

A TOUGH NUT COMES TO GREYFRIARS THIS WEEK!

The

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Week Ending March 5th, 1927.

Magnet 2^d

EVERY MONDAY.

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NOT A HAPPY MOMENT FOR ROGER'S UNCLE TO ARRIVE!

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, gets the shock of his life when he discovers his nephew fighting within an hour of his arrival at Greyfriars. (Read "ROGER OF THE REMOVE"—this week's delightful story of the boys of Greyfriars.)

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A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK! Not unnaturally the Removees at Greyfriars imagine that Roger Quelch will be a smaller edition of their gimlet-eyed Form master, Henry Quelch. But when this new boy turns up he soon makes it clear that he and his uncle have little in common. You'll like this grand story featuring

Roger of the Remove!



A Novel Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars, introducing a new boy.

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Wharton is Wanted!

"YOU'RE wanted!"
"Oh, rot!"
"Quelchy—"
"Bother!"

Harry Wharton did not look pleased. As it was a half-holiday at Greyfriars and the captain of the Remove was due on the junior football ground in a few minutes, he could hardly be expected to hear with pleasure that his Form master wanted him.

A summons to Mr. Quelch's study was not grateful or comforting at the best of times. Now it was particularly ungrateful and discomforting.

Billy Bunter grinned in at the doorway of the changing-room.

"Quelchy's waiting for you," he said. "He told me to tell you to come at once!"

"What does he want?" growled Bob Cherry. "Quelchy ought to give us a rest on a half-holiday!"

"Go and tell him so!" grinned Bunter.

"Fathead!"

"He looks rather waxy," went on Bunter cheerfully. "I noticed that he had a cane on the table."

"Did he say what he wanted?" asked Wharton.

"Yes."

"Well, what was it?"

"You!"

"You silly ass!" roared the captain of the Remove. "Did he say what he wanted me for?"

"He didn't say—but he's got a cane on the table," said Bunter. "I fancy it's a licking. Better put some exercise books in your bags."

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Better go, Harry," said Frank Nugent, as the captain of the Remove frowned, and seemed to hesitate. "We can wait. I dare say Quelchy won't keep you more than a minute."

"The esteemed Quelchy does not

know that we are going to play football," remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Tell him to cut it short, and come back as quick as you can," said Johnny Bull.

"Bother!" growled Wharton. "We don't want to keep the Shell waiting on Little Side."

"That's all right," said Bunter brightly. "I'll take your place, if you like, Wharton. I shouldn't care to take a subordinate place in the team, but I don't mind captaining the side—"

There was a roar in the changing-room.

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Thanks no end, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "I don't think we'll trouble you. You fellows get along to the ground, and I'll follow you as soon as I've done with Quelchy."

And the captain of the Remove threw on a coat over his jersey and shorts, and left the changing-room.

He made his way to Mr. Quelch's study at a trot.

As head of the Remove, Wharton had responsibilities, and his time was not quite his own, even on a half-holiday. Anyhow, if his Form master wanted him, he had to go. So he went as quickly as he could, hoping that Mr. Quelch would cut it short.

He tapped at the door of the Remove master's study, and entered.

Mr. Quelch greeted him with a smile. That was rather a relief; evidently the cane on the table was not intended for Wharton.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Harry.

"Yes, Wharton. I should be glad if you would perform a little service for me this afternoon," said Mr. Quelch.

Wharton suppressed a groan.

He was quite willing to perform little services for Mr. Quelch; indeed, as head of the Remove, it was his duty to do so. But he wished that the Form master had chosen a more propitious moment.

"I desire someone to meet the three o'clock train at Friardale Station, Wharton, and I am very busy myself."

"Oh!"

Kick-off in the Form match between the Remove and the Shell, was at two-thirty. Evidently there was no football for the captain of the Remove that afternoon, as he did not possess the gift of being in two places at once.

Mr. Quelch did not even seem to notice that he was in football rig.

"My nephew is coming to Greyfriars this afternoon, Wharton," he said.

"Oh!" repeated Harry.

This was the first he had heard of Mr. Quelch's nephew.

"Roger—that is my nephew's name—is coming here on a visit," went on Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir," said Harry, looking as interested as he could. He wished that Mr. Quelch's nephew Roger had been visiting South Africa or Australia instead, but he could not very well say so.

"It is probable," went on Mr. Quelch, "that Roger will remain at Greyfriars. At present he is at school in Devonshire, but his headmaster has given him leave for this visit. It is my desire to have my nephew at this school, under my own eye. I think it will be for his benefit."

Wharton could not help wondering whether Roger saw eye to eye with his uncle on that subject.

It was possible, of course, that he was fond of his uncle. There was no accounting for tastes.

But it was no joke for any fellow to live, and move, and have his being, under such an avuncular eye as that of Mr. Quelch.

Wharton could not help thinking that, had he been Mr. Quelch's nephew, he would have preferred the school in Devonshire.

He did not say so, however. He remained respectfully silent.

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"I have chosen you to meet my nephew at the station, and bring him to Greyfriars, as I have every confidence in you, Wharton," said the Remove master kindly.

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Wharton. On that occasion, at least, he could have dispensed with this flattering confidence.

"I desire my nephew to receive an agreeable impression of the school," said Mr. Quelch. "He will take his place, for some days, in the Remove, as if he were a regular Greyfriars boy, and I should be obliged if you would do all in your power to help him to get used to his new surroundings."

"Certainly, sir!"

"My brother," resumed Mr. Quelch, "is not satisfied with the reports he has received of his son from his present headmaster. We both hope that Roger will do better here under my personal supervision. I trust that you and your friends, Wharton, will make my nephew welcome in the Form, and help him in the little difficulties that beset the path of a new boy."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"His train reaches Friardale at three o'clock. You will meet him on the platform, and bring him directly to the school. I am obliged to you, Wharton!" added Mr. Quelch graciously.

The interview was over. But Wharton did not immediately leave the study. He was debating in his mind whether he could tell Mr. Quelch that he was due for a football match, and request the Form master to assign this honourable task to someone else.

Mr. Quelch dropped his eyes to his papers again. He was, as he had said, very busy that afternoon.

Still the captain of the Remove hesitated.

Mr. Quelch raised his eyes from his papers in some surprise as the junior lingered.

"That is all, Wharton?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

And the captain of the Remove, colouring a little, retreated from his Form master's study.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

To Go or Not To Go!

"HALLO, hello, hallo!"

"Trouble?"

"Wherefore that atrocious and infuriated frown, my esteemed Wharton?"

Harry Wharton was frowning as he arrived on the football ground; but his frown relaxed as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh asked that question. It was difficult for any fellow to frown when the nabob of Bhanipur was talking English, as learned from the native moonshee in the State of Bhanipur.

"It's rotten!" said Harry. "I shall have to cut footer this afternoon!"

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry at once.

"Bosh!" said Vernon-Smith. "You can't! We've got to go all out to beat the Shell; we're not going to have Hobson and his mob saying that we can't hold them at footer. What the thump do you want to cut for?"

"I don't want to," growled Wharton.

"Then don't," said the Bounder. "It's close on time—and here comes Potter of the Fifth to ref!"

"No choice about it," said Harry. "It's rotten, but I happen to be head of the Remove, and in possession of my Form master's confidence, and reliance, and so forth, and so I'm called on. I

almost wish I were a bad character, like you, Smithy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what does Quelch want, then?" demanded Johnny Bull. "You don't mean you're detained?"

"Quelch's got a nephew," said Wharton. "His name's Roger, and he's coming to Greyfriars this afternoon. He's a giddy visitor, but it is hoped that he will hang on at Greyfriars and come into the Remove. I'm to meet him at the station and be nice to him. I've been specially picked out because I'm such a nice chap!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Well, of all the rot!" said Bob Cherry. "Can't some other silly ass go and pick up Roger at the station?"

"Any silly ass could do it—you could, old bean. But I'm the selected victim."

"Rot!" said the Bounder. "You're not going. Bunter could do it—or Skinner. He's slacking about doing nothing this afternoon. Or Bolsover major, or anybody! What does it matter who meets the silly kid at the station? Blow him, anyhow!"

"The blowfulness is terrific!"

"Didn't you tell Quelch it was a football match?" asked Bob.

Wharton shook his head.

"You see, this is rather an honour," he explained ruefully. "Quelch would have got his rag out and thought me disobligeing. He's asked me to do this for him—but, after all, he could order me if he liked. It can't be helped. I shall have to cut the match."

"You can't!" said Vernon-Smith.

"I'm afraid it means a licking for the Remove if you do, old scout," said Bob Cherry.

"It's a licking for you fags, anyhow," chimed in Hobson of the Shell, who was standing near the group of Removes. "Don't you worry your little selves—you haven't an earthly!"

"Fathead!" said Bob.

"Don't give us Shell swank, you ass!" said the Bounder. "We're going to wipe up the ground with you. But you're going to play, Wharton. Look here, another chap can go and meet this idiot, Roger. Quelch won't mind, so long as the dummy is landed at Greyfriars this side up, with care. Pick out some fellow to go, and let's get going ourselves."

"Could I?" said Wharton doubtfully.

"Of course!"

"I agree with Smithy," said Bob Cherry. "What does it matter, so long as the kid gets to Greyfriars?"

"He's rather a special kid," said Harry. "Quelch's nephew, you know, and it's rather a distinction to be picked out by one's Form master—"

"You can pass the distinction on," said Smithy. "The long and the short of it is that you can't let us down."

"That's so," said Squiff, the Remove goalkeeper. "We've got to beat the Shell."

Wharton hesitated.

Really, it was not a matter of great importance who should meet Mr. Quelch's nephew at Friardale and conduct him to the school. So long as Master Roger arrived safely, that was all right. Mr. Quelch had assigned the task to his head boy, and his selection was rather flattering, but at the same time it was rather inconvenient. Wharton could not help thinking that his Form master would be annoyed if he passed on the task to another fellow. Nevertheless, a football match was a football match. And the captain of the Remove was very keen on beating the Shell.

It is well said that he who hesitates is lost.

For better or for worse Harry Wharton made up his mind. He glanced round and called to Bolsover major, who was lounging gloomily near the goal with his hands in his pockets. Bolsover major was suffering from a sense of deep injury because he had not been selected to play back that afternoon. He was quite convinced that in that line of defence he was far and away superior to Johnny Bull and Mark Linley. He had offered his services several times over, emphatically, and they had been declined with thanks. Hence the gloomy frown on Bolsover's rugged brow.

But he brightened up as Wharton called to him.

He looked almost amiable as he hurried across to the captain of the Remove.

"Want me?" he asked.

"Yes," said Harry. "Quelch's asked me to meet his nephew at the station—kid coming to Greyfriars this afternoon. I—"

"That's all right!" said Bolsover genially. "I'm your man."

"Thanks!" said Harry, rather surprised by such obliging geniality from Bolsover major.

"Not at all. Glad of the chance," said Bolsover.

"Oh, good! The train comes in at three—"

"Lots of time to meet it, then," said Bolsover. "You don't want me to take your place as centre-forward, I suppose?"

"Eh? No."

"I'm best in the back line. You can shift Linley into the front line; he's a good forward."

"What?"

"Leave Bull at back with me," said Bolsover major. "We can work all right together."

Wharton stared at him. Evidently there was a misunderstanding.

"Sorry you've got to cut the match, old man," said Bolsover amicably. "But we'll beat the Shell all right!"

Some of the footballers grinned. Bolsover's misapprehension had its comic side. Wharton suppressed a smile.

"I don't mean that," he said. "I want you to go to Friardale—"

"Eh?"

"And meet young Quelch."

"What?"

"And trot him along to the school."

"Look here—"

"You'll do it?"

Bolsover major was frowning again, and his face was red with wrath.

"You cheeky ass!" he roared. "I thought you wanted me to play!"

"Sorry, but—"

"Hang young Quelch! What the thump do I care about a new kid? Let old Quelch go and fetch young Quelch, and be blowed to him!"

"Look here, Bolsover—"

"Go and eat coke!"

"You've got to do it, Bolsover!" exclaimed the Bounder angrily. "We'll jolly well send you to Coventry if you don't play up and let Wharton get on with the game!"

"Be decent, old bean!" said Bob Cherry.

"Send somebody else!" growled Bolsover major.

"You kids ready?" asked Potter of the Fifth, who had arrived on the ground to referee.

"Just on," said Harry. "Bolsover, old scout, oblige us in this, like a good chap. Somebody must go."

"Tell Skinner! He's loafing about there!"



Roger Quelch held on to the handle of the carriage door while the train gathered speed. Then he stood back on the platform, smiling, and waved his hand to the four faces staring in fury from the carriage. It was too late for Skinner & Co. to attempt to alight—they were booked for Lantham! (See Chapter 3.)

"Can't trust Skinner. He would play some trick on the kid. You know what Skinner is."

"Bunter, then!"

"Bunter's a silly ass, and might miss the kid altogether! Look here, it's not too much to do!" said the captain of the Remove impatiently.

"Play up!" said Nugent.

"If you fags are going to play football—" said Stewart of the Shell.

"We're ready, ass!" said Squiff.

"You'll go, Bolsover?"

Bolsover major was angry and disappointed, but he was not proof against public opinion. He nodded his head surlily.

"Confound your cheek! I'll go!"

"That's right!"

"How shall I know the little beast?" demanded Bolsover major. "What's he like?"

"Probably like a gargoyle, if he resembles his uncle!" said Bob Cherry. "You'll pick him out all right. Come on, you men!"

"Look here!" growled Bolsover major.

But Bolsover was not heeded. The footballers went into the field, and Bolsover major was left alone to grieve.

He stood looking glumly on as the match started. Hobson of the Shell kicked off, and the game was soon going strong. In the rush and bustle of Soccer, Harry Wharton & Co. soon forgot all about Mr. Quelch and his nephew and Bolsover major. The Shell were a bigger and older team, and the heroes of the Remove had all their work cut out to deal with Hobson & Co. Extraneous matters had to be dismissed from their minds.

Bolsover major stood looking on, frowning, his hands shoved deep into his pockets, till he remembered that if he was to be at the station at three, it was high time to start. Then he tramped away, in a surly mood.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Catching a Tartar!

"CHEEK!"

Skinner of the Remove made that remark as he joined Bolsover major. Snoop and Stott were with Skinner, loafing about as usual on a half-holiday. They were not interested in the Form match, keen and strenuous as it was and well worth watching. Wild horses would not have dragged Skinner down to Little Side to watch a game unless he had a bet on the result.

Bolsover major scowled at him.

"What do you mean?" he grunted.

"What I say!" answered Skinner smoothly. "Cheek, to send you off on an errand like a fag! I wouldn't go!"

"I've said I'll go!" grunted Bolsover.

"Rather a jest to leave old Quelch's giddy nephew hanging up at the station," suggested Skinner.

"I've said I'll go, I tell you!"

Bolsover major was not a pleasant youth, but he was more particular upon such points than Harold Skinner.

"Oh, quite!" said Skinner blandly. "If you've said you'll go, of course you're bound to play up. We'll come. I'm rather curious to see whether the young rotter is anything like the old rotter!"

That was Skinner's respectful way of speaking of his Form master and his Form master's nephew.

The four juniors walked down the lane to Friardale together. Snoop and Stott looked rather impatient. They

were not disposed to waste a half-holiday on their Form master's nephew.

"Look here, what's the game?" asked Snoop. "Old Quelch's relations are nothing to us!"

Skinner did not heed.

"You're bound to go to the station, Bolsover, if you said you would," he remarked, "but it would be rather a lark to pull the leg of young Quelch!"

"Not so easy to pull his leg, if he's anything like his uncle," said Bolsover major. "I've a jolly good mind to punch his head!"

"That would mean trouble with Quelch afterwards," said Stott.

"That's why I'm not going to do it."

"I daresay the kid is some spooney ass!" said Skinner. "Easy enough to pull a new kid's leg! It was like Wharton's cheek to leave you out of the footer, and then put this job on you!"

"I know it was!" growled Bolsover major.

"If the kid got lost or anything Wharton would have to stand the racket!" said Skinner.

"Serve him right! But the kid won't get lost between the village and Greyfriars, I suppose."

"He might take the wrong train."

"He hasn't got to take a train from Friardale, fathead!"

"He may not know that."

Bolsover major stared at Skinner, and then he grinned. In his annoyed and disappointed mood, he was quite prepared to fall in with Skinner's schemes. After all, it was no business of his to

look after Mr. Quelch's nephew. That distinguished task had been assigned to the head boy of the Remove, and Bolsover had relieved him of it unwillingly. If Master Roger found trouble that afternoon, it was Wharton's business.

"Good!" said Bolsover.

And the young rascals walked on to the station in quite a cheery mood.

"A Form master's nephew is bound to be a bit of a sneaking rotter!" said Skinner sagely. "I dare say he will spy on the fellows and tell tales to his uncle. I dare say that's what he's coming to Greyfriars for!"

"Shouldn't wonder!" said Snoop.

"Likely enough!" grunted Bolsover major. "Anyhow, I'll jolly well show him that I won't stand any rot from him, Form master's nephew or not!"

"The train's in," remarked Snoop, as they arrived at the village station.

The four juniors went into the station. Passengers were coming out, and Bolsover & Co. eyed them as they left. But there was no youth among them, and they went on the platform. No doubt Roger Quelch was waiting there, as he had been told that he was to be met at Friardale.

"There he is!" murmured Skinner.

One passenger remained on the platform—a lad about fifteen. The Greyfriars juniors eyed him rather curiously.

He was rather a sturdy fellow, with a healthy face and quite an agreeable expression. A resemblance to Mr. Quelch could be detected in his features, though he was quite good-looking, and the Remove master was certainly not a handsome man.

"That's the merchant!" said Bolsover major. "Looks cheeky!"

"Come on!" said Skinner. "Awfully civil, and all that, you know. We're nice boys who love our kind teacher, and feel no end bucked at being allowed to make the acquaintance of his nephew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The quartette bore down on the stranger.

"Young Quelch—what?" asked Skinner affably.

A look of surprise came over the junior's face.

"My name's Quelch," he said—"Roger Quelch." He had quite a pleasant voice, not at all like the severe metallic tones of his scholastic uncle. "You fellows belong to Greyfriars?"

"Remove fellows!" said Skinner. "We've come to meet you. Your uncle's rather busy this afternoon."

"You're very good!" said Roger.

"Not at all. It's an honour."

"A distinction!" said Snoop, with a giggle.

Roger Quelch looked rather sharply at Snoop.

"Well, it's kind of you to come and meet me!" he said. "I suppose we walk to the school from here?"

"You can walk, if you like," said Skinner. "It's rather a long way. We generally take the train."

"The train?" repeated Roger.

"Yes."

"I thought this was the station for Greyfriars."

"So it is, if you like a long walk. But you can save the walk by taking the local train," said Skinner blandly.

"Come on! There's no time to lose."

"They've landed my box here—"

"That's all right. It will be sent on to the school. You don't want to carry it on your back to Greyfriars, do you?" Roger Quelch laughed.

"No, hardly. But—"

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"This way!" said Skinner, taking the visitor's arm in the most friendly way. "We have to cross the line to the other platform."

"But that's the up-platform."

"My dear chap, we know what we're about. Hurry up before the train comes in!"

Roger Quelch looked fixedly at Skinner for a second, and for that second his expression was remarkably like that of his uncle, Mr. Quelch. The Remove master was well known in the Remove as a downy old bird; and for that second Skinner wondered whether Master Roger was as downy as his uncle—in which case pulling his leg would have been an impossible task.

But the keen, penetrating look was only momentary. It passed, leaving a simple, confiding smile in its place.

Skinner was relieved.

"Well, I thought I had to walk from here," said Roger. "But I suppose you fellows know best."

"Naturally," said Bolsover major.

"Come on!"

"My ticket's only to Friardale."

"That's all right. Pay excess at the end, see?"

"I see."

Roger Quelch crossed the line with Bolsover & Co. Skinner winked at his friends, and they suppressed their chuckles. It was evident that Master Roger was, as Skinner had foretold, a spooney ass. Otherwise, he would hardly have allowed himself to be led to the up-platform, to take a train which would bear him directly away from Greyfriars.

In a few minutes a train was signalled, and it came buzzing in. It was the train for Lantham, non-stop for ten miles.

"Here you are!" said Skinner breezily.

"Is that my train?"

"That's it."

The Lantham train stopped, and disgorged several passengers. Skinner held open a carriage-door.

"Hop in, kid!"

"You fellows are coming?"

"Oh! Yes! Of course!"

"After you," said Roger.

"Oh, hop in!"

"No; after you," said Roger, with simple politeness. "My daddy has told me always to be polite and nice in my manners."

"Oh crikey!"

The word "daddy" almost made Skinner & Co. suffocate. They had already decided that Roger Quelch was an ass. Now they realised that he was a priceless ass—the very last word in spooneys.

It had been Skinner's intention to land Roger in the train, close the door on him, and leave him to it. But the politeness impressed upon Roger by his "daddy" made that little scheme impossible. He stood back, evidently determined not to enter till the other fellows were in the carriage. A porter came along the platform calling:

"Lantham train! No stop before Lantham!"

Roger did not seem to hear or heed.

Skinner exchanged a quick look with his comrades, and stepped into the train. It was easy enough to step out at the last moment.

Bolsover and Snoop and Stott followed him in, and then Roger Quelch entered.

"There's a corner seat, kid," said Skinner, pointing across the carriage.

Roger did not cross the carriage to the corner seat.

A porter was coming along the train slamming doors. Roger stepped back to the platform, and slammed the carriage door.

For a second Skinner & Co. stared blankly. Then Skinner tore at the handle of the door.

"Let us out!" he shouted.

Roger, standing on the platform, held the handle in a grip of iron. Skinner was unable to get the door open.

"Let us out!" yelled Snoop, in great alarm.

A non-stop run to Lantham for Mr. Quelch's nephew was one thing; but for Skinner & Co. it was quite another. But it looked now as if Skinner & Co. were going to get that non-stop run.

Roger smiled at them through the window.

"Isn't this the right train?" he asked.

"Ye-e-es. But—"

"Then what do you want to get out for?"

"You—you—you see—" stammered Skinner.

"Yes, I see," assented Roger, with a cheery grin. "Did you think I was a new soft kid who had never been to school before? My dear man, I know my way about. I'm a High Coombe man, and I knew more when I was in the Third than you will know when you're in the Sixth."

"You young rotter!" yelled Bolsover major. "Open that door!"

"Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," said Roger Quelch coolly. "You were going to send me on to Lantham. I'm going to send you. Good-bye!"

"Stand clear, there!" shouted the guard.

The train was moving.

Roger Quelch walked along with it, still holding the handle of the carriage door, and smiling at the four infuriated faces within.

"Pleasant journey!" he said.

"You young villain—"

"You spoofing rotter—"

"Oh crumbs!"

A porter grasped Roger Quelch by the shoulder, and jerked him away from the train, which was gathering speed.

"You young idiot! Do you want to be killed?" he snapped.

"Thanks, no. Only saying good-bye to my friends," said Roger pleasantly.

"Stand clear!"

Roger Quelch stood on the platform, smiling, and waved his hand to the four faces staring in fury from the carriage. It was too late for Skinner & Co. to attempt to alight. They were booked for Lantham now.

They vanished from Roger's sight, and Mr. Quelch's nephew, still smiling, turned and strolled away to the exit.

"Oh dear!" gasped Snoop, in utter dismay.

"We—we shall have to go on to Lantham now," groaned Stott. "You silly idiot, Skinner!"

"We shall have to pay our fares—and the return fare—"

"We shall be late for calling-over."

"Oh dear!"

"You ass, Skinner!"

"You fool, Skinner!"

"Oh, shut up!" snarled Skinner savagely. "That young cad took you in just as much as he did me!"

"It was your stunt!" roared Bolsover major. "You've landed us into a pretty pickle with your silly stunts, haven't you?"

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Roger Quelch sat up dazedly. "Oh, my hat!" he gasped. Billy Bunter, sitting a few feet away from him, blinked dizzily at his Form master's nephew. "Ow! Wow! Wow!" he wailed. "You fat idiot!" spluttered Roger. "What the thump do you mean by charging round the corner like a mad bull?" (See Chapter 5.)

"Booked for Lantham!" groaned Stott. "Who's going to pay my fare?"

"Oh, you idiot, Skinner!"

"We'll make Skinner pay all the fares!" roared Bolsover major. "And then we shall get lined up for being late back! You silly chump—you—you—you—"

"Oh, shut up!" snarled Skinner. He was utterly dismayed by the turn the affair had taken, and in no mood to listen to the reproaches of his comrades. Skinner was an incorrigible practical joker, and sometimes his little jests turned against himself. But never had he caught such a Tartar as Mr. Quelch's nephew.

"You—you—" gasped Bolsover major. Words failed Bolsover, and he proceeded to actions.

Skinner roared as his head went into chancery.

It was a seriously damaged Skinner that extricated himself at last from the dust on the floor of the carriage, and collapsed into a seat. He gasped and spluttered dolorously as the train whizzed on its way—to an accompaniment of incessant slanging from his enraged companions. It was not a happy party that arrived at last at Lantham Junction.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!" Harry Wharton & Co. certainly heard Bunter.

But, like a celebrated character of old, they heard but they heeded not.

It was half-time, and strenuous Soccer had ceased on Little Side. It had been a gruelling half, but on neither side had the game proceeded "according to plan." Hobson & Co., of the Shell, had not wiped the Remove off the earth, as they had intended. Harry Wharton & Co. had not mopped up the Shell, which had been their intention and determination. Neither side had scored so far, though both had had narrow escapes; and now they were taking a well-earned rest, and the voice of Billy Bunter, like that of the turtle-dove was heard in the land.

"I say, you fellows!" bawled Bunter.

Bob Cherry grinned over the lemon he was sucking, but gave no other heed. Even the hardy heroes of the Remove were feeling a little as if they had bellows to mend; and they had no breath to waste on William George Bunter.

That fat and fatuous youth blinked indignantly at the Famous Five, in a little group together. Certainly they

heard him, and equally certainly they saw him. Yet they gave him no heed—just as if they regarded him as a thing of no importance whatever.

And the matter was urgent.

Bunter had been disappointed about a postal-order! For some unexplained reason, a remittance had failed to arrive from Bunter Court. And Bunter was hungry—much too hungry to wait for tea. He had had nothing since dinner excepting a packet of toffee belonging to Peter Todd, and a cake that belonged to Squiff, and some chocolates that belonged to Frank Nugent. The toffee, the cake, and the chocolates belonged to Bunter now, and were safely packed away. But, like Oliver Twist, he wanted more. The least that these fellows could do, in Bunter's opinion, was to listen to his tale of woe, in the interval of the football. And they gave him no attention whatever.

"I say, you fellows!" bawled Bunter, for the third time. "Look here, I want to speak to you."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the whistle," said Bob Cherry.

And the football match was resumed, much to Bunter's disgust. He had waited for the interval, to speak to the Famous Five on a matter of the greatest importance.

urgency. And now they were playing Soccer again, just as if it did not matter!

"Beasts!" roared Bunter.

And he rolled away with a frowning fat brow.

"I say, Hazel!" He came on Hazel-dene among the Remove fellows who were watching the game.

Hazel grunted. He was looking cross, and Bunter knew the reason.

"I say, Wharton's an ass to put Squiff in goal and leave you out, old chap," said Bunter.

Another grunt from Hazel-dene.

"Why, you can play Field's head off," said Bunter. "Look at the duffer in goal now—simply rotten!"

"What do you know about it?" grunted Hazel.

"Well, I know that you ought to be in goal, old chap," said Bunter.

"That's right enough; I ought," said Hazel. "Squiff's all right, but it's utter rot to make out that he keeps goal better than I do."

"Utter rot," agreed Bunter. "You're the best man between the posts, old chap, and I've always said so. And I know something about footer."

"About as much as would go into a thimble, leaving plenty of room for a finger," said Hazel.

Bunter coughed.

"Well, I know a good man in goal when I see one," he said; "and you're the goods, Hazel, old bean!"

"Pity Wharton doesn't think so," grunted Hazel.

"You don't get justice, old man."

"I know I don't."

"It's a shame."

"You're right there," said Hazel, thawing a little. "You don't know anything about the game, Bunter, but you're right there. I'm glad there's one chap in the Form who can see it."

"I wouldn't stay here watching them, you know," said Bunter. "They're not worth it. Come along to the tuckshop."

"Oh, rats!"

"Mrs. Mumble has a new lot of jam-tarts—"

"Blow 'em!"

"They're jolly nice—"

"Rot!"

"I—I say, Hazel, can you lend me half-a-crown?"

"No."

"Make it a bob, old chap. I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"

"Chuck it!"

"I'm actually stony!" said Bunter pathetically.

"For the first time in your life, I suppose?" asked Hazel sarcastically.

"Ye-es—exactly! Lend me a bob—"

"Go and eat coke!"

"I—I say, old chap—"

"Oh, dry up!"

Hazel moved farther away, still watching the football.

Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles in deep indignation. His "soft sawder" had been wasted; Hazel was not to be "touched" even for a humble "bob."

"Look at that!" exclaimed Hazel suddenly, as there was a tussle before the Remove goal. "Field only saved that by a hair's-breadth."

"You'd have missed it by a mile," said Bunter.

"What?"

"You keep goal!" said Bunter derisively. "Why, you couldn't keep white mice!"

Hazel glared round at him. Bunter's sudden change of opinion with regard to Hazel's quality as a goalkeeper was

evidently due to the fact that the "bob" had not been forthcoming.

"He, he, he!" cackled the Owl of the Remove. "Why, my dear man, you're no good at all between the posts. You just stand there like a sack of coals, and let the ball pass you every time. If Wharton put you in goal for this match we'd jolly well scrag him. You're no good. You couldn't keep goal against a girls' school!"

And Bunter rolled away with his fat little nose in the air.

Hazel, crimson with wrath, made a quick stride after him and let out his foot.

There was a roar from Bunter as he pitched forward.

"Whooooo!"

He landed on his fat hands and knees, roaring:

"Ow, ow! Keep off, you beast! I'll jolly well lick you! Yarooooh!"

Hazel grinned and turned to watch the football once more. Bunter did not favour him with any more opinions about goalkeeping. He picked himself up and rolled dolorously off the football ground.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter. "It's two hours to tea, and I'm famished—simply famished! I say, Mauly!"

He caught sight of Lord Mauleverer, of the Remove, strolling in the quad. Mauleverer gave him a glance and quickened his pace.

"Mauly, old man!"

Bunter broke into a run.

So did his lordship.

Mauly vanished round a corner, and when the breathless Owl of the Remove reached the corner, Mauly was out of sight.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled away to the gates. His luck was out that afternoon, and only one chance remained—a very slim chance, but it was a case of any port in a storm. It was some time since he had visited the tuckshop in Friardale, and there was a bare possibility of "sticking" Uncle Clegg for a few tarts on "tick." The chance was slim, for Uncle Clegg knew Bunter. But there was no other prospect; and Bunter trotted down the lane towards the village.

He was half-way to Friardale when he sighted two elegant youths leaning on the stile in the lane, and stopped in dismay. He did not want to meet Ponsonby and Gadsby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe. But he had no choice in the matter, for Ponsonby and Gadsby had spotted him, and they detached themselves from the stile and came towards him with joyous looks. Ragging a fat and helpless fellow like Bunter appeared to Pon and Gaddy in the light of a little harmless and necessary entertainment.

"Here we are again!" said Ponsonby genially.

"So glad to meet you!" grinned Gadsby.

Bunter smiled feebly.

"G-g-g-good-afternoon!" he stammered.

"Fatter than ever!" said Ponsonby, eyeing him. "You really ought to take a little exercise to get your fat down, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Ponsonby—"

"Think you could race us to the village?" asked Ponsonby.

"Nunno!"

"If we helped you a little—what?"

"I—I say—"

Bunter wished he had stayed on Little Side to watch the football-match. But it was too late to wish that now; he was in the hands of the Amalekites.

"We'll help you," said Gadsby. "In

fact, we'll dribble you as far as Friardale, Bunter."

"Look here—"

"Start!" said Ponsonby, drawing back his foot.

"Keep off, you rotters!" howled Bunter. "You'd jolly well scoot fast enough if Bob Cherry or Wharton came along."

Ponsonby smiled unpleasantly. Bunter's remark was well-founded, but its truth did not make it palatable to the dandy of Highcliffe.

"Start him, Gaddy!" he said.

"What-ho!" chuckled Gaddy.

"Yarooooh!"

Two boots clumping on Bunter started him. He started with a jump, and tore desperately on towards the village.

Ponsonby and Gadsby, with shouts of laughter, followed on, dribbling the fat Owl of the Remove.

The hapless Bunter let out a yell at every other step, and put on his greatest speed; but the Highcliffians easily kept pace, kicking him in turn.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yarooooh! Leave off! Ow!"

"Go it, Gaddy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter tore on frantically. There was a bend in the lane ahead of him, and Bunter went round it at top speed, blindly. But it happened that someone was coming along from the opposite direction, and Bunter was suddenly stopped by a terrific collision.

Crash!

"Oh!"

"Ow!"

Billy Bunter staggered and sat down with a bump, while the unfortunate pedestrian who had received his charge was strewn along the lane.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Roger to the Rescue!

ROGER QUELCH sat up and blinked.

He was strolling cheerfully along Friardale Lane towards Greyfriars, while Skinner & Co. were enjoying—more or less—their unexpected railway journey to Lantham. Roger strolled along with his hands in his pockets, in cheery spirits, when suddenly an earthquake happened to him. At least, it seemed like an earthquake.

He sat up dazedly.

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped.

Billy Bunter, sitting a few feet away from him, blinked dizzily at the Form master's nephew.

"Ow! Wow, wow!" was Bunter's remark.

"You fat idiot!" gasped Roger.

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"What the thump do you mean by charging round a corner like a mad bull, without looking where you are going?" spluttered Roger Quelch.

"Ow! They're after me!"

"You silly chump! I've a jolly good mind to wallop you!" growled Roger, staggering to his feet. "Who's after you? A mad dog, I should think, by the way you were going."

"Ow! Highcliffe cads. Ow! Here they come!"

Bunter had shot ahead for a few moments, but Ponsonby and Gadsby were close behind. They came round the bend of the lane at full speed.

They stopped just in time to avoid falling over Bunter.

"Ow! Keep off!" roared the Owl of the Remove.

The two Highcliffians gave Roger Quelch a glance, and took no further

heed of him. He was a stranger to them, and he looked as if he could take care of himself. Bunter was their game.

"Get up, you fat frog!" said Ponsonby.

"Ow! Leave a chap alone. Ow!"

"Get up!" roared Gadsby.

"Groogh! Ow!"

"We'll jolly well kick you till you get goin' again!" grinned Ponsonby.

And he suited the action to the word.

"Yarooooogh!"

Roger Quelch, still a little breathless from the shock, stared on at that scene in surprise. Bunter and the Highcliffians were all strangers to him, and he was far from guessing that Bunter was a Greyfriars fellow and in his uncle's Form. But Roger was not the fellow to stand by while a fat, short-sighted fellow was bullied.

"Chuck that!" he said sharply.

Ponsonby glanced round at him disdainfully.

"Did you speak to me?" he exclaimed.

"Yes. Let that chap alone."

"What the thump are you buttin' in for, whoever you are?" exclaimed Gadsby.

"Fair play's a jewel," said Roger.

"Let that fat chap alone."

"Mind your own bizney."

And Ponsonby kicked again, and there was a roar of anguish from the Owl of the Remove.

Roger Quelch stepped forward and unceremoniously shoved the Highcliff junior back. He stood between Bunter and the Highcliffians.

"That will do!" he said, and at that moment his voice was very like that of his uncle, the master of the Remove at Greyfriars. "Stop it!"

"Stand aside!" snarled Ponsonby.

"We'll jolly well shift you, if you don't shift!" said Gadsby threateningly.

"Go ahead," said Roger.

Billy Bunter squirmed away and scrambled to his feet. He kept well behind the sturdy stranger who had chipped in to protect him. Who the fellow was Bunter had not the faintest idea, but he was very glad indeed that the fellow was there.

Ponsonby and Gadsby drew together. They had no prejudices in favour of fair play. If Roger persisted in defending Bunter, he had two enemies to tackle at once. But he did not seem daunted.

"I'm givin' you a chance to clear, you cad," said Ponsonby. "Now then, sharp—get out of the way!"

"Rats!"

"Do you want us to shift you?" roared Gadsby.

"Yes—if you can do it," grinned Roger.

"Come on, Gaddy!"

The two Highcliffians rushed on together. Each of them looked like a match for this interfering stranger, and, together, they had no doubt whatever of rushing him over and thrashing him for his cheek. They were in happy ignorance of the fact that Roger Quelch was the champion fighting-man of the Fourth Form at High Coombe School in Devonshire. They had never heard of Roger or of High Coombe. They came on with a rush, expecting to send him spinning.

What happened next showed them that this youthful stranger, whoever he was, was a good man with his hands.

Roger stood like a rock, and his right came with a crash into Ponsonby's eye, sending Pon staggering backwards, to fall with a heavy bump into the dust. The next second Gaddy's fist jarred on Roger's nose, and there was a spurt of crimson, and they closed a moment later and struggled.

Bunter blinked on, gasping.

In the circumstances, Billy Bunter was bound to go to the help of his rescuer. But that obvious consideration did not seem to occur to Bunter.

Having recovered a little of his breath, Bunter started off again, leaving his unknown rescuer to it. He stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once.

Bunter was vanishing from sight through a gap in the hedge, when Roger Quelch and Gadsby fell to the ground together and rolled over in the dust in a desperate struggle.

Ponsonby staggered to his feet.

His eye was closed and blackening; he knew that he was going to have a prize black eye, and he was seething with fury. He rushed on to help Gadsby.

But before he could join in again Roger had freed himself from his adversary. A terrific jab at close quarters

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rolled Gadsby out of his way, and Gaddy sat up in the dust, clasping both hands over a damaged eye. Roger leaped to his feet just in time to meet Ponsonby's rush.

His nose was streaming red; but he was quite cool and collected, breathless as he was. He met Ponsonby with left and right.

Crash!

Ponsonby sprawled across Gaddy.

"Oh! Great gad!" he spluttered.

Roger Quelch stood panting for breath. The two Highcliffians, dusty and untidy, sat on the earth blinking at him. Roger jerked out a handkerchief and mopped his streaming nose.

"Had enough?" he asked.

"Oh! My eye!" moaned Gadsby.

"Oh gad!" groaned Ponsonby.

"Ow, ow!"

Roger laughed breathlessly.

He was a little hurt himself, and his nose bled freely. But his damages were as nothing compared with those of the Highcliffians. Certainly the two of them together could have gained a victory yet if they had felt disposed to go "all

out" in handling this tough customer. But the victory would have cost them dear, and they were not in the least disposed to renew the combat. They sat and gasped.

"There's some more if you want it, you know," said Roger.

"Oh! You rotten cad!" groaned Ponsonby.

"Let us alone, you ruffian!" mumbled Gadsby.

"I'm satisfied if you are!" grinned Roger. He looked round for Bunter.

"Hallo! Where's that fat bird?"

Bunter was out of sight. He was scuttling across the fields as fast as his fat little legs could carry him.

"The fat boulder! He might have lent a hand!" growled Roger, dabbing at his nose with a crimsoned handkerchief.

"Rotten Greyfriars cad!" mumbled Ponsonby. "What the thump did you butt in for, hang you? You're not a Greyfriars cad!"

"Greyfriars man, was he?" asked Roger. "Well, I'm going to Greyfriars myself. You don't belong to Greyfriars, by any chance?"

"Wouldn't be found dead there!" snarled Ponsonby. He gave the nephew of Mr. Quelch a glare of hatred. "So you're goin' to Greyfriars, are you, you rotter? We'll meet you again some day, and make you sorry for this."

"You've met me now, and you can go ahead making me sorry," suggested Roger. "No time like the present."

Ponsonby did not act on that suggestion. He caressed his swollen eye.

"Sure you don't want any more?" asked Roger politely.

"Leave us alone, you Greyfriars outsider!"

Roger laughed.

"You can call me names so long as you're sitting down," he said. "If you'll stand up and repeat them I'll sit you down again!"

"Get out, hang you!"

"It's for you to get out, as you're licked!" answered Mr. Quelch's nephew coolly. "You were kicking that fat chap; and sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, as I told some other fellows who woke up the wrong passenger. Get up and hop it!"

"Look here—"

"I give you two seconds!" said Roger, drawing back his foot.

One second was enough for Ponsonby and Gadsby. They scrambled up and through the gap in the hedge by which Bunter had disappeared.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Roger. "Good-bye!"

And as the Highcliffians vanished he walked along to a pond beside the lane to bathe his nose.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Roger Arrives!

BILLY BUNTER gave a gasp of alarm.

"Those beasts again!"

Bunter had stopped three fields away from the scene of the combat, quite winded.

He sat on a log to recover his breath, and gasped and spluttered, and spluttered and gasped, as if for a wager.

He was feeling a little recovered, when he sighted Ponsonby and Gadsby coming towards him by the footpath across the field.

The Owl of the Remove jumped up at once in alarm. But a second glance showed him that he had nothing to fear from Pon and Gaddy.

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Those two youths, not looking at all ciry or elegant now, were dragging themselves wearily along, moaning and groaning.

Gaddy had a black eye, and Ponsonby had two, and they had other damages, and they were quite spent and exhausted, and they limped along as if every step was going to be their last.

Two more thoroughly thrashed young rascals could not have been found in the whole county that sunny afternoon.

Bunter grinned.

"Oh, my hat! He's licked them both!" chuckled the Owl of the Remove. "Oh crumbs! They look a sight! They'll get into a row at Highcliffe over this!"

Ponsonby and Gadsby limped on, dabbing their eyes and noses and moaning, not even seeing Bunter till he hailed them.

"I say, you fellows!" chortled Bunter.

Then they looked at him.

"Had it bad?" chuckled the fat junior.

Ponsonby made a movement towards him and stopped. He was not feeling equal to handling even Bunter just then.

"Get out, you fat rotter!" mumbled Gadsby.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter did not get out. He was as bold as a lion when there was no danger—and it was evident that there was no danger to be apprehended from the two nuts of Highcliffe now.

"Well, you do look a picture!" he jeered. "What will your Form master say when he sees you? You'll give old Mobby a fit! He, he, he!"

"Shut up, you fat cad!"

"Shut up yourself!" retorted Bunter.

"For two pins I'd wade in and give you what you've been asking for!"

Ponsonby and Gadsby glared at him. But they were at the end of their tether, and they passed on without replying. Even Bunter was able just then to jeer at them with impunity.

"He, he, he! Funks!" roared Bunter. The Highcliffians tramped savagely on.

Whiz!

A turf whizzed through the air and knocked off Ponsonby's hat. He spun round, with a howl of rage.

Biff!

Another turf landed on his nose as he turned.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

Even that did not induce Ponsonby to rush on the fat junior. He picked up his hat, jammed it savagely on his head, and tramped away after Gaddy, leaving Bunter cackling.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter rolled away, feeling quite contented. He rolled in the direction of Friardale Lane, to go on to the village and try his luck with Uncle Clegg.

"Hallo!"

Roger Quelch, having bathed his nose, was coming up the lane, and he came on Bunter as the fat junior stepped out into the road.

Bunter blinked at him and grinned.

"Oh, my hat! What a nose!" he ejaculated.

"What?" exclaimed Roger.

"Looks like a prize beetroot!" chuckled Bunter.

Roger stared at the fat junior. He did not know Bunter, and was quite unacquainted with that fascinating youth's manners and customs. So Bunter came as a surprise to him.

"Why, you fat rotter!" he exclaimed. "Is that how you thank a fellow for standing up for you and saving you from ragging?"

"Oh rats!" said Bunter loftily.

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"Wh-a-at?"

"Rats! You needn't have chipped in," said Bunter coolly. "I could have licked those two fellows easily enough."

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Roger.

"Easy as falling off a form," said Bunter. "A pair of cads like that would be nothing to me!"

"You looked like it!" said Roger sarcastically. "Were you letting them kick you because you enjoyed it?"

"Oh, you shut up!" said Bunter. "I don't want any cheek from you, whoever you are—you and your cauliflower nose! Yah!"

"You're a Greyfriars man, I think?" said Roger. "Are there any more at home like you? Must be a ripping school if it turns out your sort. Cut off before I kick you!"

"Why, you cheeky ass—"

"On second thoughts, I'll kick you before you cut off," said Roger, and he came quickly towards the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter did not wait to be kicked.

His fat little legs fairly twinkled as he flew towards the village; and Roger Quelch laughed and resumed his way to Greyfriars.

He had never been to the school before, but he had no doubt, when he stood before the old grey gateway, that he was at Greyfriars. The gates stood wide open, as usual on a half-holiday, and Roger Quelch strode in. Old Gosling eyed him from his lodge, and perhaps detected in the newcomer's features the resemblance to Mr. Quelch. Gosling stepped out and touched his hat.

"Master Quelch?" he asked.

Roger nodded.

"That's little me," he assented.

"Mr. Quelch's nevy?" said Gosling.

"Exactly—his nevy!" said Roger, with a cheery grin. "Is my jolly old uncle at home?"

"Your—your what?" ejaculated Gosling.

"Jolly old uncle!"

"My eye!" said Gosling, staring at the cheery Roger. "Yes, Mr. Quelch is at home, and you'll find 'im in his study in the School House. Had an accident, sir, on the way 'ere?"

Roger rubbed his nose.

"A collision," he explained.

"Collision on the railway?" asked Gosling.

"No; in Friardale Lane," said Roger.

"Something horrid hard jammed right against my boko!"

And he walked on, leaving Gosling staring. The old Greyfriars porter had heard that Mr. Quelch's nephew was expected that afternoon, and he had wondered what Mr. Quelch's nephew would be like. He had not expected him to be like this. Roger looked like a very youthful and much better-looking edition of his scholastic uncle, but in other respects he did not seem to resemble Mr. Henry Quelch very much.

"Young rip!" was Gosling's verdict, as he retreated into his lodge.

Roger sauntered on cheerily towards the House. From the distance came a roar on the wind.

"Goal! Goal!"

"Well kicked, Wharton."

"Bravo, Remove!"

Roger spun round at once. A game of football was going on, on Little Side, and the shout told him that it was his uncle's Form that was concerned. As Roger was to take his place in the Remove during his stay at Greyfriars he was naturally interested in that F.o.m. He was interested in Soccer, too, being a great man at the game at his own school. And, leaving his interview with Mr. Quelch over for the

present, he made his way rapidly in the direction of the football ground.

The Form match was near its close, and Harry Wharton had scored for the Remove at last—the only goal obtained in the game, so far. Remove fellows round the ground were cheering lustily. Even Hazel had lost his sullen look, and was shouting with the loudest.

"Bravo, Wharton!"

"Remove wins! Hurrah!"

Potter of the Fifth blew his whistle. The sides lined up again for the last five minutes of the match.

Hobson & Co. of the Shell put all they knew into that last five minutes. But it booted not, as a novelist would say.

The Remove held them well, and the Shell were unable to get through. And the final blast of the whistle put an end to the game, and to their hopes, at the same time.

"Bravo, Remove!"

"Hurrah!"

The players came off, panting from their exertions. Remove men were cheering wildly, and Roger Quelch joined genially in the cheering. He had not seen much of the game, but what he had seen struck him as good. Bob Cherry noticed him in the crowd and gave him a second glance. He was a stranger there, and Bob noted his resemblance to the master of the Lower Fourth.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Quelchy's nephew!" exclaimed Bob.

Wharton looked round quickly.

"Where?" he asked.

"That merchant. He's got a beak rather like Quelchy's, anyhow, and I've never seen him before."

Harry Wharton threw a coat and muffler over his football rig and came quickly through the crowd towards Roger Quelch. He had forgotten that young gentleman's existence entirely while the match lasted, and now that he was reminded of it he was glad to see him safe and sound at Greyfriars.

"Young Quelchy?" he asked.

Roger smiled and nodded.

"Yes, and you're young—what?"

Wharton smiled, too. He rather liked this youth's cheery looks and pleasant manner.

"My name's Wharton, captain of the Remove. Glad to meet you, kid! I'm supposed to have picked you up at the station and brought you here. I asked another fellow to go, as I was playing footer. You seem to have got here all right."

"Right as rain!"

"Good! I'll take you to Quelch now—I mean to your uncle."

"Lead on, Macduff!"

Harry Wharton led the newcomer to Mr. Quelch's study, while the other fellows were going into the changing-room. Mr. Quelch was still busy with papers when the captain of the Remove tapped at his door and opened it.

"Your nephew, sir!" said Wharton.

Mr. Quelch looked up.

"Thank you, Wharton! Come in, Roger!"

Roger went in. The door closed on him, and Harry went along to the changing-room to join his friends. As the cheery Roger had arrived safely at Greyfriars, and Wharton had taken him to his uncle's study, there was no reason, so far as Harry could see, why the Remove master should know that Wharton had not been to the station to fetch him. It was a case of least said, soonest mended. Wharton did not guess just then that a very great deal remained to be said on the subject.



"Yah! Funks!" roared Bunter. The Highcliffians were tramping savagely on when— Whiz! A turf whistled through the air and knocked off Ponsonby's hat. "He, he, he!" cackled the fat Removite, as the Highcliffe junior made no attempt to rush him down. (See Chapter 6.)

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Tells the Tale!

BILLY BUNTER rolled in at the school gates disconsolately.

Uncle Clegg had not turned up trumps.

Bunter had given the ancient gentleman a long rest, and he had hoped that Mr. Clegg would realise that he was in danger of losing a good customer, and would play up accordingly. But Mr. Clegg had not played up. Perhaps he did not mind losing a customer like William George Bunter. Quite rudely Uncle Clegg had declined to supply even a solitary bun on the "nod," and Bunter had rolled back to Greyfriars hungrier than ever—his last state worse than his first.

He had had a long walk and a kicking from the Highcliffians—all for nothing. Worst of all, he had reached the school too late for tea in Hall. And that day, as he knew, Peter Todd was "tea-ing" out with Wibley, in No. 6. Unless he could find some good Samaritan in the Remove passage to take compassion on him Billy Bunter was likely to remain in a famished state till supper, by which time it was probable that he would be on the verge of cannibalism.

He tramped up to the Remove passage and stopped at the door of Study No. 1. The door was half open, and a scent of toast and tea floated out into the passage. Five cheery juniors were there, enjoying a spread after the exertions of a football match.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" boomed Bob Cherry, as Bunter's fat face and big spectacles glimmered in at the doorway.

Bunter limped into the study.

He was tired, and he was hungry. The Famous Five were having tea, and Bunter had already decided that he was going to have tea with the Famous Five. The formality of waiting to be asked did not worry Bunter. In such matters he was not accustomed to standing on ceremony.

"Want anything?" asked Wharton politely.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Good-bye!"

"The fact is, you fellows, I'm feeling rather done," said Bunter. "I've had a rather exciting time this afternoon."

"Somebody been after you for pinching his tuck?" asked Frank Nugent sympathetically. "I hear that Squiff has missed a cake from his study."

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"I know I've missed some chocolates," said Nugent.

"If you think I know anything about your rotten chocolates, Nugent, I can only say it shows that you've got a rotten, suspicious mind!" said Bunter. "I'm not the fellow to touch a fellow's choes, I hope. There were only six in the box, too."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter crossly. "I think you might ask a fellow to sit down, after

he's been scrapping with a gang of Highcliffe rotters."

The Famous Five stared.

"Scrapping with a gang of them?" said Johnny Bull.

"Five or six of the cads," said Bunter. "They set on me in Friardale Lane—"

"And you licked the lot, of course?"

"Yes."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Go it, Bunter!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "Let's hear all about it. They had to be taken back to Highcliffe in an ambulance, I suppose?"

"Or to the hospital on a gate?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" roared Bunter. "They set on me in Friardale Lane—"

"And you licked the lot, of course?"

"Yes."

"I—I mean—"

"Go it! Tell us what you mean, by all means!" chuckled Bob. "There were nine or ten of them, and you walloped both—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I thrashed Ponsonby and Gadsby," said Bunter. "Come to think of it, there were only two of the cads—Pon and Gaddy. But no man here could have licked the two of them together as I did. I'll tell you how it happened—"

"Oh, do!" said Bob. "I suppose you

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mean, you'll tell us how it didn't happen. But fire away!"

"They set on me in Friardale Lane," said Bunter. "I gave Ponsonby right and left, and blacked both his eyes—"

"Splendid!"

"I gave Gaddy one black eye—"

"Only one? Not three or four?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'd have given him another, only he ran for it!" hooted Bunter. "Both of them fairly scooted, like frightened rabbits. That's exactly what they were like—frightened rabbits."

"Well, you ought to know what a frightened rabbit is like," conceded Bob. "It's remarkably like W. G. Bunter at times."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They've gone home with black eyes," said Bunter. "And look at me—hardly a scratch."

"No good looking at you for any damages you got in a fight, while you're facing us. Turn round."

"Eh?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" yelled Bunter. "Think I'd turn my back on those Highcliffe cads? I tell you I've blacked their eyes and squashed their noses, and they'll get into an awful row at Highcliffe for going home in such an awful state. You'll hear about it later."

Bob Cherry selected a bun from the dish on the table, and held it out to the Owl of the Remove.

"Take it!" he said. "You've earned it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, if you fellows don't believe me—"

"Believe you! Oh, my hat!"

Russell of the Fourth came along the passage and looked into the study.

"You fellows heard the latest?" he asked.

"That depends on what it is," said Wharton. "What may it happen to be?"

"About Ponsonby—"

"Oh! What about Pon?" asked the Famous Five together.

In view of what Bunter had just related, they were rather interested, for once, in Ponsonby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.

"Somebody's been handling him," said Russell. "Pon and Gaddy! Young Gatty of the Second has seen them limping home with black eyes, looking as if they'd been under a traction-engine, according to Gatty. You fellows been on the war-path?"

"We've been playing football," said Wharton. "Ponsonby is always hunting for trouble; but he hasn't found it at this address, this time."

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

"You know anything about it, Bunter?" asked Russell.

"Lots! I've just told these fellows."

"Bunter has been trying to gammon us with a yarn that he licked Pon and Gaddy this afternoon!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Russell.

"I jolly well did lick them!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "Who do you think did it, if I didn't?"

"Anybody but you!" grinned Bob.

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter was indignant. He had been present when Pon and Gaddy found trouble, and that was enough for Bunter. The actual licking had been administered by another fellow, but that fellow was a stranger, never likely, so far as Bunter knew, to come anywhere near Greyfriars. It was a chance for

William George Bunter to reap a little glory, on the cheap, as it were. It was really most exasperating not to be believed.

"But, I say, it was a Greyfriars chap who licked them," said Russell. "Young Gatty was passing Highcliffe when he saw them—and he saw Mr. Mobbs meet them at the gate. He stopped to look at them, and heard them explaining to Mr. Mobbs that they'd been damaged by a Greyfriars man."

"Who the dickens was it, then?" said Bob.

"Me!" hooted Bunter.

"Can it! Must have been a pretty hefty fellow to damage the two of them," said Bob. "If that chap the Game Kid was still here, I should think that he was the man. I wonder if it was a Remove chap?"

"It was me!" roared Bunter.

"Where's your grammar, old fat bean?" said Nugent. "You should say, 'It was I,' you ass!"

"But it wasn't you, it was me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's lock-up now," said Wharton, rising from the table. "All the fellows will be in. Let's go down and see who blacked Pon's beautiful eyes."

"Good egg!"

And the Famous Five went down to the Rag to inquire, Bunter blinking after them with great indignation. But he forgot his indignation the next moment. There were eatables left on the table—and Bunter promptly dropped into a chair, and started operations on them. In five minutes William George Bunter was feeling much better, and the tea-table in Study No. 1 was as bare as if a swarm of locusts had invaded the study.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter the Bruiser!

MR. QUELCH, the master of the Remove, took roll-call in Big Hall at Greyfriars that evening. Some of the fellows, who knew that the Form master's nephew had arrived, looked round for him curiously; but Roger Quelch did not come into Hall. He had "tea-ed" with his uncle in the Remove master's study, and so far had not appeared among the Greyfriars fellows.

Four times Mr. Quelch frowned portentously as he called the roll: four fellows, in his own Form, failed to answer their names. Bolsover major, Skinner, Snoop, and Stott, were absent.

Obviously, Roger Quelch had not mentioned the episode at Friardale Station to his uncle, for Mr. Quelch was quite unacquainted with the cause of the absence of the quartette. He marked them down as absent, with a frowning brow.

After roll-call, there was a general movement of the juniors to the Rag. The story of the disaster to Ponsonby and Gadsby had spread, as well as Billy Bunter's assertion that he was the cause of that disaster. All the fellows were curious on the subject. It was almost impossible to believe that the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove really had handled the two nuts of Highcliffe and sent them limping home. True, neither Pon nor Gaddy was of the

stuff of which heroes are made—and there would have been nothing surprising in Bob Cherry or Harry Wharton having handled the two of them together. But it was very surprising indeed if Bunter had done it. Pon and Gaddy might be funks; but in that line William George Bunter was their equal, if not their superior.

But the most exhaustive inquiry failed to reveal the fellow who had handled Pon and Gaddy.

Gatty, of the Second, questioned by a good many fellows, told again all he knew; and Nugent minor, who had been with him at the time, corroborated. They had seen the horrified Mr. Mobbs, master of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe, meet the two damaged nuts at the gates of the school, and they had stopped to look on—naturally interested at beholding Pon and Gaddy in such a state. And they had heard the damaged youths declare to Mr. Mobbs that they had been "attacked" by a Greyfriars junior.

"Must have been Bolsover major!" Bob Cherry decided. "He went down to Friardale to meet young Quelch, you know; goodness knows why he hasn't come back. Skinner and Snoop and Stott are out of gates, too; but they couldn't have done it. It was Bolsover!"

"It wasn't!" roared Bunter.

"Who was it, then?" demanded Vernon-Smith.

"Me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Quite a crowd of fellows waited for Bolsover & Co. to come in. If the Highcliffians' damages were as serious as reported, it was probable that there would be trouble. Mr. Mobbs was never reluctant to lay complaints before the Head of Greyfriars; and it was certain that he would be greatly shocked and indignant at seeing his favourite, Cecil Ponsonby, sporting two black eyes. And it was certain that Ponsonby would tell his story of the encounter in his own way, and that Mr. Mobbs would make it a point to believe that he was an innocent injured youth. Quite probably Mr. Mobbs would come over to Greyfriars in a state of fuming indignation. And it was likely enough that Dr. Locke would deal drastically with the offender.

So when Bolsover major came in at last, he was surrounded at once by a crowd of Remove fellows, who wanted to know.

The four late-comers came in looking tired and savage and sulky. Bolsover major was scowling blackly.

"Has that young cad got here?" he asked.

"Who—which-what?" asked Bob.

"That young cad Quelch!"

"Didn't you meet him at the station?" asked Harry Wharton.

Bolsover major snorted.

"I said I would, didn't I?" he snarled. "I met him at the station, and these chaps too! Hang him!"

"He's come in," said Harry. "But what—"

"Where have you fellows been?" asked the Bounder.

"Lantham!" growled Bolsover major.

"Out of bounds!" said Bob.

Another snort from Bolsover major.

"That young cad tricked us into it! We were going to land him in the train for Lantham—it was Skinner's wheeze—and he tricked us into getting into the train, and then held the door outside and we couldn't get out, and it was a non-stop run to Lantham, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Funny, isn't it?" howled Bolsover major angrily.

ANSWERS
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"Yes, rather!" roared Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Serve you jolly well right!" exclaimed Harry Wharton hotly. "What the thump were you playing tricks on the new kid for? By Jove! I've a jolly good mind—"

"Easy does it, old man," said Bob. "There's no harm done—these jolly jokers seem to have caught a Tartar in young Quelch."

"No doubt about that," groaned Snoop. "He's as downy as his uncle, blow him! Fooled Skinner all along the line—"

"Fooled you, too!" growled Skinner. "Where is the young cad?" grunted Bolsover major. "I'm going to punch his head when I see him."

"You're not!" said Wharton curtly. "Look here—"

"So you've been at Lantham?" asked Johnny Bull. "Did you meet Ponsonby of Highcliffe there?"

"No, I didn't!"

"Did you meet him at all this afternoon?" asked Nugent.

"No!"

"Then it wasn't Bolsover!" said Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major stared.

"What wasn't me?" he snapped.

"Somebody's been hammering Ponsonby black and blue, and it was a Greyfriars chap, and we can't find the giddy hammerer," explained Bob. "I worked it out that it must have been you."

"Well, it wasn't!" grunted Bolsover major. "I've seen nothing of any Highcliffe cads. I dare say I should have punched Ponsonby if I'd met him. But I haven't seen him to-day."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Bunter says that he did it!" chuckled Bob.

"Rot!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

Wingate of the Sixth bore down on the four returned truants.

"So you're back, you young rascals," he said. "You're to report to your Form master at once!"

Bolsover & Co. tramped away to the Remove master's study. The juniors were left in a buzz.

"Blessed if it doesn't begin to look as if Bunter has told the truth for once," said Bob Cherry, in wonder.

"The onefulness is terrific," grinned Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We've asked every fellow in the Lower School now, and nobody claims the giddy distinction except Bunter," said Bob. "Was it really you, Bunter?"

"I've told you so, you beast!"

"I know that; but that doesn't make any difference—in fact, it's adverse evidence."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows can't take my word I—"

"Your word! Ye gods!"

"You cheeky ass!" roared Bunter. "I've a jolly good mind to thrash you, same as I did Pon and Gaddy!"

"Better not," chuckled Bob. "I'm not a funk like Pon and Gaddy, and you might get damaged. If you're telling the truth for once, it's your own fault if you're not believed. Why haven't you ever done it before?"

"The never-beforefulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The truth from the esteemed Bunter is surprising."

"Bunter—and truth!" said Peter Todd. "The two things don't seem to hang together, somehow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I did it," said Bunter. "I—I fought like a lion. They all rushed on me together—"

"All the two?" chuckled Bob.

"I mean they both rushed on me together. I stood up to them like a—like a tiger."

"My hat! Were you on all-fours?" asked the Bounder.

"Eh? No!"

"Well, that's how a tiger stands up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" said Bunter peevishly. "I gave them left and right, and sent them spinning. They howled for mercy. They ran for it—all of them—I mean, both of them. Precious few of you fellows could have done it. It needed pluck."

"Yes, that's what beats me," said Bob Cherry, with a nod. "It needed pluck to stand up to the two of them; so how on earth did you do it, Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly chump!" hooted Bunter. Harry Wharton laughed.

"We've asked every fellow in the Lower Forms," he said. "It really must

almost forgotten that it was a stranger who had rescued him and knocked out Pon and Gaddy; he almost believed that he was indeed the man who had handled those two hapless youths. His statement was not true—but it could not be disproved, and that was near enough for Bunter—it was, indeed, as near as he generally got to the truth. Nothing could disprove his statement save the turning up at Greyfriars of the unknown stranger who had actually done the deed—a very improbable contingency.

So Bunter was happy and satisfied. Probably he would not have felt so satisfied had he been able to guess that that unknown stranger was Roger Quelch, the nephew of his Form master—and that the stranger was, at that very moment, in Mr. Quelch's study at Greyfriars!

In fact, Bunter's happy satisfaction would have been considerably dashed had he known that. But he did not know it—yet.

ON SALE FRIDAY!



Things begin to hum when the "Colonial Co." is formed at Rookwood, and Jimmy Silver & Co. find themselves up against a rare handful. Read this remarkable story of Rookwood School in

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(No. 48)

have been Bunter. Pon and Gaddy must be rotten funks to let one fellow handle them like that—especially a blind owl like Bunter—"

"Well, they are rotten funks," said Bob.

"It was plucky of Bunter, anyhow," said the captain of the Remove. "After all, if he got in a punch by luck, with his weight behind it, it would be enough to stagger any fellow. Bunter, old fat bean, we believe you—you're a giddy hero, of sorts. Next time we go on the warpath against Highcliffe, you shall be in the giddy van."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Bob.

Bunter grinned with fatuous complacency.

"Rely on me," he said. "When it comes to real scrapping, I'm the man for the job."

"Bravo, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled back into the Rag with his fat little nose high in the air, looking and feeling extremely pleased with himself. By this time, Bunter had

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Dutiful Uncle!

"ROGER!"

"Yes, uncle," said Roger Quelch meekly.

Roger had "tea-ed" with his uncle in the Form master's study. After tea, he sat by the Form master's fire, looking very cheery.

Several times he stole glances at the severe, thoughtful face of Mr. Quelch, who was going through Latin papers at the table after call-over.

Roger respected his uncle; everybody respected Mr. Quelch. He liked him, too, in a way. Mr. Quelch had many sterling qualities, with which his nephew was naturally better acquainted than the Remove fellows were.

But there was no doubt that Mr. Quelch was rather a stern and grim gentleman; and the prospect of passing his schooldays under that severe avuncular eye probably did not appeal to Roger very keenly.

Mr. Quelch, having finished his Latin papers, turned his gimlet-eyes upon his nephew, and devoted his attention to that cheery young gentleman. Roger's bright and cheery looks did not wholly please him. Certainly, he wanted his nephew to enjoy life. He would not have liked Roger to look miserable. But Mr. Quelch was a solemn gentleman himself; and he valued seriousness and solemnity at a high rate. Perhaps he did not allow sufficiently for the difference in age between fifty and fifteen.

Mr. Quelch knew what was good for a boy, better than the boy himself could possibly know. He was sure of that. Any disagreement on that point savoured of disrespect and frivolity of mind. Disrespect and frivolity were quite intolerable to Mr. Quelch. He frowned as he regarded his hopeful nephew, and the effect of his frown was to dim the brightness of Roger's cheery visage.

That was all to the good, from Mr. Quelch's point of view. Roger was becoming serious, and Mr. Quelch wanted his nephew to be serious.

"I must now have a little talk with you, Roger."

Roger suppressed a groan.

"Yes, uncle."

"Your father is very far from satisfied with the reports he has received from your Form master at High Coombe."

"BACKING UP BURLEIGH!"

(Continued from previous page.)

juniors who had dared to oppose his wishes in the matter of the election.

JACK JOLLY & CO. locked themselves in their study until eight o'clock, which was the hour fixed for the election.

It was a wise precaution, for the Head was probably looking out for a chance to kidnap them, and shut them up in the school tower, and thus prevent them voting for Burleigh.

The Head had promised Mr. Tweedy, the tailor, that by hook or by crook, by fair means or by foul, he would secure the kaptincy of St. Sam's for Mr. Tweedy's son. And, being utterly without principle, the Head would not have scrupled to get some of Burleigh's supporters out of the way, so that they would be unable to go to the pole.

But Jack Jolly & Co. had no intention of walking into any of the Head's traps; and they stayed in their study until the assembly bell rang, summoning St. Sam's into Big Hall.

Scenes of the wildest eggitement prevailed as seniors and juniors and flags went flocking to the pole.

Every supporter of Burleigh wore a red rosette, while the few miserable curs whom the Head had succeeded in bribing to vote for Tweedy, sported blue rosettes. And whenever one of the Reds spotted one of the Blues, there was a terrific scrap. Quite a collection of black eyes and swollen noses were taken into Big Hall.

One of the first arrivals was big, berly Burleigh, whose advent made the fellows cheer as if it was Christmas.

"Hurrah!"

"Vote for Burleigh!"

"Put him at the top of the pole!"

The Head, mounted majestickally on the raised platform, nashed his teeth at that demonstration of loyalty to Burleigh. His long beard bristled with rage.

"Silence!" he thundered.

Then he walked round serving the ballot papers. Prozzantly, when he came to a fellow who was wearing a blue rosette, he slipped half-a-duzzen ballot-papers into his hand, instead of one. But the artful wangle was observed by Tallboy of the Sixth.

"Hi, what are you doing, sir?" shouted Tallboy. "Play the game! You're giving more than one ballot-paper to Tweedy's supporters!"

"Shame!"

The Head's face turned the color of beetroot.

"Sorry!" he gasped. "That was a 'lapsus mitt'—a slip of the hand."

And he went on serving the papers, with Tallboy's eagle eye upon him.

"Now," said the Head, resuming his perch on the platform. "I have only a few words to say before you record your votes. I am hear to see fair play, and not to influence your choice in any way. To do so would be unworthy of a headmaster and a gentleman. On your ballot-papers you will find the names of two candied-dates—Tweedy and Burleigh. Every boy will place a big cross against the former name. If any misguided boy dares to place a cross against the name of Burleigh, he will answer for it afterwards to me. I'll burch him black and blue!"

The Head paused in order to let that terrifying thrett sink in.

"One word more," he said. "Every boy who votes for Tweedy will have a

new pair of trowsis made for him, free, grattis, and for nothing, by Tweedy's father. In these days, when trowsis are so eggspensive, this should be a grato inducement to you to vote for the right man. The ballot will now proceed!"

In spite of the Head's thretts and bribes very few crosses went down against Tweedy's name. Every decent fellow in the school—every fellow who had the welfare of St. Sam's at hart, and respected its high traditions—voted for Burleigh.

The Head's face was haggerd with anxiety, as he watched the fellows recording their votes. The rozzult of the election meant much to him. If Tweedy got in, it meant a happy end to all his trubbles. But if Burleigh was elected, stark ruin stared the Head in the face!

The Head owed Tweedy's father the sum of three-and-elevenpence-three-farthings, for a pair of trowsis. If young Tweedy were elected to the kaptincy, this dett would be waved. But if young Tweedy was beaten, then his irate father would swoop down upon the Head, and demand his dues, and ramp and rage, and probably give the Head a taste of his own birch-rod. He had throttened to do this; and the Head knew that Mr. Tweedy never went back on his word.

Further, Mr. Tweedy would show the Head up to all St. Sam's, as a man who obtained his trowsis without paying for them—a man who walked about in reseated baggs without a reseated bill in the pocket!

So the Head's anxiety was very real, as he walked round and collected the ballot-papers. He carried them back to the desk on the platform, and started to sort them; and his face grew more and more haggerd when he saw that practically every man-jack had voted for Burleigh.

As a last despritt resorce, the Head desided to make a deliberate miscount—to pretend that Tweedy had poled more votes than Burleigh, and to proclaim the tailor's son fourthwith as kaptin of St. Sam's.

But something of what was in the Head's mind seemed to be sensed by Burleigh; for the latter sprang to his feet with a protest.

"It isn't fare that you should count the votes, sir!" he cried.

"Why isn't it fare?" demanded the Head huskily.

"Bekawse you're biassed in faver of Tweedy. In order that this election may be kondueted with perfect fareness to all parties, I suggest that two newtral people should act as scrootineers. Will you summon Mr. Justiss and Mr. Lickham, sir?"

"No, I won't!" roared the Head. "And, as for your suggestion of corruption on my part, Burleigh, I hurl it back in your teeth with skorn!"

Burleigh shrugged his sholders. Then he made a signal to Jack Jolly, who hurried out of Big Hall and fetched Mr. Justiss and Mr. Lickham.

The Head's last hope had gone! No longer was he in a position to wangle the election. With a sinking hart, he realised that all his endovvers on behalf of Tweedy had been in vano. All his bribes and thretts and cajolings and coaxing had recoiled on his own head. Like a man in a nightmare, he watched the two masters at their task of counting the votes.

The St. Sam's fellows looked on brothlessly, and Burleigh's supporters were confident of the issow.

At last, the scrootiny was finnishd, and Mr. Justiss turned to the Head.

"We find, sir," he said, "that Burleigh has poled two hundred and eighty-seven votes, and that Tweedy has poled thirteen votes. Burleigh is therefore re-elected kaptin of St. Sam's by a majorrity of—or—are you any good at arithmetick sir?"

The Head berried his face in his hands, and groned allowed. As for Burleigh's partisans, they cheered allowed.

"Hurrah!"

"Burleigh wins!"

"Good old Burleigh!"

And the re-elected skipper of St. Sam's was swept off his feet, and born sholder-high out of Big Hall.

The election was over; and the Head, quaking in every lim, slunk away to his study.

"Doomed!" he cried, throwing himself into his chair. "Dished, diddled, and done! Nothing now remains, but for me to face the wrath of Mr. Tweedy. He is likely to call upon me at any minnit!"

The unhappy Head cowed and crinjed, in his chair, and every time he heard a footmark in the quadrangle, he shrank back like a startled fawn. Nommysis, in the person of Mr. Tweedy the tailor, was hot on his trail!

Prezzantly he rose to his feet, and crossed to the window. Sure enuff, Mr. Tweedy was coming across the quad, chatting to the postman, who walked beside him.

The Head rung his hands in despare.

"This is where the chopper comes down!" he groaned. "Oh dear! Nothing short of the payment of his bill will passify that man Tweedy. And I cannot pay! I haven't a bean in the world! Woe unto Israele!"

Footmarks sounded in the corridore. The Head blanched as he heard them.

Then the postman came in, and handed the Head a letter. Behind him came Mr. Tweedy, stern and sinnistor, and implackable.

"I have come, sir," thundered the tailor, "to know if you have succoeded in appointing my son to the kaptincy of St. Sam's!"

Doctor Birchomall shook his head helplessly.

"I did my best, Mr. Tweedy," he groaned. "Beleeve me, I moved heaven and earth to bring about the consummation you desired; but I have failed!"

"Ho!" said Mr. Tweedy, a dangorus gleem in his cold, blue eyes. "Now, what about that little bill you owe me? There is a matter of three-and-elevenpence three-farthings—"

"One minnit!" cried the Head. Something seemed to tell him, in that despritt moment, that delivorance was at hand. Feverishly he opened the letter which the postman had brought; and from it fluttered a postal-order—a postal-order for five shillings!

The Head sank sobbing into his chair.

"Saved!" he cried, dramatically.

"Saved at the skaffold!"

It transpired that the postal-order had been awarded to the Head as a prize in a Crossword Competishun. In the letter which came with it, the Head was informed that his effort was the only one which had every word wrong; and the Editor was so struck by the effort that he had awarded the Head a special booby prize of five shillings.

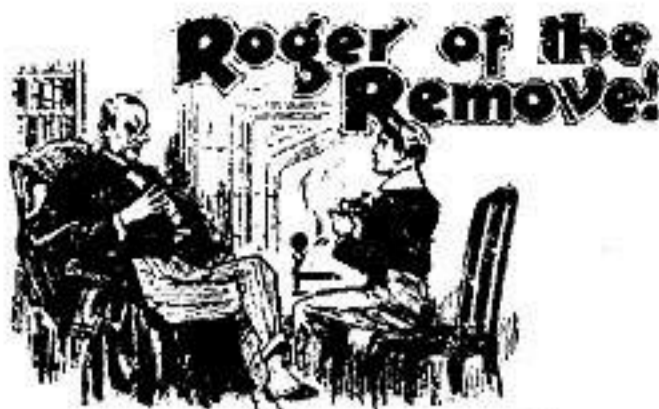
The Head picked up the postal-order, and handed it to Mr. Tweedy.

"Take your money, you dunning skoundrel!" he cried. "I want a shilling and a farthing change. Thank you! Now give me a reseet, and this unhappy oppiside of the trowsis will be closed for ever. As for your son, you can take him home with you, and I never want to set eyes on either of you again!"

And thus the clouds rolled by; and had you peeped into the Head's study a moment after Mr. Tweedy's departure, you would have seen him dancing a horn-pipe!

THE END.

(Now look out for "THE HEAD'S JOY-RIDE!" next week's amazingly funny story of St. Sam's, by Dicky Nugent.)



(Continued from page 15.)

"Oh, uncle!"

"You are backward in class, Roger."

"I—I hope not, uncle."

"It is futile to hope not, Roger, when that is the fact."

"I—I suppose so, uncle."

"You appear to have a good record in games, and I understand that you have distinguished yourself in boxing," said Mr. Quelch, with a touch of sarcasm. "Both very good things in their way; but, after all, a schoolboy is at school for educational purposes. My belief is that under my eye you will make much better progress in class."

Roger had no doubt of it, but he did not look enthusiastic.

Between fifteen and fifty there was a great gulf fixed; and Roger could not possibly see eye to eye with his uncle.

"I am told that you also have a great propensity to practical jokes—japes, as I think they are called in the Lower School?"

"Oh, uncle!"

"That kind of thing will not do at Greyfriars, Roger."

"No, uncle."

"I expect my nephew to be quiet, orderly, well-behaved, serious, setting an example of propriety to other boys."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Roger involuntarily.

"What—what did you say?"

"N-n-nothing!" stammered Roger, colouring. "G-g-go on, uncle."

Mr. Quelch knitted his brows.

"It is not yet decided to place you at Greyfriars," he said. "I have advised my brother to do so; but he has suggested, very reasonably, that you should spend a week or two here first. My belief is that you will make much more rapid progress under my personal care, and your father agrees. He appears to think, however, that I may find you a trouble and a responsibility. That may be the case; but it will not make me swerve from the path of duty."

"You're very kind, uncle," faltered Roger.

"My intention is to be kind, Roger," said Mr. Quelch, relaxing a little. "I hope I am an affectionate uncle. I desire to see you distinguish yourself in your school career. I shall aid you by every just means."

"I'm not exactly a dunce, uncle," said Roger meekly.

"Quite so; but you have it in your power to distinguish yourself, if you care to make the effort, and to win a Balliol scholarship. I am sure of that; and that is what I desire you to do."

"Oh!"

"The prospect does not seem to please you, Roger," said Mr. Quelch, bending his grim brows again.

"I'm not keen on swotting, uncle."

"Probably you are not keen on work at all," suggested the Remove master satirically.

"Not very!" confessed Roger.

"We shall alter all that."

"Oh!"

"You are, I presume, willing, indeed

anxious, to come to Greyfriars, and take your place in your uncle's Form?"

Roger hesitated. To reply in the negative was scarcely polite or dutiful. To reply in the affirmative was to depart as far from the truth as Billy Bunter was accustomed to do.

"I require a candid answer, Roger."

"I—I like being at High Coombe, uncle," faltered the hapless Roger. "My friends are there—"

"You will make new friends here."

"Yes, but that isn't quite the same thing, uncle. I'm in the second eleven at High Coombe—"

"Games have a certain importance, Roger, as healthy exercise, and so forth; but the place they take must be quite secondary to more important things. For what other reason do you desire not to come to Greyfriars?"

Roger was silent.

He could not tell an affectionate and dutiful uncle that it was that very uncle's position as Form master that constituted his chief objection.

He was grateful to Uncle Henry; he was attached to him. But really he did not want the watchful supervision of a dutiful uncle added to the authority of a Form master.

But he could not possibly say so, and he was silent.

Mr. Quelch, having waited in vain for a reply, pursued:

"I think you will like Greyfriars! I am sure you will like the school, unless you are a discontented and incorrigible boy. I sincerely hope that my nephew is not that."

"I—I hope not, uncle."

"Very well. Now for a word of advice. I shall expect you to take a good place in class; I shall expect you to behave yourself in a way that will reflect no discredit on me, as your uncle. In your position as the nephew of your Form master, you will be expected to be much more circumspect than the other boys. No foolish practical jokes, no light or frivolous conduct—steady application to your studies—above all, no fighting."

"Oh!"

"While you are here, whether you remain permanently or not, you will be treated exactly like any other Lower Fourth boy. If it is my duty to punish you, I shall do so without regard to our relationship—indeed, all the more severely, perhaps, on that account, to avert any suspicion of favouritism."

"Oh!"

"You now know what to expect, Roger, and I shall look to you to behave accordingly."

"Yes, uncle!" groaned Roger.

"I think, and hope, that you will be happy here, Roger."

"After what you've said, uncle, there can't be much doubt about that," said Roger demurely.

Mr. Quelch gave him a very sharp look. Perhaps it was fortunate that at that moment there came an interruption.

Tap!

"Come in!" rapped Mr. Quelch irritably.

The study door opened, and Bolsover major tramped in, followed by Skinner and Snoop and Stott. The weary four ranged themselves in front of Mr. Quelch's table. Roger, from the arm-chair by the fire, looked at them and smiled, recognising them at once.

Bolsover major glanced at him carelessly, and then gave a jump. On his side, too, recognition was immediate.

"That cheeky cad!" he exclaimed.

"What?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Bolsover! Are you speaking of my nephew?"

"Oh, I—I mean——" stammered Bolsover.

"What do you mean?" demanded the Remove master. "Have you ever met my nephew before?"

"I met him at Friardale station this afternoon," said Bolsover major sullenly.

Skinner & Co. gave Roger bitter looks. They had not enjoyed their run to Lantham that afternoon.

"Roger!" Mr. Quelch looked at his nephew. "You seem to have made the acquaintance of Greyfriars boys already."

"Yes, uncle."

"And to have quarrelled with them, apparently?"

"Oh, no, uncle!" said Roger. "These chaps met me at the station, that's all."

"Why did you apply that epithet to my nephew, Bolsover?" demanded the Remove master, knitting his brows.

Bolsover major hesitated. As Roger obviously had told his uncle nothing, it would have been judicious on the part of the practical jokers who had caught a Tartar to keep the affair dark. Certainly Mr. Quelch was likely to be incensed if he discovered that they had schemed to send his nephew off to Lantham that afternoon on a fool's errand. But it was too late to think of that now; Bolsover major had put his foot in it.

"I—I didn't mean——" stammered Bolsover major.

"Tell me at once what happened at the station, Bolsover."

Not one of the four wanted to explain, but Mr. Quelch very soon drew the story from them. His brow grew more and more thunderous as he extracted it.

"So you deliberately endeavoured to place my nephew in an express train, which would have taken him directly away from Greyfriars and kept him away from the school till this hour!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"It—it was only a joke, sir," faked Skinner.

"And you, Roger—you——" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"One good turn deserves another, uncle," said Roger meekly. "I thought that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander."

"You have caused four boys of my Form to remain out of gates an hour after calling-over."

"I—I didn't think of that——"

"You should have thought of it, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "You have begun very badly here, Roger. I have already warned you that your frivolous propensity for practical joking must be restrained. I am extremely reluctant to punish you on your first day at Greyfriars. But you have left me no choice in the matter."

"Oh!"

"As these foolish and thoughtless boys failed in their foolish scheme, and as you succeeded, I shall punish you more severely than them."

Skinner & Co. brightened up a little. They were feeling disposed to lynch Roger Quelch. But they realised that with so extremely dutiful an uncle as Mr. Quelch, Roger's life at Greyfriars was not likely to resemble a bed of roses. There were likely to be more thorns than roses in his path.

Mr. Quelch took up his cane.

"Bolsover! Bend over that chair!"

Whack!

"Skinner——"

Whack!

"Snoop! Stott!"

Whack, whack!

"Roger!"

"Oh dear!"

Roger Quelch detached himself from the armchair. He had had to "bend over" sometimes in the Fourth Form at High Coombe. But he had not expected to begin at Greyfriars by bending over in his uncle's study.

Whack, whack, whack!

It was three for the hapless Roger, and they were heavy and hard. The junior from High Coombe fairly squirmed.

Mr. Quelch pointed to the door with his cane, his glance on Skinner & Co.

"You may go!" he snapped.

They went. Roger was following them to the door, as if he supposed that Mr. Quelch's command included himself. But evidently it did not, for the Remove master snapped out:

"Remain here, Roger!"

"Yes, uncle."

"I have to speak to you very seriously."

"Yes, uncle!" groaned Roger.

And he remained. Skinner & Co. grinned at one another in the corridor when the door had closed.

"Nice uncle!" murmured Snoop.

Skinner chuckled.

"Must be potty to come to Greyfriars if he could help it," he said. "One each for us and three for the giddy nephew! That's to show that there's no favouritism—just like old Quelch! I don't think that cheeky young cad will want anything from us; he will get enough from his jolly old uncle."

And Skinner & Co. walked away in quite a cheery mood, leaving Roger Quelch to enjoy the improving conversation of his affectionate and dutiful uncle.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Scrap in Study No. 1!

"COME in, fathead!"

Harry Wharton called out that cheery invitation, as a tap came at his study door. Wharton and Nugent were deep in prep in Study No. 1 in the Remove, and Wharton called out without looking up, and he did not look up when the door opened.

"Shut up for a minute, whoever you are!" he said, with his eyes still on his work.

"What?"

Harry Wharton looked up fast enough as he heard that ejaculation in a sharp, metallic voice—the voice of his Form master, Mr. Quelch.

He jumped up from the study table, his face scarlet.

"Oh! You, sir!" he exclaimed, taken greatly aback.

Mr. Quelch eyed him grimly.

"I—I didn't know it was you, sir," said Harry. "I thought it was one of the fellows butting-in!"

Behind Mr. Quelch was a youthful figure—that of Roger. There was a grin on Roger's face.

He followed his uncle into the study.

"Really, Wharton—" began Mr. Quelch.

"Sorry, sir. I—I really didn't know you—"

Mr. Quelch waved his hand, dismissing the subject. Wharton and Nugent, both on their feet now, looked at him, and looked at Roger, wondering why the Remove master had brought him there.

"You have met my nephew, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"It appears that you did not meet him

at the station this afternoon, according to my instructions."

Wharton knitted his brows. He had, he considered, given Roger a quite sufficient hint on that subject, and the fellow need not have mentioned it to his uncle.

"I was playing football, sir," said Harry. "I asked another fellow to go, and—and—"

"You did not ask my permission to do so."

"Hem! You seemed so busy, sir, I—"

"I had reasons for asking you to render me that slight service, Wharton. I am disappointed in you!" said Mr. Quelch frigidly.

Wharton wriggled uncomfortably.

"You see, sir, it was a Form match, and—and I was wanted. We—we beat the Shell, sir, as it turned out."

"Wharton kicked the winning goal, sir," said Nugent.

Mr. Quelch seemed deaf to that. Apparently he did not regard a Form football match as a matter quite so important as the carrying out of his instructions to his head boy.

"I am disappointed in you, Wharton," he repeated.

"Another fellow went to the station, sir, and—and your nephew seems to have got here quite safely, sir."

"My nephew was met at the station by some boys, who made an attempt to inveigle him into the express for Lantham, as a foolish practical joke."

"Oh, sir!"

"Had my nephew been a little less on his guard he would have been sent off to Lantham, and would not have reached Greyfriars till a late hour."

"Hem!"

"I shall not punish you, Wharton. I shall leave you to your own conscience in this matter!" said Mr. Quelch majestically.

Wharton looked extremely serious, but inwardly he could not help feeling that his conscience would be able to stand the strain. Really and truly, beating the Shell at Soccer was a more important matter than Mr. Quelch's nephew, or all his nephews and nieces lumped together; or, indeed, all his relations to the thirtieth and fortieth generation. But it was useless to attempt to explain that to a Form master; so the captain of the Remove was seriously and respectfully silent.

"As I told you, Wharton," resumed Mr. Quelch, changing the topic, "my nephew will take his place in the Remove while he is at this school. He will share this study with you and Nugent."

"Oh!"

"You will, I trust, make my nephew welcome here."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"Roger, these two juniors, Wharton and Nugent, will be your study-mates while you are here. I hope you will all be good friends," added Mr. Quelch more graciously, and he retired from the study, leaving Roger with the two Removites.

Both of them looked at him grimly when the door had closed on the Remove master.

Undoubtedly Mr. Quelch hoped that his nephew would make friends in Study No. 1; but it could not be denied that he had been a little lacking in tact. To rag Wharton for not meeting the important youth at the station, and in the next breath to present him as a study-mate, was not exactly the best way of making Roger welcome in Study No. 1.

"Well, here we are!" said Roger cheerily. "I hope you fellows don't

mind my butting in like this. No choice in the matter, you know."

"What sort of a silly owl do you call yourself?" demanded the captain of the Remove gruffly.

"No sort at all, old bean. What sort of a scowling gargoyle do you call yourself?" inquired Roger, in his turn.

"You silly chump!"

"Same to you, old pippin, and many of them!" said Roger affably. "But what's the row? How have I had the misfortune to offend your highness?"

"You ought to have had sense enough not to mention to Quelch that I never met you at the station!" growled Wharton.

"Think so?"

"Yes, ass. It doesn't matter a brass button whether anybody met you at the station or not, and it didn't matter a rap whether you hiked off to Lantham, and not a scrap whether you ever got back or not! But Quelch thinks it matters!"

Roger laughed.

"Well, I agree with nunky in that. I think it matters a little," he said. "In fact, I think it matters a lot. Anything else?"

"You oughtn't to have told Quelch about the trick Bolsover and his mob played on you. It was a rotten trick. But we don't like sneaks in the Remove."

"Sneaks?" repeated Roger.

"We call it sneaking to tell tales to a Form master, whether he's your uncle or not!"

"Easy does it, old chap," said Frank Nugent, in his good-natured way. "The kid's new to school—"

"Not on your life!" said Roger. "I'm no more new than you are. I'm a High Coombe man—and High Coombe leaves off where Greyfriars begins. You're nowhere in comparison."

"Why, you cheeky ass—" began Nugent.

"Did you learn sneaking at High Coombe?" inquired the captain of the Remove sarcastically.

"Not at all. But I learned to punch a fellow's nose if he calls me names," answered Roger.

Wharton's eyes glinted.

"If you want to begin punching in this study, there's nothing to stop you," he said. "I daresay you'll be sorry a little while after you've started."

"Well, I shall start, if you call me a sneak again!"

"Sneak!"

"That does it!" said Roger.

He pushed back his cuffs, and came across the study towards the captain of the Remove.

"Prep, Harry," said Nugent.

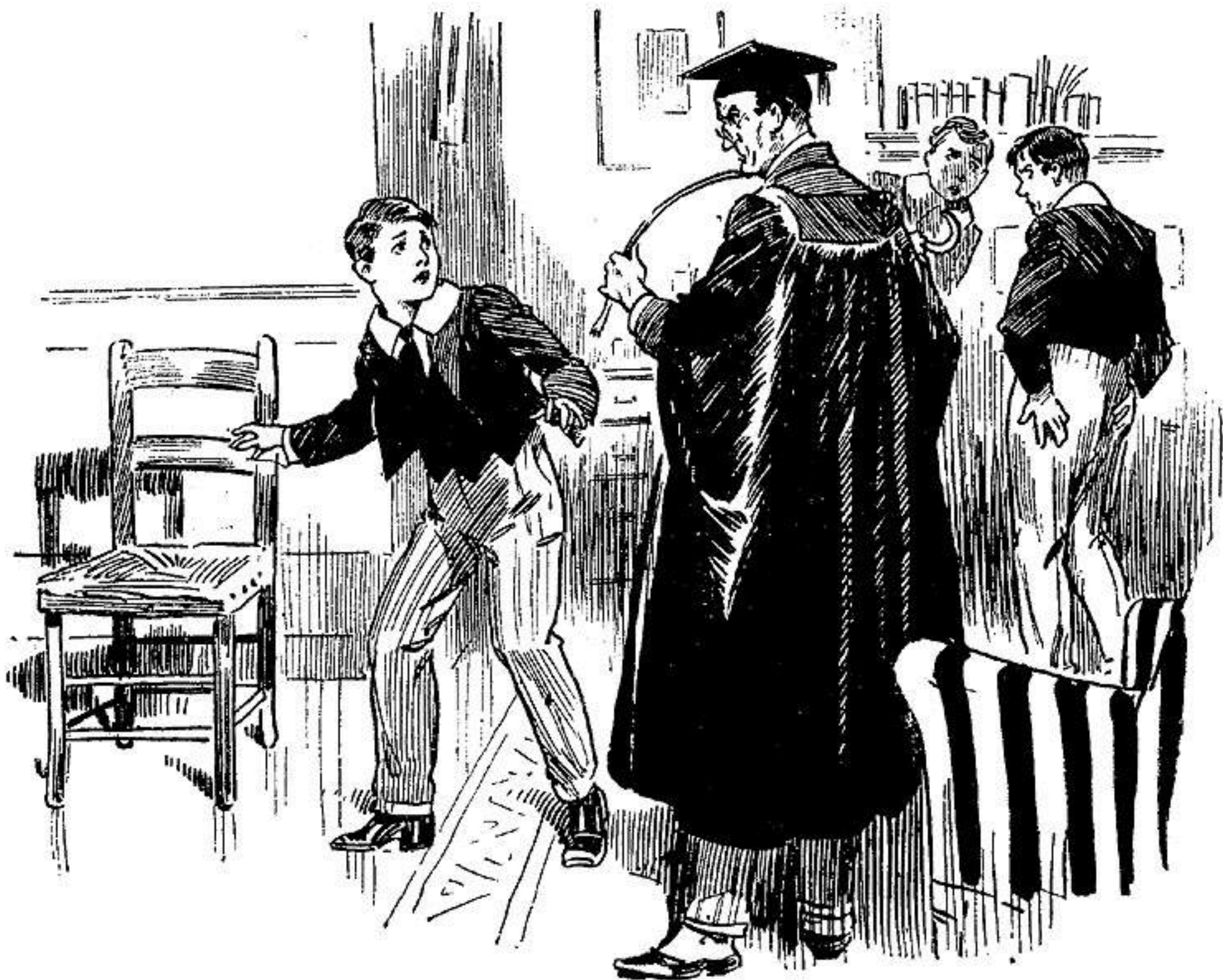
"Blow prep! Prep can wait while I give this cheeky cad a lesson," said Wharton.

"I'm ready for the lesson," grinned Roger. "I saw a Greyfriars man in a scrap this afternoon, and I wasn't much impressed. I'll be glad to show you High Coombe style."

"Come on, then!"

Frank Nugent hastily dragged the study table out of the way, as the two juniors closed in strife. Wharton was angry, annoyed by the lecture he had received from Mr. Quelch on Roger's account, and by his belief that the new fellow had told tales. That was quite a misapprehension, as it happened, which Roger Quelch could have explained at once had he chosen. Possibly Wharton's manner had not encouraged him to explain.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!



Skinner & Co. were feeling disposed to lynch Roger Quelch, when the Remove master turned and faced his nephew. "Roger!" he said, swishing his cane. "As you succeeded in the foolish scheme in which these thoughtless boys failed, I shall punish you more severely than them. Bend over that chair!" "Oh, dear!" gasped Roger. (See Chapter 9.)

No doubt Billy Bunter's inglorious display in Friardale Lane, and the victory over Ponsonby and Gadsby, had led Roger to overrate his prowess a little in his new surroundings. He soon discovered that, good fighting-man as he certainly was, Harry Wharton was at the very least a match for him.

The fight had been going on two or three minutes when the study door opened and Peter Todd looked in. Several more Remove fellows looked in along with Peter.

"No charge for admission, I suppose?" asked Peter cheerily. "Go it, both of you! Want a man to keep time?"

More Removites gathered round the door. The fight was hard and fast, and both the adversaries were breathing hard, and putting all their beef into it. Wharton staggered back under a powerful drive he failed to guard, and Roger closed in on him.

But the captain of the Remove recovered himself instantly, and met the Form master's nephew with left and right, and Roger Quelch spun back and went headlong into the doorway.

"Man down!" grinned the Bounder from the passage.

"Cave!" shouted Wibley from the stairs.

There was a heavy tread on the stairs, and the juniors scattered at the well-known step of Mr. Quelch. Roger, gasping for breath, and with his nose

streaming red for the second time that day, sat up dizzily in the study doorway as his uncle arrived on the scene.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Bunter!

MR. QUELCH stared into Study No. 1.

Wharton dropped his hands at once, flushing red. A little too late he realised that it was not quite the thing to be fighting with a new fellow, his Form master's nephew, on the fellow's first day at the school.

Mr. Quelch stared at him and stared at his nephew.

"Rise!" he snapped.

Roger staggered to his feet.

"What does this mean?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly.

"Boxing, sir," said Roger cheerily.

"You were boxing?"

"Yes, uncle. I was showing Wharton High Coombe style, and he was showing me Greyfriars style." Roger pressed his handkerchief to his nose, and winked at the captain of the Remove, unseen by his uncle. "It was my fault, sir, if there's any harm done."

Mr. Quelch pursed his lips.

"You are too fond of this kind of amusement, Roger, and boxing is not allowed in the studies, especially without gloves on."

"I—I—I'll remember that, uncle," said Roger meekly.

"Do not let it occur again."

"Very well, sir."

"You should endeavour, Wharton, to acquaint a new boy with the rules of the House, instead of encouraging him to break them."

"Yes, sir," stammered Wharton.

And Mr. Quelch stalked majestically away.

Roger closed the study door, and grinned at the two Removites, what time he dabbed his nose.

Wharton and Nugent eyed him rather uncertainly.

"Well, you're a queer fish," said Harry at last. "If you'd told your uncle what really happened—"

"I did tell him. We were boxing."

"Well, yes; but—well, it would have meant a licking for me, if you'd told him we were fighting."

"I'm not a sneak," said Roger. "I'd have explained if you'd given me time, instead of jumping on a fellow before he could open his mouth. I never told my uncle about Bolsover's trick on me at the station; the fellows told him themselves."

"Oh!"

"I never told him you hadn't met me at the station; he worked that out for himself when Bolsover told him that he had not me instead of you."

"Oh!"

Wharton's face was crimson.

"I—I understand. I'm sorry," he stammered. "I forgot that those fellows had been up before the beak. I take back what I called you."

"Right as rain, old bean. No harm done."

"If you want this to go on, we'll finish it in the gym to-morrow, with the gloves on."

"Oh, rats!" broke in Nugent. "There's nothing for you to scrap about. It was a misunderstanding."

"Exactly," said Roger. "I'd rather be friends than foes, if it's all the same to you, Wharton."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Done!" he cried. "It was my fault."

And he held out his hand frankly to the new junior.

"Good egg!" said Roger. "I'll try not to be a bother to you fellows in this study so long as I'm here. I hope it won't be long."

"You don't like Greyfriars?" asked Nugent, with a smile.

"Oh, immensely!" said Roger. "Fine place—fine chaps—first-class all round. But I happen to be a High Coombe man, and I want to stick to my own school."

"Well, that's natural enough," said Frank. "I shouldn't care to change into a new school, especially if I had an uncle for Form master there."

"Just that," assented Roger. "Uncles are all right in their proper place, which is the family circle. Uncles as Form masters are what some giddy novelist calls the Thing-too-Much. My uncle's fond of me, and I'm fond of him—and the less we see of one another the more fond we are!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nunky wants me to swot for Balliol scholarships and things—I want to shine as a footballer and cricketer. High Coombe for me, and Greyfriars can get on the best it may without me. Uncle wants me to do the family credit. I'm going to do it credit at games. I'm jolly well not going to burst my crop bagging University scholarships. But I'm interrupting you fellows. I'm supposed to be watching your prep; so get on with it while I nurse my nose."

Roger sat down, still with his handkerchief to his damaged nose, but in a cheery temper. Evidently the new fellow was endowed with a fund of high spirits, and his good-humour was not easily dashed.

Wharton and Nugent resumed their prep, Roger having none to do on his first night at Greyfriars School. He did not take much interest in the prep done by the two juniors, either, though he was supposed to be observing it. Having finished dabbing his nose, he fished a "Holiday Annual" out of the bookcase, and settled down in the arm-chair to enjoy it.

The chums of the Remove finished their prep, and strolled along the Remove passage to Bob Cherry's study, leaving Roger in possession of Study No. 1 and the "Holiday Annual."

Roger was still perusing that entrancing volume when a fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered in at the doorway.

"I say, you fellows!"

Roger looked up from his book, and grinned as he recognised the fat junior whom he had rescued from the raggers that afternoon.

Bunter rolled into the study and blinked at him. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not recognise him for the moment.

"Wharton and Nugent gone?" he asked.

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"Yes."

"And who the thump are you?" asked Bunter. "I've not seen you before. New chap?"

"My name's Quelch."

"Oh, my hat! Old Quelch's nephew?"

"Just that."

"And the old bird's landed you on Wharton and Nugent," chuckled Bunter. "Serve 'em right. Lucky he didn't plant you in my study."

"Lucky for me!" assented Roger.

Bunter blinked at him again. He was beginning to realise that he had seen this fellow before somewhere. He came closer to the new junior, and gave a series of blinks at his grinning face, and finally ejaculated:

"Oh, crikey! You're that chap!"

Roger Quelch chuckled.

"Recognised me at last?" he asked.

"Yes, I'm the chap. Have you got over the kicking those fellows gave you this afternoon?"

William George Bunter stared at him in something like consternation.

This fellow, who had hammered Ponsonby and Gadsby, and whom Bunter had never expected to see again, was at Greyfriars! He was Mr. Quelch's nephew! It was a startling shock for Bunter. Nobody in the school had been able to contradict Bunter's story of his terrific victory over the Highcliffians; all the Remove by this time really believed that Bunter had knocked out Pon and Gaddy in a desperate affray. And here was the fellow who actually had done it—at Greyfriars—in the Remove! Bunter's jaw dropped, and he blinked in utter dismay at Roger Quelch.

"Oh, crikey!" he repeated.

"What's the trouble?" asked Roger, in surprise. "I'm not going to eat you!"

"You—you here!" stuttered Bunter.

"Right here!" assented Roger. "Why not?"

"I—I never knew you were coming to Greyfriars!" gasped Bunter. "I never knew you were old Quelch's nephew when I met you this afternoon!"

"Of course you didn't. You know now, if it matters! What the thump does it matter, anyhow?"

"Oh dear!"

Roger looked at him curiously. He simply could not imagine why the Owl of the Remove was so dismayed to find him at Greyfriars.

Bunter recovered a little at last. He closed the door of the study, and turned back to the new fellow.

"Look here, you new kid," he said. "you keep your mouth shut—see?"

"Eh?"

"The—the fellows think that I thrashed those two Highcliffe rotters this afternoon—"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"In fact, I did!" said Bunter. "I'd have finished them off easily enough if you hadn't butted in, young Quelch!"

"Great pip!"

"Like your cheek to butt in, as a matter of fact!" said Bunter. "I'd have preferred to handle them on my own without any help from you. In fact, you didn't help me much—not at all, as a matter of absolute fact! You got in the way more than anything else!"

Roger stared at him blankly. W. G. Bunter was quite a new experience for the fellow from High Coombe.

"I licked those Highcliffe cads, as I've told the fellows!" said Bunter firmly. "If you begin any silly yarn about it I shall contradict you flat! I'm not going to have you making out that you did it! See?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Roger.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You just keep your mouth shut, and it's all right!"

Roger roared.

"So you've bagged a little cheap glory, old fat barrel?" he said. "You're afraid I may give you away? You fat ass—"

"Look here—"

"Ha, ha, ha! It's all serene! I'll say nothing!" chuckled Roger. "If you want to swank as a warrior, go ahead! You don't mind my laughing, do you? Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cheeky ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Roger.

"You're going to keep your mouth shut?" demanded Bunter.

"Certainly—except for laughing! I shall have to open it for that!" said Roger. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!" grunted Bunter.

And the Owl of the Remove rolled from the study leaving Roger Quelch yelling.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Called to Account!

"SOMETHING'S up!"

Bob Cherry made that remark the following morning.

Bob was not the only fellow who noticed that something was up. At the breakfast-table Mr. Quelch's severe countenance was more severe than ever. It was grim and stern, and boded trouble for somebody.

After breakfast Mr. Quelch made a sign to Wharton to follow him to his study.

The captain of the Remove made a grimace as he followed in his Form master's footsteps. He expected trouble, though he could not guess what it was—unless Mr. Quelch intended to refer further to his delinquency in playing football the previous day instead of meeting Roger at the station.

In the study the Remove master fixed his eyes upon his head boy, who waited uncomfortably for the storm to burst.

"Wharton!"

Mr. Quelch rapped out the name like a pistol-shot.

"Yes, sir!" murmured Harry.

"You are well aware, Wharton—you and the rest—that the Head is very much displeased by the continual quarrels and disputes with a certain section of the boys at Highcliffe School?"

"You've told me so, sir," said Harry, rather relieved.

He had not lately been involved in any row with the Highcliffians, so it was apparently not upon his devoted head that the storm was to break.

"I have told you so on many occasions, Wharton, and warned you to keep clear of these Highcliffe boys."

"Yes, sir."

"Yet the Head has now received a very serious complaint from Mr. Mobbs, the master of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe. He states that two boys of his Form—Ponsonby and Gadsby—were attacked yesterday, and reached Highcliffe in a disfigured state—their eyes actually blackened."

"I've heard so, sir."

"He states that this ruffianly attack was the act of a Greyfriars junior!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "It does not appear to have been a mere scuffle—the boys are actually injured. Gadsby has one black eye, Ponsonby has two, and they have received other damages."

"I've no doubt they asked for it, sir!"

"According to Mr. Mobbs' statement,



"It appears that a member of this Form attacked two Highcliffe boys yesterday, both of whom were very severely hurt," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "I call upon the boy concerned to give me his name at once." Bunter rolled out before the class. "Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Remove master. "Do you mean to imply that it was you who ill-used Ponsonby and Gadsby?" "Yes, sir," said Bunter, with a smirk. "Little me!" (See Chapter 12.)

they were wantonly and brutally attacked. They appear to have told him so, at least."

"They would!" said Wharton, with a curl of the lip.

"Certainly, I shall not accept the statement without investigation," said Mr. Quelch, more mildly. "No doubt you are aware of what happened?"

"I've heard of it, sir."

"Were you concerned in it?"

"I was playing football at the time, sir."

"Hem! Yes, I remember that that was the case. Probably it was Cherry or Bull—"

"They were in the football match, sir."

Mr. Quelch pursed his lips.

"As these injuries were inflicted upon Ponsonby and Gadsby by one person, that person must have been a somewhat powerful lad," he said. "Doubtless you know who it was?"

Wharton was silent.

"I will not ask you the name, Wharton, but you will tell me whether the person concerned was a member of my Form."

"It was a Remove chap, sir."

"Very good. Then I shall deal with the matter in the Form-room before classes. You may go, Wharton."

And Harry Wharton went.

His comrades gathered round him in the quad when he came out of the House. They were rather anxious; all the Remove knew that there was thunder in the air that morning.

"Well, what's the giddy trouble?" asked Bob.

"Highcliffe," said Harry. "Mobby has laid a complaint before the Head. Two of his dear boys were brutally attacked and disfigured by a naughty

Greyfriars chap, and they seem to have let him do it like really nice boys—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Nugent. "It's rather a shame if he gets wiggled. I'm jolly certain that he never started the trouble."

"The certainfulness of that is terrific!" said Hurrce Jamset Ram Singh.

"Better hunt him up and give him the tip," said Johnny Bull. "I don't see that Bunter has anything to be afraid of. It's pretty clear that those two cads started it, and a fellow was bound to protect himself. What beats me is that Bunter was able to knock them out. Pon and Gaddy don't seem to mind owning up that they let one fellow thrash the two of them together. If I had as many eyes as Argus, I'd rather have them all blacked than own up to being a funk!"

"Well, they had to tell Mobby something," said Bob. "Mobby doesn't like his nutty favourites to have their eyes dotted. Still, Bunter will be all serene. It's jolly plain that he only defended himself—he's not the chap to hunt for trouble with two fellows at once. He's only got to tell Quelchy what happened."

The Famous Five proceeded to look for Bunter, to put the fat youth on his guard. They found him blinking in at the window of the school shop.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You're for it, Bunter!" said Bob Cherry.

Bunter blinked round.

"I say, you fellows, my postal-order hasn't come—"

"Go hon!"

"If you like to lend me half-a-crown till it comes—"

"Never mind that now," said Wharton. "The Head's had a complaint from Mobby of Highcliffe, about your

handling Pon and Gaddy yesterday. You're going to be called over the coals as soon as we go into the Form-room."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

"Just tell Quelchy the truth," said Wharton.

"The—the truth?"

"Just that, and you will be all right. I suppose you didn't start the trouble with the Highcliffe cads, did you?"

"Nunno! They started on me!"

"Well, that's all right, then. Quelchy's in a wax; but if you show him that you weren't to blame—"

"I didn't do it!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I jolly well know Quelchy when he's in a wax, somebody has to go through it. I shall deny the whole thing."

"You silly ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "If you begin telling Quelchy lies, he will spot you at once, and think that you were to blame. He can't blame you if you prove that the Highcliffe cads started on you."

Bunter blinked at the chums of the Remove very doubtfully. In claiming the distinction of having thrashed the two Highcliffians, Bunter had not foreseen this development; Bunter never foresaw anything. Every other fellow in the Remove had expected that more would be heard of the matter from Highcliffe; but it had not occurred to Bunter's fat mind. He was unwilling to part with the glory he had reaped; but he would have parted with that, or anything else, rather than have taken a licking from his Form master.

"I—I say, you fellows, you know Quelchy!" he gasped. "It's safer to deny the whole thing. I'll tell him that I never went out at all yesterday—"

"Fathead!"

"You fellows can bear witness that I

was on Little Side, watching the football match all the time."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Besides, I never did it——"

"You told all the Remove that you did!"

"That—that was only a figure of speech, you know," gasped Bunter.

"You frabjous ass——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the bell!" said Bob. "Come on, Bunter—and stick to the truth if you want to save your skin."

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

A crowd of the Remove fellows gathered round Bunter as he went to the Form-room. For once, Billy Bunter had gained credit in the eyes of his Form-fellows; and they encouraged him on all sides. All the Remove were prepared to stand up and testify for Bunter; and they explained to the fat and fatuous Owl that he had nothing to fear if he told the truth. On the face of the thing, it was not to be supposed that one fellow had deliberately attacked two without provocation—especially a fat and flabby fellow like Bunter. The most annoyed and incensed Form master could not deny that a fellow was entitled to self-defence.

Billy Bunter drew encouragement from his Form-fellows, and by the time he reached the Remove-room, he was quite complacent again. Mr. Quelch's inquiry into the affair was to be, in point of fact, an official recognition of Bunter's prowess as a fighting-man—merely that, and nothing more.

So Bunter rolled into the Form-room in a satisfied mood, prepared to own up at once as soon as the delinquent should be called upon to stand forward.

Mr. Quelch was already in the room with a frowning brow. The Remove fellows took their places, Roger Quelch coming in with the Form. Roger was a member of the Greyfriars Remove now—pro tem.

Roger had great hopes of not remaining a member of that Form; but he had not confided those hopes to his uncle.

In such a matter, it was necessary for the Form master's nephew to walk warily.

Bunter gave him a rather uneasy blink as he noticed Roger among the Remove fellows. But Roger had pro-

mised to keep his mouth shut, and Bunter relied on his silence.

Mr. Quelch eyed his class grimly.

"My boys!" he said, in a deep voice, "I have received a complaint from Mr. Mobbs, of Highcliffe School. It appears that a member of this Form was involved in a fight with two Highcliffe boys yesterday, and that both of them were very severely hurt. It is my duty to inquire into the matter. I call upon the boy concerned to give me his name at once."

From all sides encouraging looks were bestowed on Bunter. The Owl of the Remove rolled out before the Form.

Mr. Quelch stared at him.

"What does this mean, Bunter?"

"Me, sir!" said Bunter.

"You!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Bless my soul! Do you mean to imply that you were the Remove boy who ill-used Ponsonby and Gadsby?"

"Little me, sir!" said Bunter, with a smirk.

And there was a long pause, while Mr. Quelch stared at Bunter in blank astonishment, and Roger Quelch winked at the bust of Socrates on the Form master's desk.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Bunter!

MR. QUELCH blinked at Bunter. He was utterly astonished.

A hefty fellow like Bob Cherry, or Bolsover major, might have handled the Highcliffe fellows in the manner described by Mr. Mobbs. But it was amazing if the fat and flabby Owl of the Remove had done it.

"Are you serious, Bunter?" demanded the Remove master, at last.

"Quite, sir!"

"Unless you can prove to me, Bunter, that you were blameless in the matter, you will be taken to the Head for a flogging."

Bunter quaked.

"Oh, really, sir, I—I—I——"

"You have only to tell me the truth, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, more gently. "According to Mr. Mobbs' statement, his boys were attacked by a Greyfriars junior, who took them by surprise, and injured them severely. I shall not believe this statement without proof. It

appears to me, indeed, that you are physically incapable of having defeated two boys, bigger than yourself, in a fight. Tell me exactly what occurred, and you may rely upon receiving justice. Did you attack these Highcliffe boys?"

"No fear, sir!"

"Did they attack you?"

"They jolly well did, sir!" said Bunter warmly. "I was going down to Friardale to see Uncle Clegg. I'd been disappointed about a postal-order and——"

"Keep to the point, Bunter!"

"That is the point, sir. Having been disappointed about a postal-order, I was going to Uncle Clegg's——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, tell me at once what happened between you and Ponsonby and Gadsby, and leave out extraneous matters."

"They rushed on me, sir, like—like tigers," said Bunter. "They kicked me hard, sir! I've got the marks where they kicked me——"

"Never mind that now. What did you do?"

"I fought like a lion, sir," said Bunter modestly. "I tackled the whole gang of them——"

"Were there more than two?"

"Nunno, sir!" gasped Bunter. His fertile imagination had led him astray once more. "I mean, I tackled both of them."

"Kindly say what you mean, then, and nothing more!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"And you assure me that you did not strike the first blow?"

"Certainly not, sir! The beasts had been kicking me half the way to Friardale, and then I fell down——"

Bunter broke off suddenly.

"And what then?"

"Then—then—then I—I got up, sir, and—and mopped up the ground with them," stammered Bunter. "Nobody else had anything to do with it."

"Was anyone else present?"

"Nunno, sir. I never saw young Quelch till after prep——"

"What?"

"I mean I never saw him at all, sir."

"Are you speaking of my nephew?"

"Yes, sir; he wasn't there."

"My nephew was not there?" repeated Mr. Quelch, gazing at Bunter.

"No, sir; not at all, sir. If he says he was he's telling fibs, sir. I should have known him if he had been there. Family likeness, you know, sir. Bob Cherry says he's got a beak just like yours, sir."

"Bless my soul!"

"C-c-can I go now, sir?" stammered Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove realised that somehow or other he was not convincing his Form master.

"No, Bunter, you cannot go yet," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "I command you to tell me the truth of what happened yesterday."

"Oh, dear!"

"Why did you mention my nephew?"

"I—I didn't, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean I didn't mean to," gasped Bunter, quite confused and flurried now. "He wasn't there, sir, and he had nothing to do with it. I did it, sir, because they kicked me. They followed me along the lane, kicking me, sir. I can show you the marks!"

"I can only conclude, from your rambling statements, Bunter, that my nephew was present."

"Oh, lor'!"

(Continued on page 28.)

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"YOU do this sum for my Bill and I'll give you some breakfast," the woman added. "That dog of yours won't bite, I suppose?"

Jack put his hand upon Squall's head. "Not anybody I tell him not to."

The woman laughed good-naturedly. "Well, you tell him not to take a fancy to me, and you can come aboard."

Jack, inspired by the thought of breakfast, hurried down the plank on to the deck of the Emerald. Taking the chalk from Bill's hand, he rapidly added up the sum. It came to three tons seventeen hundredweight two quarters and twelve pounds. Bill watched him with undisguised admiration.

"Blow me if you ain't a blessed weighing-machine!" he gasped. "I dunno how you does it!"

Jack modestly denied that he had any particular ability, but it was clear that in Bill's eyes he still remained a wonder.

"You come along down and get breakfast, my lad, and maybe you'll answer a few questions."

Bill led the way to the stern of the boat, and introduced Jack to the smallest, brightest, neatest room he had ever seen in his life. It was hardly more than ten foot by eight, but everything about it had been so cunningly contrived that there seemed plenty of room. There were beds that folded back into the wall. Even the table swung back on a hinge. The bunks themselves acted as chairs, and at one end, close to the doorway, was a miniature stove, complete with ovens, above which hung china and pots and pans. A brass drying rail, glittering like the stove, was fixed immediately above the fire. All these details Jack took in before he seated himself at a table in front of a plate of eggs and bacon.

"Lor' bless us, but the lad's half starved!" the woman exclaimed. "Have you been running away from somewhere, sonny?"

Jack shied at the question.

"I've just left school, and I'm trying to find a job," he answered evasively.

The woman laughed.

"All right, sonny, we won't split. If you ain't done nothin' wrong we won't give you away; and if you 'ave done anything wrong—well, I dunno as we'd give you away even then. Where's your home?"

Jack looked at the two kindly faces that were peering at him, and decided that he could take them into his confidence. A moment later and he was relating how his father had been killed in the War, and his mother had died, and how his uncle and aunt had brought him up and had been very cruel to him. So he had run away and jumped on the very lorry that had brought that cargo to the Emerald. The only information he refused to give was his uncle's name.

"Dang me, if you ain't a little sport!" Bill exclaimed, with a low, rumbling laugh. "Beat it, did you, to earn your own living you and your little dawg? Well, what do you think of doing, sonny?"

Jack confessed he didn't know.

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY.

JACK HORNER, a stocky youngster of fourteen, orphaned by the Great War, is given into the care of his uncle.

GEORGE PARKER, known locally as "Mean-as-Mud Parker," who treats the lad so brutally that Jack resolves to run away from Dane's Farm. Together with his faithful wolf-dog, Squall, Jack flies from the house.

BLACK MICHAEL, a mysterious individual, who visits Parker and offers him the sum of four hundred pounds if he will deliver Jack into his hands. In the course of bargaining it transpires that Jack is heir to a title and estates which will automatically go to Black Michael should Jack Horner die. Knowing nothing of these things, Jack is trudging across the Cumberland mountains when he espies a number of men hard on his trail. Aided by the faithful Squall, however, he eludes his pursuers by leaping aboard a passing lorry, where, thoroughly exhausted, he drops into a sound slumber. Aroused some hours later by a sudden jolting Jack is astonished to find himself on a wharf where he meets Bill Bowker—skipper of the monkey-boat Emerald—and his wife. The latter takes kindly to Jack.

"Maybe you're hungry, lad," she says. "Well, now's your chance to earn a bite of breakfast."

(Now read on.)

Husband and wife exchanged glances over the table.

"What's eight times seven?" Bill inquired abruptly.

"Fifty-six," answered Jack, with a feeling that if he had said seventy-seven Bill would have been none the wiser.

"And how many pounds in a hundredweight?"

Jack supplied the information. Bill's moonlike face absolutely glowed with wonder.

"Ain't you just a little packet of information!" he exclaimed. "Can you add up money, too, without getting the pence column all muddled up with the shilling column, same as I do?"

Jack declared that he was quite capable of doing that.

"Then, look here, my lad, I'll make a fair bargain with you. I'll give you five bob a week and the run of your teeth here if you like to sign on. The missus here will be a mother to you. We ain't got any bairns of our own, more's the pity, and she'll like looking after you. What about it?"

Jack looked about the snug little cabin, and thought of how hungry he had been a few minutes ago, and decided that there was only one answer to that question. Then he suddenly remembered Squall.

"If—if I can keep my dog—" he stammered.

"Yes, we'll take the whole bloomin' menagerie! Come to think of it, I can sleep easier at nights when we're in dock with that little dawg hanging around. He don't look at me as if he'd let much get by him."

"It's most awfully kind of you!" Jack exclaimed, flushing. "I'll do my very best."

Bill Bowker held out an enormous hand.

"Put it there, sonny, as the Americans say! You've signed on. Five bob a week, and you and the dog with the run of your teeth. But, mind you, when any of these guys come aboard and try to put it across me because I've had no

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education, you've got to see I ain't done!"

"I'll promise to do all the adding up for you," Jack answered.

"And that being so, we'll cast off and get under weigh, my lad. You come along with me, and I'll show you something of your job."

Then began for Jack one of the most delightful experiences of his life. They were bound, it appeared, for Brentford-on-the-Thames, a journey of some hundred and fifty miles. In the course of that five-day trip Jack quickly learned what was expected of him—how to manipulate the tow-rope when they were passing under bridges; how to get the necessary "way" on the boat by whipping up the horse at the critical moment; how to steer so as to keep the Emerald amidstream; how to manipulate the locks through which she had to pass.

The weather was perfect, and when the day's journey was done it was very pleasant to stroll through the rolling country-side, or to lie on the deck and listen to the yarns that old Bill had to tell him.

According to Bill, canal life had been spoiled by the introduction of the "butty"—the canal boat which is towed by a motor-launch instead of a horse—the horse-drawn vessel being known as a monkey-boat. Bill's hatred of butties was extraordinary. During that journey to Brentford Jack saw him engaged in half a dozen fights with butties who demanded that the Emerald should get out of the way so that they could pass. If he could hold them up for three or four hours, Bill sat down to his evening meal with a sigh of content. If by any chance they slipped past him he was sullen and morose until Mrs. Bowker put her arms about his neck and ruffled his hair and stroked his beard.

"Never you have anything to do with butties, my lad," Bill remarked a hundred times a day to Jack. "Nasty smelly oily things! I hate them!"

Jack loyally decided to hate them, too, and conveyed his feelings on the matter to Squall. The wolf-dog, as if understanding what was expected of him, so terrorised the crew of any motor-drawn vessel which attempted to slip by the Emerald that old Bill's admiration for the dog knew no bounds.

"Gosh, but that's the very little dawg I've been looking for all my life!" he exclaimed. "What'll you sell him to me for, Jack?"

"Not for all the gold in the world!" Jack answered stoutly.

Bill stroked his ginger whiskers.

"That's right, my lad! I like to see a chap stand by his pals."

By the time they reached Brentford, Dane's Farm, Mean-as-Mud Parker, Jack's aunt, and Black Michael seemed to belong to a nightmare world which he had almost forgotten. It was all so peaceful and so secure aboard the Emerald, and he had already conceived a deep affection for the skipper and his wife. Since Jack could remember they were the first people, with the exception of his mother, who had been kind to him.

But as they glided into the dock at Brentford—the great port for canal traffic, where the monkey-boats and butties discharge their cargoes on to barges which carry them down the Thames to the ocean-going steamers—he little dreamed how soon that sense of peace and security was to be dispelled!

It was six o'clock when they docked. Bill decided that the task of discharging the cargo should be begun at once, in spite of the lateness of the hour. With

the assistance of his wife and a derrick, the casks of cement were hauled up and arranged neatly on the quays.

Then Jack, in his role of clerk to the Emerald, accompanied the skipper to the office, saw the figures checked, and the right amount of money handed over. There was a difference of opinion between Jack and the clerk as to what that amount ought to be, the clerk wanting to pay much less than the boy's calculations showed ought to be paid.

"Funny thing, Jack," Bill remarked, as they finally left the office, "but the last time as I did that trip from Manningfold with twice as much cargo aboard I got a quid less. You stood up to that bloke with the linen fence round his neck and the get-off-the-earth air proper, my lad, and I'm much obliged to you."

It occurred to Jack then that Bill Bowker, owing to his deplorable lack of education, must have been robbed of his just dues for years.

"I'm glad I was able to get you the proper amount!" he exclaimed. "I'm sure that chap wanted to rob you."

Bill looked thoughtful; and then, taking out his pipe, began to fill it slowly. It was clear that he was seriously disturbed.

"Just you get down below and put the hold right, Jack. I'm going to stay here and have a smoke and think things out. If that there bloke has been twisting me I'll screw his bloomin' neck off!"

Jack, accompanied by Squall, made his way into the hold. The hatches were off, and as he was busy there he heard voices.

"Hallo, skipper! Can I have a word with you a moment?"

"'Allo yourself!" Bill replied surlily. "Wotcher got to say? I can't stop your talkin', you know."

"Can I come aboard a moment?"

There was silence for a space, as if the skipper debated the question with himself.

"All right! There ain't anything you can pinch here," he remarked presently.

There was the sound of footsteps on the gangway plank. Then the stranger's voice again.

"You made this last trip from Manningfold, didn't you?"

"I hears what you say."

"You took aboard that cargo of cement. It was brought you to Manningfold in a lorry—a lorry with the name of the Northern Cement Company written on it."

"Seems to me you know as much about my business as I do!" the old skipper exclaimed gruffly.

"Look here, skipper, I want some information. Those for whom I am acting will pay for the information. There was a boy and a dog on board that lorry. Did you see anything of them?"

Jack felt as if his heart had stopped beating. His uncle's agents were after him. They had tracked him down, after all. What would Bill say? Would the old skipper betray him?

"If twenty-five pounds is any use to you, skipper—" the insinuating voice went on.

"Cheese it!"

"I'm afraid I don't understand. You said—"

"I said 'Cheese it!' And when I says 'Cheese it!' on the deck of my own monkey-boat I means 'Cheese it!'—which, being interpreted, means, 'op it—beat it—fade away down the alley—sling yer hook—git!'"

"I only asked you a civil question, and I'm willing to pay well for the answer."

"I don't like your civil questions, and I don't want your dirty money!"

And if it comes to that, I don't like your face; and, speaking by the book, the very look of you makes me feel ill. And you don't seem to git quick enough!"

Jack clambered up the ladder and peered over the edge of the hold. He was just in time to see a dark, well-dressed man standing in front of Bill on the edge of the plank gangway.

The next moment the skipper put the flat of his hand on the man's face, completely eclipsing it, and pushed him by that means across the plank on to the quay.

"You would have it, you know!" Bill remarked cheerfully, as he returned to the deck and ostentatiously removed the plank.

A few minutes later, when he joined Jack in the little cabin for the evening meal, he made no reference to the interview he had just had; but as he ate in silence his huge figure shook now and again with suppressed laughter, and his face became almost apoplectic.

Presently Mrs. Bowker seemed to notice something odd about his behaviour.

"Bless the man! What's got him? You old juggins, why do you want to go on behaving the same as a grampus?"

Bill jerked a thumb in Jack's direction, and for another thirty seconds was again convulsed with silent mirth.

"They've spotted him, mother! There's a bloke come aboard just now wanting to know if I'd seen a boy with a dog as took a free ride on the Northern Cement Company's lorry; he offers me twenty-five quid if I'd tell him anything. I pushed his face in."

Jack looked across at him with shining eyes.

"It was awfully good of you not to give me away, Mr. Bowker!"

"I always stands by my pals, lad. You done me a good turn; you 'ates butties as I 'ates them; you squeeze a couple of quid more out of that guy in the office than I'd have got by myself; and I ain't going to sell you—not for all the uncles, aunts, cousins, and what-nots in the world!"

He looked solemnly across at Jack.

"But, look here, lad, if they're chucking about monkeys like that they must want you badly. You've got to be careful. It seems to me as your uncle must have cared for you a deal more than you thought."

"That's just what I can't make out!" Jack exclaimed. "Uncle was never known to part with a penny. Round our part he was known as Mean-as-Mud Parker. I can't understand him parting with twenty-five pounds."

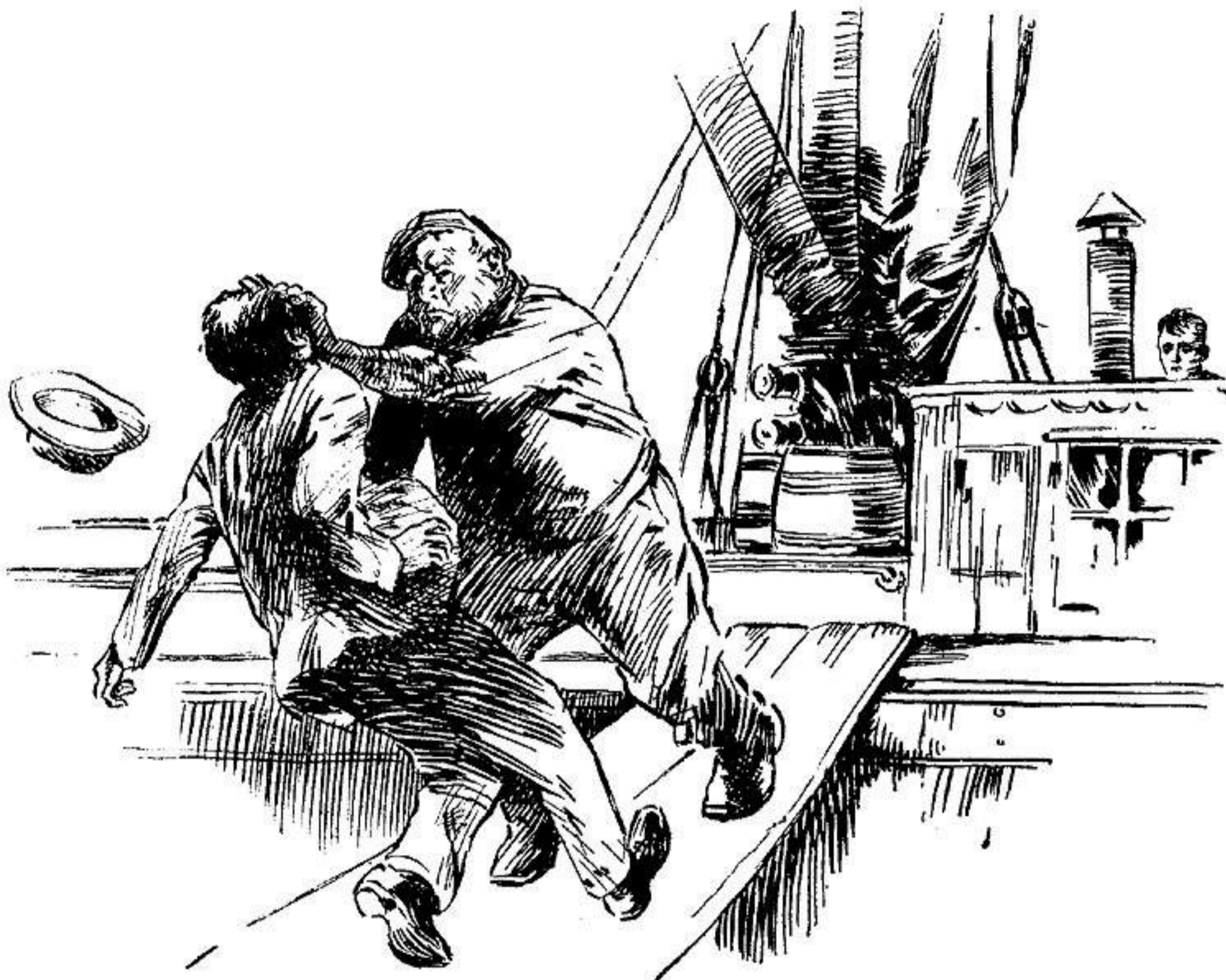
"Well, this bloke showed me the money; so if your uncle is as you say, he must be wanting you badly for some reason or other. You'd better sit tight, my lad, aboard the Emerald, in case there's anyone sneaking round looking for you."

He rose, wiping his mouth with a big, red bandanna handkerchief.

"Ready, mother?" he exclaimed, turning to his wife, and then added, in an aside to Jack: "Me and the missus always goes to the pictures when we're down these parts. They've got a proper one on at the Wonderland House—"Passion's Pilgrim." That guy What's-his-name—you know who I mean—jumps off expresses, climbs mill chimneys, and chases the villain round the top—regular bit of all right—he's in it."

Mrs. Bowker was busy getting on her bonnet and a cape while he was speaking.

"Wish we could be taking you, Jack; but maybe it'd be best, as father says, if you sat close here in case your uncle



"I don't like your 'civil' questions," growled Bill. "And I don't want your dirty money!" The next moment the skipper put the flat of his hand on the man's face and pushed him across the plank on to the quay. (See page 24.)

has somebody hanging round looking for you!" she exclaimed, patting Jack on the head.

"And don't you let anybody pinch the Emerald while we're away, my lad," Bill laughed.

Jack saw them off from the deck. As they disappeared through the dock-gates into the deepening dusk, he felt a curious sensation of loneliness until something very hot touched his hand, and, looking down, he saw Squall by his side.

"Never mind, Squall. We've got each other, haven't we? Some day, perhaps, I'll take you to the pictures, though I don't suppose you care much about them."

He began to replace the hatches over the hold, and, having seen everything tidied up on board, he seated himself on the deck. After Dane's Farm, it seemed a strange and mysterious world into which he had drifted. Beyond there was the Thames rushing swiftly inland with the tide, the lights of tug-boats and barges glittering like glow-worms in the darkness. Behind him more houses than ever he had seen in his life, crowded down to the very edge of the dock. In his ears there was a roar like the moaning of the sea—the sounds of the great city. He sat quite still on the deck, his arm about Squall's neck.

He had been seated there for some time when he was roused by the faint patter of feet. He rose quickly as Squall stiffened and bristled. Looking round, Jack saw a boy standing on the deck gazing about him. He was the strangest

boy he had ever seen in his life. His face was long and thin and bloodless, his cheeks hollow, and the clothes he wore seemed to consist of one shirt, so torn that his emaciated body was visible, and a pair of trousers that gaped from many a ragged tear. Round his neck was a string, from which was suspended what looked like a cigar-box, and in this tray were some boxes of matches and a few collar-studs.

"Hallo! What do you want?" Jack exclaimed.

The boy started as if he had been shot, and made as if to leap back to the quay. Then, seeing only somebody of his own age, he appeared to pluck up courage.

"Crikey!" he exclaimed, in a high-pitched voice. "I thought it was the bloomin' skipper as had copped me!"

"What are you doing here?" Jack inquired sternly.

"Tryin' to find something to eat. That's what I'm doing. I ain't had nothin' since first thing this morning, and that wasn't anything to speak of. You ain't got anything you could give a bloke?"

An exclamation of surprise broke from his lips as he saw Squall.

"My, what a dog!" he exclaimed.

Jack felt rather proud of the admiration Squall excited.

"He's mine. He's four-fifth wolf, and he'll do anything I tell him."

The boy pattered across the deck. Jack could see now that he was bare-footed. Without any show of fear, he bent over Squall and stroked his head.

"Ain't he the goods! Lumme, I wish I had a dog like that. I'd teach him to do tricks, and I'd go on the 'alls, and make a pot of money, and wear white shirt-fronts, and smoke cigars. I would, straight!"

To Jack it seemed a curious ambition.

"You trying to sell those things?" he inquired, mainly for something to say.

"Yes, but nobody'll buy, and the coppers is always a-chivvyin' me away from any decent pitch. Say, mate, you ain't got anything to eat, 'ave you? I'm proper starving!"

Jack hesitated a moment. Down in the cabin he knew there were eggs and bread and butter, but they were the property of the skipper and his wife. Ought he to take them? Then he glanced again at the boy—at his white, hungry face. He could boil a couple of eggs, and tell Mr. and Mrs. Bowker when they came back, and ask them to deduct the cost from his wages. He remembered how hungry he himself had felt six days ago.

"You stay here, and I'll get you something!" he exclaimed. "Sit down on the deck and make yourself comfortable. How would a couple of eggs suit you?"

The boy's screwed-up face showed just how the prospect of such a meal appealed to him. Telling him again to make himself comfortable, Jack made his way down into the cabin, followed by Squall. There, having first lit the lamp, he poked up the fire, and put two eggs in the saucepan to boil. Then, finding

the bread and butter, he cut three or four generous slices.

Eggs, he knew, should take three minutes. He decided to give them double that time so that they would be hard, and the other boy could eat them more conveniently. While the water sizzled in the saucepan he kept his eye on the clock, which was let into the wall, Squall watching as well, as if he, too, were concerned with the cooking of the eggs.

The six minutes was nearly up, and he was reaching out his hand for the saucepan, when the movement was arrested by an amazing sound on deck. There was suddenly a rush of feet, a cry of terror, the momentary sounds of a struggle, and then a piteous wail:

"Help, help!"

It was the voice of the street-waif, and it was almost instantly silenced. Jack reached forward just in time to grip Squall by the collar, as the wolf-dog made for the companion-way.

"Steady, Squall!" he whispered. "Steady!"

Jack listened with all his ears. Those footsteps were passing back again. Still holding Squall's collar, he crept on hands and knees up the companion-way. Now the deck was visible.

He stifled the little gasp of horror that rose to his lips. There were six men there, and they were carrying between them the motionless figure of the waif. In the half light Jack could see that the boy had been bound hand and foot and that over his mouth a handkerchief had been tied.

The men were now half-way across the deck. As they came in a line with the cabin, two of them turned their heads for a moment, and Jack saw their faces. Instantly the blood seemed to turn to ice in the boy's veins. In those cruel, brutalised faces he recognised the features of the two men he had seen last in the cave in the Cumberland mountains—the man called Curly, and the other whose name he did not know—and it dawned upon him that they had come aboard the Emerald with the idea of kidnapping him, and, finding another boy on deck, had jumped to the conclusion that that was the one they wanted.

For a few seconds the discovery almost paralysed Jack's power of action. Was this unfortunate waif of the streets whom he had wanted to befriend to be sacrificed on his account? Jack had only to lie where he was, and the men would go away satisfied that they had procured their quarry.

But he couldn't do that. Whatever the risk, he couldn't allow this other boy to suffer in his stead. There was always Squall to help him.

The men, moving swiftly, reached the side of the Emerald. Now they were on the quay. If he were to act, he must do so at once. He released his hold of Squall's collar.

"At them, Squall!" he whispered—"at them!"

Without a sound, like an arrow released from the string of a bow, the great wolf-dog swept across the deck of the monkey-boat.

A Near Thing for Squall!

JACK scrambled on deck, his heart beating with excitement. Squall had leapt the gangway at a spring.

In the moonlight he seemed like a swiftly-moving shadow. The gang were hurrying across the dock, carrying the helpless figure of the street waif, all unconscious of what was following in their track.

Jack felt an almost uncontrollable desire to cheer. The great wolf-dog had sprung. Instantly there was confusion and uproar. A man went staggering face downwards to the ground. The boy saw Squall seize a second man by the arm, and, with a twist of his body, sent him hurling across the quay.

But the effect of that surprise lasted only a few seconds. There were still five men left, and when once they realised their danger they dropped their burden and turned and faced the dog. Jack heard Curly's voice:

"Gosh, it's the brute that nabbed Jim and me! Out him, boys!"

Close to where they were standing was a pile of bricks that had been unloaded from one of the barges. As if by mutual agreement, the men armed themselves with these missiles. A moment later and Squall was the mark for a deluge of bricks thrown with great force at close range. Twist and turn though he might he could not escape from that barrage. He backed, growling. The men, with a cheer, pursued him. Curly, Jack saw, had produced a rope. It was obviously his intention to catch the dog and make an end of him. And at the thought of the danger in which Squall stood, Jack forgot all his own personal fears.

Unnoticed by anyone, he slipped over the side of the Emerald, with the intention of seizing Squall and dragging him to a place of safety. But even as he gained the quay, one of those bricks missing Squall hit him on the side of the head. A thousand stars seemed to play before his eyes. The earth heaved and moved under his feet. He put up his hands to his face with a helpless gesture, and then, with a little stifled sob, dropped unconscious to the ground.

It was, perhaps, fortunate for Jack that he fell just behind one of the big iron posts which were used for mooring purposes, for it hid his figure from view. Unobserved by the gang, he lay there until gradually the mists of unconsciousness cleared. His first thought as he came to himself was that his head

was splitting. With a groan he sat up, trying to remember what had happened. Then bit by bit it came to him. The street waif—those brutes who had seized him—Squall's danger.

As his mind picked up this last recollection he forgot all about the pain in his head. Jumping to his feet he looked about him, terror in his heart. Where was Squall—Squall, his only friend?

Silence reigned on the quayside. Except for the bricks that scattered the ground, there was nothing to suggest that the spot had been the scene of that outrage only a few minutes ago. Jack tried to whistle, but his trembling lips refused to make any sound.

"Squall," he whispered. "Squall."

He heard a faint sound that was like a stifled whimper. He looked towards the spot from which it had come. There he saw a sight that chilled the blood in his veins. Hanging by a rope from one of the derricks on the quay was the body of the wolf-dog. He was still struggling, but it was clear that his strength was nearly spent.

Jack dashed towards the spot. In another moment, with the aid of his penknife, he had cut through the rope so that Squall dropped to the ground. As he lay there helpless, Jack flung himself down on his knees by his side.

"Squall, old fellow!" he gasped, with a catch in his voice. "Oh, Squall!"

For one terrible moment he thought that the dog was dead. Holding Squall's head on his lap, Jack discovered that a handkerchief had been bound about his muzzle. Evidently even when they had him helpless the gang of roughs had had a healthy respect for those powerful snapping jaws.

Jack removed the handkerchief. As he did so Squall's long red tongue shot out and licked his hand. Jack gave a little gasp of satisfaction.

"Oh, Squall, poor old fellow, did they hurt you very much?"

He could see that the blood was oozing from a wound in the dog's head. Jumping to his feet he ran across to the canal-side, and, wetting his handkerchief, returned to bathe that cut. Quite suddenly Squall, who had remained lying helplessly on one side where he had fallen, rose to his feet, shook himself, and then, with his ears erect, looked inquiringly at his master as if to tell him that he was quite all right now, thank you, and what was he to do next? Jack hardly knew whether to laugh or cry.

"Oh, you wonderful old dog!" he exclaimed. "I don't know what I should have done if you had been killed! Those brutes, if only——"

He stopped abruptly. There had flashed suddenly into his mind the recollection of the half-starved street waif who had come aboard the Emerald to look for food. Where was he? Where were those brutes taking him to? What would be his fate?

In his concern for the waif's safety was mingled a certain generous feeling. Undoubtedly the boy had been kidnapped in mistake for himself. He had stumbled into a danger with which he had no concern; he was being made a victim for another.

"We must try and find him, Squall!" gasped Jack.

(This search for the street waif is destined to lead Jack Horner into an astonishing adventure. Read about it in next week's thrilling instalment, *chums.*)

ALL THE INNER SECRETS
OF FOOTBALL—

and all about the

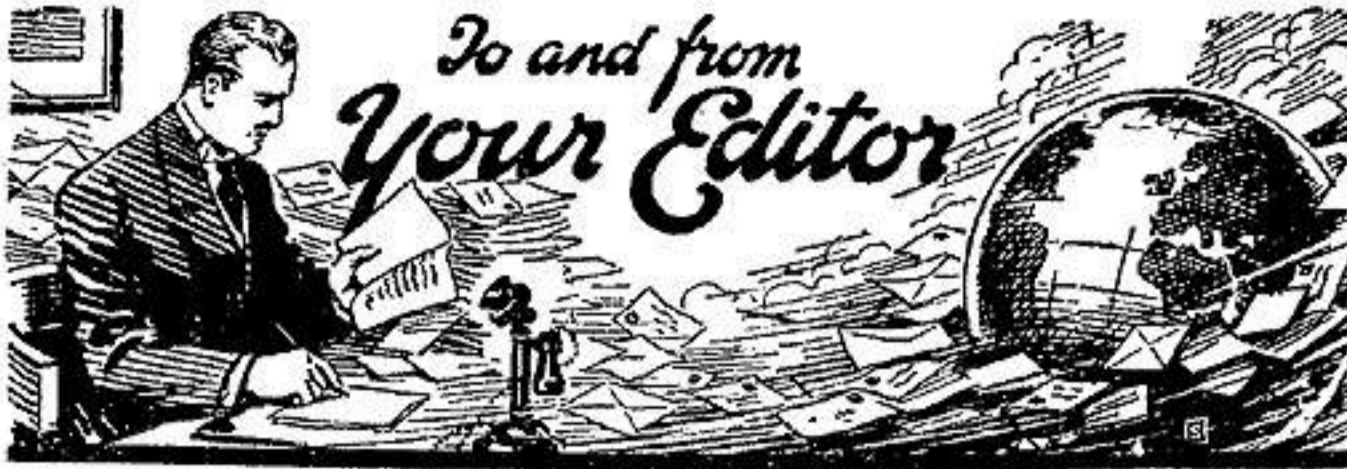
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THE BOUNDER!

THIS week's mail brings an extraordinary number of requests from MAGNET readers for a Vernon-Smith series of Greyfriars stories. And, strangely enough, each of my correspondents who refers to this character wants to see him again as he was in the "old days"—the days when he really earned the name of the Bounder. The notion is a good one. Mr. Richards and I have talked it over, and my correspondents can now look forward to a return of the old Vernon-Smith very shortly. How's that?

BON VOYAGE AND GOOD LUCK!

An old reader of the MAGNET writes and tells me that shortly he is to sail for Australia, where he intends to take up farming. He says it will be a bit of a wrench to leave "Blighty" and his old pals, but one of these pals—namely, MAGNET—will be with him "out there," as good and as strong as ever. Bravo! I'm sure all Magnetites wish my cor-

respondent a pleasant voyage and the very best of luck.

FROM BARNSELY!

A loyal reader of the MAGNET, who signs himself "X.," writes and tells me that he's keen to enter the Mercantile Marine when he leaves his school, and adds that his mother doesn't want him to go. "What-ought he to do?" he asks. Well, if my chum's mother doesn't want him to take up this profession, there's nothing more to be said, so far as I am concerned. Doubtless his mater has good and sufficient reasons for taking this view, and who am I to run counter to her wishes? I'm afraid I must leave it at that, my chum.

FROM TAMWORTH!

A. N. Other," of Tamworth, wants to know if there will be any competitions in the MAGNET this year. I think I can safely promise this chum that

there will be. Next he wants to know if the "Schoolboys' Own" Libraries deal with the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., Tom Merry & Co., and Jimmy Silver & Co. They do. "Is there any paper dealing solely with the Rookwood characters?" is another query from this chum. And the answer is—there is not. But there's a ripping complete story of "Uncle James" & Co. in the "Popular" every Tuesday. This correspondent closes his letter with a list of the Remove footer and cricket teams, and he asks if he has "got them right." You have, my chum. Many thanks for your letter.

Next Monday's Programme:

"FED UP WITH GREYFRIARS!"

By Frank Richards.

Roger Quelch, the Remove master's nephew, comes out strong in next week's grand story of the Greyfriars chums. Mind you read it, boys!

"THE TRAIL OF ADVENTURE!"

By Lionel Day.

Look out, too, for another ripping instalment of this amazing adventure serial featuring young Jack Horner and his faithful dog Squall. Also another screamingly funny short complete from Dicky Nugent, entitled:

"THE HEAD'S JOY-RIDE!"

which deals with the adventures and misadventures of the heroes of St. Sam's. Order your copy of the MAGNET in good time. Saves disappointment. Cheerio, chums! YOUR EDITOR.

them my autograph, and then—in my presence—offer to exchange it for three cigarette cards. The proportion's all wrong."

Yates, the goalkeeper of Watford, has a fine baritone voice, and is in much demand at local concerts.

Only one London professional team has ever won the Cup—Tottenham Hotspur, and, of course, they have been successful on two occasions—in 1901 and 1921. Shall we have to wait till 1941 before another London club wins?

The man who has done such a lot for Reading this season is Messer, the centre-half, or, to put it in another way, this player has proved to the world that he has been wrongly named.

Huddersfield Town and West Ham United are the only two clubs which have reached the Cup Final and won promotion in the same season. Manchester City have a unique record the other way round: they are the only club which has got to the Cup Final and been relegated in the same season.

It is quite a common practice for footballers playing against each other for different countries to exchange shirts after the match is over. These shirts are treasured as mementoes.

Do You Know That?

Interesting Tit-Bits for the Footer Fan!

The regular right full-back of Leicester City is named Black, but when he is unable to play his substitute is usually a player named Brown. This might be called working to a colour scheme.

When Mr. Peter McWilliam takes up his managerial appointment with the Middlesbrough club at the beginning of April he will be the third ex-Newcastle United International player who has managed that club. The others were Andy Aitken and James Howie.

Association football is now played in forty-two different countries, which means that it would be possible to arrange an International championship as big as the First and Second Divisions.

Louis Page, the outside-left of Barnley, who has come to the fore in no half-hearted manner this season, has played in three representative games for England at baseball.

The last time an amateur player scored a goal in a Cup Final was in 1908, when the Rev. K. R. G. Hunt registered

a goal for Wolverhampton Wanderers. Mr. Hunt is now a master at the Highgate School, and he has more than once told the curious boys under him that his goal was a "fluke."

When Reading were drawn to play Portsmouth in the fifth round of the Cup this season the club received over 22,000 applications for reserved seats, but there were only 3,000 of these available. Football does its bit towards the Post Office revenue.

Albert Knight, the full-back of the Corinthians, has played games in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Egypt, India, and Switzerland, as well as in all the four countries of the British Isles. Some traveller.

Asked recently to give his opinion on people who annoyed him, Andy Wilson, the Chelsea forward, said, jokingly: "There are some little boys in the Fuh-ham Road who pester me until I give

"ROGER OF THE REMOVE!"

(Continued from page 22.)

"Mr. Mobbs has stated that his boys do not know the name of the Greyfriars boy who assaulted them. It is improbable that they do not know your name, Bunter. They have seen you many times. You are telling falsehoods!"

"Oh, dear!"

"The truth—at once!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter's fat knees knocked together.

"Great pip!" murmured Bob Cherry. "It was young Quelchy who handled those Highcliffe cards, and that fat villain has been pulling our legs!"

"Was my nephew present, Bunter?" thundered the Remove-master.

"Oh, dear! No, sir; I—I mean yes, sir!"

"You have told me that he was not!"

"I—I meant that he was, sir," gasped Bunter. "That was what I really meant to say, sir."

"Bless my soul! This wretched prevarication! Bunter, I shall cane you severely."

"Oh, crikey! I never did it," howled Bunter. "Those beasts said you would let me off if I told you Pon and Gaddy started it. I never did it. I never touched them, sir. That—that was what I really meant to say all along!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, bend over that desk."

"Oh, lor'!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Yarooooo!"

"You may go to your place, Bunter. You are exonerated so far as the affair of the Highcliffe boys is concerned. You have been punished for untruthfulness. Cease those ridiculous noises and go to your place."

Bunter crawled back to his place, making an effort to suppress the ridiculous noises.

"Roger!"

The Form master's nephew stood up.

"Yes, sir!"

"You have sat without saying a word while this boy, Bunter, was telling me what you must have known to be falsehoods."

"Yes, sir."

"Was it you who treated the Highcliffe boys in the manner described by Mr. Mobbs?"

"Yes, sir," said Roger resignedly.

"And why?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"They were kicking that fat duffer, sir, when I came along the lane," said Roger. "I felt bound to chip in."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Bravo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry in voluntarily.

"Cherry! Take a hundred lines."

"Oh! Yes, sir."

There was a long, long pause. Mr. Quelch finally laid his cane on his desk, much to his nephew's relief.

"I cannot blame you, Roger, for defending a foolish and helpless boy from a pair of young ruffians," said Mr. Quelch at last.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Roger. "I shall tell Mr. Mobbs so." Mr. Quelch paused a moment. "The matter ends here. We shall now proceed."

And the Remove proceeded.

When the Remove were dismissed for morning break a crowd of fellows gathered round Roger Quelch in the corridor, and Bob Cherry gave him a thump on the back that made him gasp. Billy Bunter rolled up.

"I say, you fellows—"

"You fat fraud!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You spoofing porpoise!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Bump him!"

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter in alarm. "It really was me, you know—me all the time!"

"What?"

"If young Quelchy says it was him he's fibbing. It was me, you know! I hope you fellows can take my word. Yarooooo!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter, shorn of all his glory, sat and gasped on the floor, while Harry Wharton & Co. walked away cheerily with Roger of the Remove.

THE END.

(Now look out for the next topping yarn in this splendid series, entitled: "Fed Up With Greyfriars!" A powerful story this, chums, and one that is bound to please. Avoid disappointment by ordering your copy of the MAGNET well in advance!)

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Backlog

DICKY
INTEREST

ALL OVER AN UNPAID TAILOR'S BILL!
Stark stares Dr. Birchmell in the face unless he sees to it that Gilbert Tweedy, the local tailor's son, is made the kapitan of St. Sam's!

A Punting and Breathless Tail of Jack Jolly & Co., the Cheery Chums of St. Sam's.

Loyly and Trew—three other members of the Fourth who were backing up Burleigh—lounge in the Head's occasional-chairs, waiting for the old buffer to serve tea.

then poured out very watery tea from a cracked teapot. Then, after waiting hand and foot on his guests, he dashed off to the tuckshop, returning in a few minutes with a bag of jam-tarts in one hand, a bag of doe-nuts in the other, and a bag of assorted pastries in the other.

He had already bribed them with a good tea; but he had expected that they would have to be coaxed and bullied and threatened into the bargain, before they would agree to vote for the Head's candidature. However, they seemed already to have made up their minds that Tweedy, the tailor's son, would be the right man in the right place, and that Burleigh was the miserable toad and the worthless scamp which the Head had dubbed him.

"F EW!"
Jack Jolly, of the Fourth, gave a long-drawn-out whistle of astonishment.

The juniors stared at that invitational for a long time. Had it been worded in a less dignified way, and had the spelling been at all shaky, they might have taken it for a joke. But only Doctor Birchmell could have written such a note.

Jack Jolly & Co. were frankly puzzled. Even at St. Sam's, where strange things happened sometimes, it was not customary for the Head to invite Fourth-Formers to tea. He sometimes invited himself to tea in their studies; but that was a different matter. A headmaster was privileged to drop into any study he liked, whenever he felt peckish.

Gradually the crafty old codger worked the conversation round to the election which was taking place that evening. "I hope St. Sam's will do its duty, and elect the best man," he said.

So saying, the Head fairly ran amok with the birch-rod, and their was a wild stampede to the door. Stedfast and Loyly and Trew, who had out in the passage before you could say nife. But Jack Jolly & Co. were not so lucky. In their panic-stricken rush for the door, they had to pass the Head, and his birch curled and lashed about their shoulders. Then they became wedged in the doorway, kicking and struggling for exit; and the Head, seeing his opportunity and his birch-rod at the same time, did tremendous execution.

"I say, you fellows!" he exclaimed. "Do I dream, do I wonder and doubt? Is things what they seem, or is visions about?" The Head has invited us to tea!"

Jack Jolly & Co. were always squabbling and ranting with each other, and the Head, because he happened to be dressed in a gown and mortar-board and a little brief authority, generally got the better of the argument.

Dr. Birchmell was waiting hand and foot on the guests. "Pile in, my boys!" he said cheerily, pouring out some very watery tea from a cracked teapot.

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"To JOLLY, MERRY, and BRIGHT." The headmaster renews the pleasure of your society at a ripping blow-out in his study, at five o'clock.

Jack Jolly stood his chums the note, and Merry and Bright gazed at the message as if they were under a hypnotic spell.

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"There must be a catch in it somewhere!" said Jack. "Strikes me that we shall be given a round of the Head's birch!"

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Needling before the blazing fire, Dr. Birchmell resumed his task of frying herrings on a pen-holder.

Dr. Birchmell was waiting hand and foot on the guests. "Pile in, my boys!" he said cheerily, pouring out some very watery tea from a cracked teapot.

He had already bribed them with a good tea; but he had expected that they would have to be coaxed and bullied and threatened into the bargain, before they would agree to vote for the Head's candidature. However, they seemed already to have made up their minds that Tweedy, the tailor's son, would be the right man in the right place, and that Burleigh was the miserable toad and the worthless scamp which the Head had dubbed him.

So saying, the Head fairly ran amok with the birch-rod, and their was a wild stampede to the door. Stedfast and Loyly and Trew, who had out in the passage before you could say nife. But Jack Jolly & Co. were not so lucky. In their panic-stricken rush for the door, they had to pass the Head, and his birch curled and lashed about their shoulders. Then they became wedged in the doorway, kicking and struggling for exit; and the Head, seeing his opportunity and his birch-rod at the same time, did tremendous execution.