if he didn't go back to his work. But it was no use telling Coker that.

"In fact, keep your mind a blank," said Coker. Coker was only bent on getting the page into a proper mental state to be hypnotised, and he hadn't any time to reflect on how surprised Trotter must be.

"A—a—a blank!" stuttered Trotter.

"Yes; exactly."

Trotter cast a longing glance at the door. He wished he was well out of Coker's study.

"Don't look round!" commanded Coker.

"N-n-no!"

"Fix your eyes on mine!"

"Ye-e-es!"

Trotter fixed his eyes on Coker's.

Coker fixed a steely glare on him, as if he wanted to gaze a hole right through Trotter's head. His eyes were gleaming with excitement. But Trotter did not know that it was merely excitement and enthusiasm. He naturally couldn't see what Coker had to be excited or enthusiastic about.

He was so nervous by this time that his knees were knocking together, and he was debating in his mind whether to bolt and chance it. There seemed to be no doubt that Coker was mad.

"Don't keep on moving!" said Coker sharply.

"N-n-no!" faltered Trotter.

"Is your mind a blank?"

"I—I think so!" groaned Trotter helplessly.

"Keep still, then!"

"C-c-certainly, Mr. Coker!"

The terrified page hardly knew what he

was saying. But he humoured Coker. Trotter isn't a very bright youth, but he knew that you have to humour lunatics. He hoped that if he agreed with everything Coker said he would get out of the study without being throttled or brained with the poker.

He jumped as Coker raised his hands and commenced making magic passes before his eyes.

Trotter didn't know they were mesmeric passes.

He feared that Coker was going to seize him by the throat and become violent, and he squirmed back in the chair in awful terror.

"Keep still!" roared Coker, quite exasperated.

"Yes!" gasped Trotter.

"Now, is your mind a blank?"

"Oh, dear! Yes, yes!"

"Good!"

Coker recommenced making passes, Trotter staring at him with wide-open eyes like a frightened rabbit.

Every minute he expected Coker's paw to come darting at his throat, and he fairly quaked.

But Coker didn't seize him by the throat. He only went on making hypnotic passes till his arms ached.

"Feel sort of sleepy now?" asked Coker at last, feeling that it was time that the influence came on.

"Eh?"

"Sleepy—dreamy?" asked Coker.

"Yes, Mr. Coker," murmured Trotter, thinking that it would be safer to agree.

There was no telling what Coker might do if he was contradicted, and he evidently expected Trotter to feel sleepy and dreamy.

"Oh, good!" said Coker.

He was getting on, and his eyes fairly glittered with triumph. That glitter in his eyes almost made Trotter bolt, and chance it. But he sat still.

"Do you feel a sense of floating away?" continued Coker.

"Fuf-fuf-floating away, Mr. Coker?"

"Yes. Answer me!"

"Yes!" gasped Trotter.

The poor kid was willing to say he felt anything Coker wanted him to feel, so long as the lunatic kept his hands off him.

"Sort of sinking into infinite space?" asked Coker.

"Oh, crikey! Yes!"

"Good egg!"

Coker could have hugged his "subject" in his glee. It was all going according to the description in the shilling book. Coker felt that he had quite had his bob's worth in that volume.

It was evident to Coker that Trotter was a splendid subject. Later on he would be able to hypnotise Wingate like this, and old Prout, and perhaps even the Head. In fact, there was no limit to the terrific powers he would wield.

"Now," said Coker, in a deep voice of command, "Trotter, you are the slave of my will!"

"Hoh!" gasped Trotter.

"I am master of your thoughts, and your will is subjected to mine!"

"Hoh!"

"Whatever I command you to do you will do!"

"Hoh!"

"Whatever I tell you, you will believe!"

"Hoh!"

Trotter couldn't say anything else. He was frightened almost out of his wits.

Coker glanced round, and pointed to the inkstand.

"You see that inkstand, Trotter?"

"Yes, sir," said Trotter faintly.

"Well, that is a—a birdcage!" said Coker.

"Hoh!"

Coker eyed him anxiously. If he could make Trotter believe that the inkstand was

(Continued on page 15.)



a birdcage, it was clear that the 'fluence had worked most completely.

"You see it plainly, Trotter?"

"Yessir!"

"Now, what is it?"

"A hinkstand, sir!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, it's a birdcage, sir!" stuttered Trotter, in a great hurry.

Coker was relieved.

"Sure it's a birdcage?" he asked, more pleasantly.

"Yessir!"

Trotter would have said it was a volcano in eruption rather than have contradicted Coker just then.

"Can you see the canary in it?" asked Coker, with a smile.

"The—the canary? Oh, yes, sir!" moaned Trotter. "I—I see him like—like hanything, sir!"

Coker's face fairly glowed. He wished Trotter and Greene had been there to see this splendid success of his hypnotism.

"Now look at this, Trotter!" He held up a cricket-stump, and Trotter trembled, fearing he was about to be brained. "That's a stick of liquorice!"

"Hoh!"

"Are you fond of liquorice, Trotter?"

"Yessir!"

"Well, eat that stick of liquorice!" said Coker.

He held out the stump. His idea was to take the 'fluence off as soon as Trotter tried to eat the stump. He only wanted a proof that his power was absolutely complete over Trotter's will. Trotter blinked at him like a fish, gasping. He had humoured Coker so far, but he couldn't eat the cricket-stump to humour him.

"Oh, dear!" he murmured.

"Eat it!" thundered Coker, in his most commanding tone.

Trotter could stand no more. He fully expected to be brained with the stump if he didn't eat it, and he simply couldn't eat it. He made a sudden jump from the chair—so sudden that his head crashed on Coker's chin, and sent Horace staggering back. Trotter made a leap for the door.

"Yow!" yelled Coker, clasping his chin in anguish. He was hurt. "Yow-ow! Come back! Do you hear?"

Trotter heard; but, like the merry old gladiator in the poem, he heeded not. He fairly spun into the passage, and ran for his life.

"Good heavens!" gasped Coker.

He rushed after Trotter in alarm. The 'fluence seemed to have taken the wrong turning, so to speak, and Trotter might do anything, running amuck with the 'fluence on him—so Coker thought.

He dashed down the passage at top speed after Trotter.

"Stop!" he shouted. "Come back, Trotter! Stop!"

Trotter wasn't likely to stop.

He went down the stairs in three jumps, and rolled over. He blinked back, and saw Coker racing downstairs after him, and jumped up with a howl of terror and bolted again.

"My hat!" gasped Coker, tearing down the stairs. "He'll do some damage! I must get the 'fluence off somehow! There's nothing like this mentioned in the book! My word! Hypnotism's a dangerous thing!"

He flew after Trotter, and gained on him.

Trotter gave up all hope of escaping alive to the kitchen. He tore open a study door, and dashed in for safety. It was Mr. Prout's study, and the Fifth Form master jumped up as the page tore in.

"What—what—what—" spluttered Mr. Prout.

"'Elp!" shrieked Trotter. "He's arter me! He's mad! 'Elp!"

He whiaked round behind Mr. Prout as Coker's red and excited face appeared in the doorway.

"Keep him orf!" he yelled, clutching at Mr. Prout's gown.

"Bless my soul!"

"Yow! Keep him orf! Ow!"

"Coker!" thundered Mr. Prout, in majestic wrath. "What do you mean, sir, by chasing Trotter into my study? Are you out of your senses?"

"He's mad!" wailed Trotter. "Dangerous, sir! Made me sit down, and waved his 'ands at me, sir, and told me the hinkstand was a birdcage, sir, and told me to eat a cricket-stump, sir! He's orf his onion, sir! Then he came arter me, sir! Ow, ow, ow!"

"Coker!"

Coker's face was a study.

"Mind he don't get at you with that there stump, sir! He's dangerous!"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Prout.

Coker's face was a study.

"Is it possible, Coker, that you have been terrifying this boy—?"

"I—I—I—" stuttered Coker. It was an awful shock to Coker to find that Trotter wasn't under the 'fluence at all, but that he only thought Coker was petty. "I—I—It's all right, sir! I—I—"

"It is not all right, Coker!" thundered Mr. Prout. "How dare you, sir!"

"I—I was only hypnotising him, sir!" mumbled Coker. "I—I thought he was under the 'fluence, sir!"

"Hoh!" gasped Trotter.

"Coker!" Mr. Prout seemed to find it difficult to speak. "Coker! You incredibly stupid boy!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Trotter, you may go! Coker is not insane! He is merely an utterly silly boy whose stupidity nearly amounts to idiocy!"

That was very pleasant for Coker, who prided himself on being brainy. Trotter sneaked out of the study, going round by the wall to keep as far as possible from Coker, and keeping an eye on him all the time very warily. When he got to the door he bolted like a rabbit, and didn't stop till he was safe in the kitchen.

Coker would have been glad to follow, but he had to stay and listen to some personal remarks from Mr. Prout. The Fifth-Form master talked to him for five minutes without stopping to take breath, and the things he said nearly made Coker's hair curl.

"Let me hear anything more of hypnotism, or such nonsense, and I will report you to the Head for a flogging!" Mr. Prout wound up. "Coker, I do not generally cane boys in the Fifth Form, but I shall make an exception in your favour! Hold out your hand, sir!"

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

Mr. Prout pointed to the door with his cane, and Coker crawled out. When Trotter and Greene asked him later how the 'fluence was getting on, Coker only glared at them like a Hun. Coker of the Fifth was done with the 'fluence.

THE END.

## THE TERRIFIC TRICKFULNESS!

By HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH.

THE esteemed Bunter came into the Common-room with terrific excitement portrayed in his honourable and ludicrous fat countenance.

"I say, you fellows!" he exclaimed, regarding us blinkfully. "What do you think?"

"I think you're a fat duffer!" remarked the esteemed Bob Cherry.

"I think you're a plump porker!" said the honourable Wharton.

"Oh, really, you fellows! I'm going to Quelchy!"

"You can go to Jericho, if you like," remarkfully observed Johnny Bull, "and the sooner the quicker!"

"That rotter Kipps!" said the disgusting fat Bunter excitedly. "He's breaking the regulations! He's got no end of sugar in his study!"

"Rot!"

"The rotfulness is terrific!" I observed remarkfully.

"I've seen him!" said Bunter ragefully. "I happened to stop outside his study-door to tie my bootlace, and happened to glance in the direction of the keyhole, and happened to see—"

"Shut up!"

"I happened to see him," said Bunter firmly. "Quite by chance, of course. I wouldn't spy on a fellow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He didn't know I was there, and he was taking sugar out of a box!" declared excitedly the esteemed fat Bunter. "That box he keeps locked, you know, on his desk!"

"I don't know!" said Johnny Bull growlfully.

"Well, I do. He's having tea, and he took a lump of sugar out of that box, and then another, and another. I watched him—I mean, I happened to see him—and he took out dozens of lumps, one after another. He was standing just in a line with the keyhole. Now, you know we ain't allowed to have sugar in the studies now, and Kipps is break-

ing the rules. He ought to be stopped. I went in and remonstrated with him—"

"Did you get any of the sugar?" asked Peter Todd sharply.

"He wouldn't give me any; he wouldn't go halves, the rotter! I—I mean, of course, I should refuse to be bribed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter snortfully. "I'm going to Quelchy. It's my duty to give information about a food-hog!"

"Don't be a sneaking tell-tale!" said Bob Cherry scornfully. "Keep your silly mouth shut!"

"You're unpatriotic, Bob Cherry! It's a fellow's duty to sneak under the circumstances!" said Bunter loftfully. "I'm going to Quelchy, and you can come with me, Wharton, as captain of the Remove!"

"I'll give you a thick ear, if you like!" said Wharton. "That's all you'll get from me!"

"You're unpatriotic, too. Well, I'm going

to take Quelchy there, and have that rotter's secret hoard taken away!"

And the esteemed Bunter snorted, and rollfully departed.

"It's all rot!" remarkfully said Bob Cherry. "Kipps isn't that sort! He's a blessed exasperating ass sometimes with his conjuring tricks, but he isn't a food-hog or a hoarder! Rot!"

"Bunter says he saw him, though!" said Snoop sneerfully. "I think he ought to give information if he did!"

"You would!" said Johnny Bull contemptfully.

But nearly all the esteemed fellows believe-fully considered that the ludicrous Bunter was offside. Kipps of the Remove was sometimes a worryful merchant with his conjuring tricks, but he was as goodful as gold. But a few minutes laterfully we observefully saw the august Quelchy go upstairs with Bunter, with his august brows wrinkled in a terrific, frownful expression.

"Quelchy's going to look into it, anyway," said Snoop chortlefully. "I'm going to be on the scene!"

"Same here!"

"The samefulness is terrific!" And most of the fellows followed upstairs to witness the scene in the esteemed Kipps' study.

Mr. Quelch stridefully entered, followed by the grinfal Bunter, and we gatherfully stood round the open door, lookfully regarding.

Kipps jumpfully rose as the august Form-master entered.

"Kipps!" said Mr. Quelch thunderfully.

"Yes, sir?" said Kipps.

"I have received information from Bunter that you have a large quantity of sugar concealed in your study!"

"Oh, sir!"

"You are aware, Kipps, that no sugar is now allowed, excepting the allowance in the beverages at the meals served in Hall?"

"Yes, sir."

(Continued on page 16.)

*Eat less  
Bread*



## THE TERRIFIC TRICKFULNESS!

(Continued from page 15.)

"Have you any sugar here, Kipps?"  
"One lump, sir," said Kipps meekfully. "I saved it out of my last allowance, sir, weeks ago, as a souvenir!"

"Bunter assures me that you have a large quantity!"

"Bunter is mistaken, sir!"  
"Oh, really!" ejaculated Bunter splutterfully. "I saw him, sir! He was taking lump after lump out of that box and putting it in his pocket! I watched him for five minutes at least!"

"Turn out your pockets, Kipps!"  
We all looked on breathlessly while the esteemed Kipps turnfully outed his pockets. There were several varyful articles turned out, but there was not a jot or tittle of sugar among them.

"He's put it back in the box, sir!" said Bunter.

"Open that box, Kipps!" said the honoured Quelch.

Kipps hesitated pausefully.

"There's only private papers in that box, sir!" he said softly.

"If there are only private papers, Kipps, I shall not look at them. But you must open the box in my presence!"

"Very well, sir!"  
Kipps producefully extracted a key from his pocket, and unlocked the esteemed box. All eyes were fixfully fastened on the box as the esteemed Kipps turnfully backed the lid.

Billy Bunter chortled cacklefully.  
"You see, sir—"

"Silence!" snapfully exclaimed the honoured Quelch. "There is nothing but papers in this box!"

It was correctful. The box was fully crammed with papers, letters, and other esteemed articles of suchlike sort.

Billy Bunter's jaw dropped startlefully.  
"He's hidden it somewhere else, sir!"

Mr. Quelch regarded Kipps eyelessly.  
"I ask you once more, Kipps, whether you have a secret hoard of sugar in this study?" he exclaimed snapfully.

"Not at all, sir," said Kipps meekfully. "Perhaps I can explain Bunter's mistake, sir!"

"Kindly do so at once, then!"  
The esteemed Kipps took a lump of sugar from the table.

"This is the only lump I have, sir. It's the one Bunter saw when he was spying through the keyhole!"

"I saw dozens and dozens!" howled Bunter yellfully.

"It is extraordinary that Bunter should be under such a misapprehension!" said the honoured Quelch sternfully. "If you can explain—"

"Certainly, sir! Look here!"  
To the amazefulness of the honoured Quelch, the trickful Kipps proceeded to take lumps of sugar from the box and put them in pocketfully. The august Form-master watched him dazefully.

"Then you have a large quantity of sugar concealed in those papers, Kipps?"

"Not at all, sir!" said Kipps cheerfully. "It's the same lump!"

"Wha-a-at!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!" said Bob Cherry roarfully. "It's one of Kippy's blessed conjuring tricks!"

Kipps looked at the astounded Quelch grinfully.  
"It's only a conjuring trick, sir," he said meekfully. "I knew that fat cad was spying through the keyhole; I heard him grunting—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"So I played a conjuring trick for his benefit, sir! There's only one lump of sugar, and he saw me take it out of the box over and over again!"

"Oh, crumbs!" said Bunter gaspfully.  
"Oh!" ejaculated the honoured Quelch. "You—you should not play such tricks, Kipps!"

"I was only pulling Bunter's leg, sir, because he's a sneak and informer!" said Kipps.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
The honoured Quelch looked grinful himself for a moment; but he regarded Billy Bunter frownfully the next moment.

"Bunter!"  
"Ye-e-es, sir? I—I—I thought—"

"Never mind what you thought, Bunter!"

It appears that you were spying through a keyhole—a most contemptible and unworthy action! Moreover, you have shown a disposition to entertain disgraceful and unworthy suspicions of your schoolfellow, which is very despicable! I am afraid, Bunter, that you have a mean and suspicious disposition, which it is my duty to endeavour to correct! You will follow me to my study!"

"Oh, sir! I—" gasped Bunter stammerfully.

"Follow me!" said Mr. Quelch roarfully.  
The honoured Quelch whiskfully departed, and Billy Bunter, with a funereal, fat countenance, went followfully. A few minutes later there was a loud swishfulness in the honoured Quelch's study, and the yellfulness was great. And for the rest of that evening the groanfulness of the esteemed, sneaking Bunter was terrific.

## BUNTER THE PHILOSOPHER.

(This is only a fragment, with marginal notes. Bunter soon got tired of being a philosopher, I suppose; but the paragraphs which follow, except for those within parentheses, were all in his writing and spelling, and Peter Todd, who brought them along, vouches for them as authentic. They were written on a paper with a wide margin; and certain members of my Editorial staff appear to have made notes on that margin—with a view, no doubt, to the avoidance of waste in war-time. They initialled their notes, and this will give my readers a chance to judge whether Bunter really is the biggest ass of the crowd.—H. W.)

### TO THE BOYS AT THE FRONT!

*If you are unable to obtain this publication regularly, please tell any news vendor to get it from:*

Messageries HACHETTE et Cie.,  
111, Rue Reaumur,  
PARIS.

I am talking up filosofee.  
I dont meen beeing the sort of silly ass who dont mind wether its wet or fine, or wether he has his grub or not. Wat I meen is deep thinking.

(When Bunter does not mind whether he has his grub or not, it will be a case of "Hic jacet" for Bunter.—F. N.)

(And not much change, either! "Hic jacet" means "here lies." What's Bunter always doing?—J. B.)

Not that deep thinking is enny novelty to me. My mother says that in the dais wen I was the dearest little infant that ever sucked its thumb, the ammount of thinking that I did was sumthing prodigshus.

Ever since I have had my thowtful times. Their are things wich arows awl that is wholiest in my nacher. Wen I see an apple-tree in full bloom, and think of the munths laiter on wen the apples will be awl rosy-checked and plesent to the taist, my mowth larely waters. But peraps that is moor like poltry than filosofee.

(Jolly sight more like piggishness than either!—B. C.)

Yesterday I was mewsing as I thowt, thinking deeply.  
I thowt of life and awl its hidden mistries. Why am I alive?

(That's rather a hard one. But I fancy it's because we are too kind-hearted at Greyfriars.—J. B.)

I saw somewuns wosh hung owt to dry in Friardale, and deep thowts wear within me.

A wosh is verry much like ennything else, onley difrunt. Even from a wosh the trow filosofer obtanes matter for thowt.

Evverything is ekwal, onley sum things are moor than other things. Their is a hidden meaning in this, but that onley maiks it moor filosofikle.

Who am I?  
Who is ennybody?  
Ekko ansers "Who?"

(Then echo ought to be poleaxed! The right answer is "body," of course.—B. C.)

(You can't poleaxe an echo, ass!—J. B.)  
(But you can poleaxe an ass, ass!—B. C.)  
(And would it be ass-ass-ination if you did?—F. N.)

Is anything reel? Are not awl things alusion?  
(Tubby means "illusion." But there isn't

anything in the way of illusion in the way Tubby gets outside sausages; though it is a bit like conjuring, and conjuring is mostly illusion.—P. T.)

This is but a small wored wen you compair it with much bigger ones. But even on so small a wored as this I am a mere spek.

(And a most unnecessary one!—J. B.)  
(He means "spectacle."—F. N.)

(The spectaclefulness of the esteemed and disgusting Bunter when accomplishfully doing the honourable getoutsidfulness on the platefulness of sausages is terrific.—H. J. R. S.)

(Talking about spectacles, if you break my prize porpoise's, you will have to pay for them, you know.—P. T.)

Think of my sighs, and then of the sighs of the erth.  
Taik it that I am six feet rownd.

(And a bit more!—B. C.)  
But the wored is menny thowsand miles around.

(Well, you can't expect to get there all at once, can you? Only let the war stop, and plenty of grub be on show again, and I should not wonder if you catch up the old world before long.—P. T.)

So wat am I but—  
(Here Bunter's fragment ends. I have suppressed a number of answers to his last unfinished question. It is not the policy of this paper to be abusive.—H. W.)

## The Editor's Chat.

For Next Monday:

### "THE GREYFRIARS ORGANISER!" By Frank Richards.

The story which will appear next week is one of a kind always most popular with a large number of readers—possibly with the majority. Coker is its central figure; and when the magnificent Horace takes the stage we always expect to be amused, and are never disappointed.

Coker gets a notion that it is up to him to play the part of National Service Controller within his sphere of influence—an influence which he is very apt to exaggerate by the way. He wades in after the true Cokerish manner—browbeats the Fifth and Sixth, snubs the Shell, Upper Fourth, and Remove, and ignores the small fry. Their serene majesties of the Sixth and his own Form largely ignore him, but the Remove prefer to encourage him. It is funnier to do that.

Then the Bounder takes a hand—why and how you will read later—and the results are distinctly humorous—none the less so because they drive the mighty Horace and the long-suffering Mr. Prout to the very verge of distraction!

### WHAT READERS LIKE.

I am always glad to hear from my readers as to the kind of stories that suit them, and the recent inquiry in these columns has brought me a shoal of letters on the subject.

But there is one thing that most of my correspondents forget. This is that I cannot guarantee to please individual tastes. When a number of readers want a particular kind of story, they stand quite a good chance of getting it. Each one of them may fairly be considered as spokesman for a number of others. But when just one reader wants anything—well, he may get it by good luck; he can hardly expect to get it to order, can he?

There is a big demand for the japing type of yarn—the kind in which tuck-hampers change hands, and soot and treacle are used upon heads, and rags are many. And these stories are quite good reading; but they would pall if we had them every week. That is what some of my correspondents appear to want.

Others would have every week some story of strong dramatic interest, such as those dealing with the backsliding of Vernon-Smith. These, I think, would take longer to pall, for there are greater possibilities of variety in them; but they would grow stale in time if no variety were introduced.

Variety should appeal to all. If you don't care greatly for anything too serious, you can be sure that something lighter is coming along soon. This week's story—a really good one—is on the serious side. Next week's—also good—is quite otherwise. See?

YOUR EDITOR.