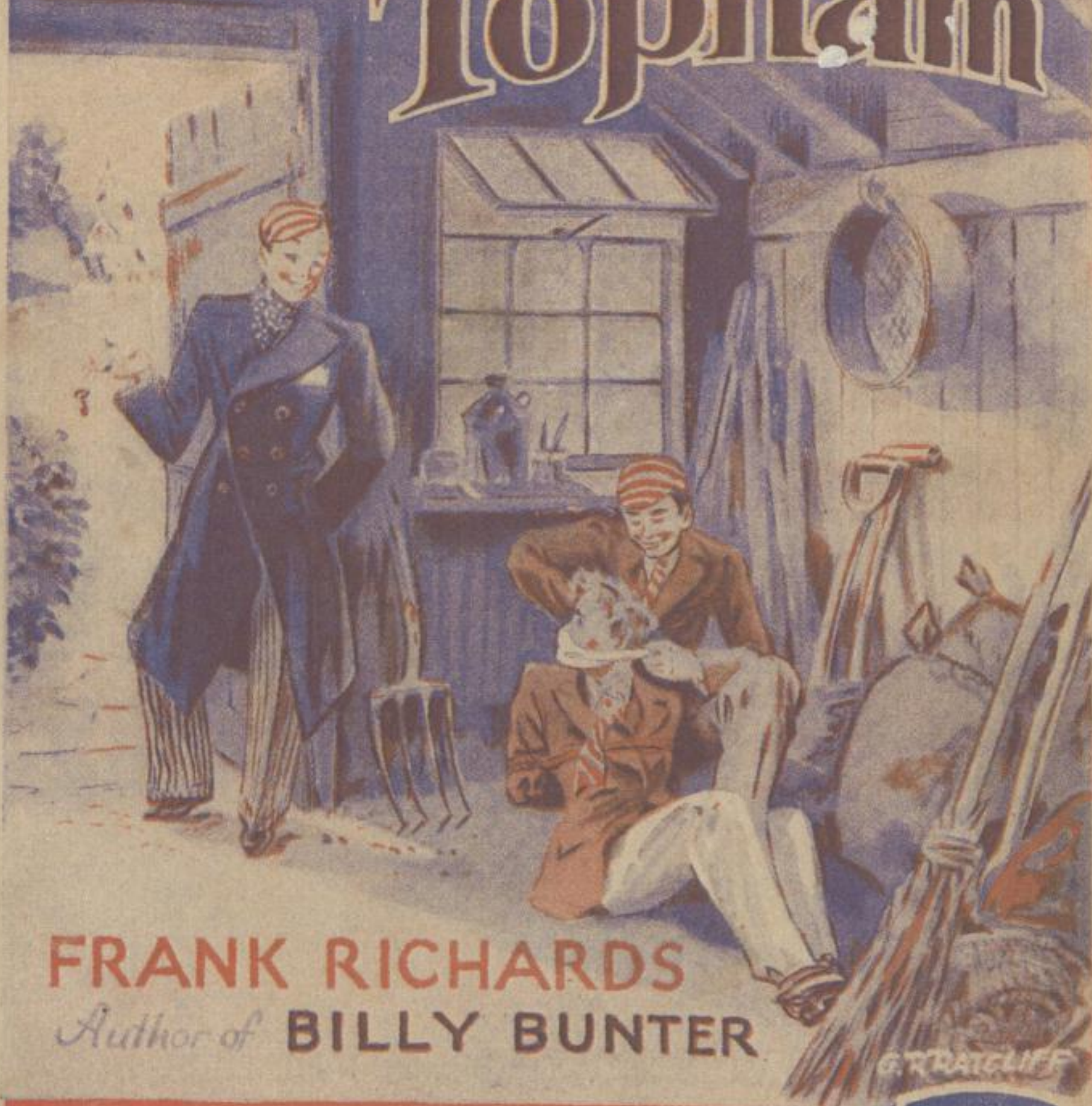


*Marscot*

SCHOOLBOY SERIES No. 3

# The Dandy of Topham



**FRANK RICHARDS**  
*Author of* **BILLY BUNTER**

A COMPLETE 'BOB HOOD & CO.' STORY

**4½**



MASCOT SCHOOLBOY SERIES No. 3

# THE DANDY OF TOPHAM

*by*

*FRANK RICHARDS*

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BILLY BUNTER

**A "Bob HOOD" Story**

Published by

JOHN MATTHEW (Publishers) LIMITED  
FINSBURY HOUSE, BLOMFIELD ST., LONDON, E.C.2

# THE DANDY OF TOPHAM

By FRANK RICHARDS

*Author of "Billy Bunter"*

## CHAPTER I.

BOB HOOD PUTS HIS FOOT DOWN!

"**N**O!"  
"Look here—!"

"No!" repeated Bob Hood.

The captain of the Topham Remove did not often say "No." He was too good-natured and easy-going to say "No" if he could possibly say "Yes." But now he said "No" with emphasis and finality.

There were four fellows in Top Study—Bob Hood, Harry Vane, and Bunny Binks, to whom the study belonged: and Picton-Brown of the Remove, who had just come in.

Bob was seated at the study table, with a paper before him on which were scrawled a number of names, in Bob's sprawling hand. It was a football list, and the names were all those of fellows in Fourth A—otherwise the Remove. Bob had been pondering over that list when Randolph Picton-Brown came in, with his hands in his pockets, and a spot of swagger in his manner. There was very often a spot of swagger about Picton-Brown, and often a jingle of cash. Randy never seemed quite able to forget that he was the son and heir of a City millionaire who could have bought Topham School—had it been for sale—without missing the money. But Randy was a good footballer, which earned him more respect in Fourth A than all the ample cash that jingled in his pockets.

"Now, look here, Hood—!" said Picton-Brown.

"Nothing doing!" interrupted Bob. "Games-practice at three, and every man has got to turn up."

"I want to cut, this afternoon."

"No!"

"You can let a man off, as form-captain."

"I can," assented Bob, "But I won't. Don't be a goat, Randy. We're playing Fourth B on Wednesday, and we want all the practice we can get. You'll turn up with the rest."

Bob dropped his eyes to the football list again, apparently regarding the matter as ended. But Randolph Picton-Brown did not leave the study. He stood scowling at the top of Bob Hood's bent head, with its unruly mop of flaxen hair.

Bunny Binks, sprawled in the armchair, with his fat little legs resting on another chair, chuckled. The expression on Picton-Brown's face seemed to amuse the fat Bunny. Harry Vane, the new fellow at Topham, standing by the window, appeared to be interested in the view of the quadrangle below. An argument between the form-captain, and a member of the Form eleven, was no business of his, and he carefully gave no heed to it.

"Now, look here, Hood, I've got to cut," said Picton-Brown, "My

pater's comin' down to Hamley this afternoon, and I've got to go over and meet him there."

Bob Hood raised his eyes again.

"I've heard that one," he said, drily, "You're not cutting games-practice to hike along to the Spotted Dog this afternoon, Randy."

"He, he, he!" came from the fat Bunny in the armchair.

Picton-Brown scowled.

"That's good enough for Hedley, if he asks," he snapped.

"Perhaps! It's not good enough for me. Look here," exclaimed Bob, angrily, "Cut out that rot and think of Soccer instead. One of these days you'll get spotted at your silly games, and sacked from Topham. I jolly well know that Carfax has an eye on you already. We don't want a man expelled in Fourth A. Wash it out and stick to footer."

"I'll please myself about that," snapped Picton-Brown.

"You'll please me in this case," said Bob, coolly, "I happen to be captain of the Remove, and you happen to be in my team. You'll toe the line just like any other fellow in the form, Dandy Randy."

"I'm goin' out."

"Get it clear," said Bob Hood, "If you go out of Topham this afternoon, before games-practice, you go out of the Form eleven too. If you prefer banker at the Spotted Dog to Soccer, take your choice—you can't have both."

Picton-Brown stood looking at him across the study table, breathing hard. The scapegrace of Topham did undoubtedly like banker at the Spotted Dog, and other pursuits that would have caused his swift departure from the school if his headmaster had heard of them. But he was a keen footballer too, and the best winger in Fourth A, "Dandy Randy" was not a man who could be easily spared.

"That's gas!" he grunted, at last, "There isn't a man in Fourth A you could put in my place, without gettin' licked by Fourth B on Wednesday, and you know it as well as I do."

"Perhaps!" said Bob, "But I'd rather play Bunny here, than a man who won't toe the line. Don't spill any more, Randy. Games-practice at three."

"I'm goin' out."

"I've told you what will happen, if you do."

"Rats!" said Picton-Brown. And he turned on his heel, and stalked out of the study. The "Dandy" had evidently made up his mind.

Bob Hood drew a deep, deep breath. He was an easy-going fellow—too easy-going sometimes for a football captain. But his mind was made up now. He rose from the table, and stepped to the open window, where Harry Vane stood. There was a flush in his face, and his blue eyes were glinting.

From one of the windows of Top Study, there was a view of the quad, and the school gates in the distance. It was a fine afternoon, cold and clear, and a good many fellows were going down to the gates. Bob Hood fixed his eyes on them from the window of Top Study.

Harry Vane glanced at him, but did not speak. He had made friends with Bob Hood, in the short time he had been at Topham, and he was feeling a little concerned. He had joined several times already in the junior games practice, and he knew Picton-Brown's value to the team, and how sorely he would be missed: but he could see that Hood's mind was made up. If Randolph Picton-Brown went out of the gates, he went out of the team: that was easily to be read in Bob's grim, rugged face. And his brow darkened a little as he saw the rather elegant and extremely well-dressed figure of Picton-Brown appear below—going down to the gates. With his hands in the pockets of a



handsome overcoat, and his hat a little tilted on his head, Picton-Brown was sauntering to the gates, with his pal and study-mate, Caffew. Evidently they were going out.

"The ass!" muttered Vane. How any fellow could feel the urge to join in dingy blackguardism, when he might have been playing football, was a mystery to the new junior at Topham. But Picton-Brown's ways were not his ways.

"The blackguard!" growled Bob. "If he goes—!"

He stood watching from the window, with a clouded brow. He hated coming down hard on any fellow. But he was coming down hard, if Randolph Picton-Brown went out at the gates, after what had been said in Top Study.

In the gateway, Picton-Brown paused, and looked back. His glance fixed on the window of Top Study, where, distant as it was, he could see the grim frowning face of his form-captain. Harry Vane hoped that he was about to turn back. He did not like Picton-Brown, but he did like Bob Hood, and would have been glad to see the trouble blow over.

But Randolph Picton-Brown did not turn back. He smiled sarcastically, gave a shrug of the shoulders, and then turned again and walked out of gates with Caffew.

"He, he, he!" Bunny Binks had joined the juniors at the window, his curiosity overcoming his laziness to the extent of detaching him from the study armchair, "I say, he's gone. He jolly well knows you can't drop him, Bob."

"You fat chump!" grunted Bob.

He stepped back to that table, and picked up his pencil. He drew the pencil through the name of R. Picton-Brown in the football list.

"Oh crumbs!" said Bunny, staring, "Randy will kick up a row, Bob."

"Let him!" snapped Bob.

He stood looking at the football list, and then looked at Harry Vane. Then he wrote in another name under the one he had blotted out.

"That's that," said Bob, "Like to see the new man's name, Vane?"

He held up the paper. Harry Vane glanced at it, and gave quite a jump. He could hardly believe his eyes as he saw "H. Vane" in Bob's sprawling hand. He had played hard in games practice, and he knew that he was a good man at Soccer—but that he would be playing for his form in his third week at Topham was an idea that had never entered his head.

"My dear chap—!" he gasped.

"You're keen, I suppose?" asked Bob.

"Yes, rather! Keen as mustard. But—"

"I've been wanting to give you a chance in the eleven, but I couldn't leave a man out for a new kid. Randy's taken himself out now, so that's that. You play for Fourth A on Wednesday. Pull up your socks when we meet Tunstall's lot, old man, and don't let me down."

"What-ho!" said Harry Vane, "I wouldn't claim to be Picton-Brown's form, but I'll jolly well play the game of my life, I know that."

"Good man," said Bob. "I'll go and stick this up in the Jungle now." And the captain of the Remove left Top Study with the paper in his hand.

"He, he he!" chuckled Bunny, "I say, Vane, Randy won't like you pinching his place in the eleven. Oh, crumbs, won't Randy go off at the deep end when he sees that paper! I say, old chap, guard with your left when you see Randy again."

Harry Vane laughed. It was quite likely that there would be a spot of trouble with Randy. But trouble with Randy had no terrors for the new fellow at Topham.

## CHAPTER II.

### RANDY CUTS UP RUSTY!

"H E'S coming!"

"Look out for fireworks!"

There was a buzzing crowd in the 'Jungle'—the junior day-room at Topham. The winter dusk was falling on the old quad: it was close on lock-ups. Games-practice was long over: fellows had come in ruddy and cheery. Almost all the Remove were gathered in the Jungle: and Bunny Binks was posted at the big bay window, staring out into the dusk. It was Bunny's squeak that announced that "he" was coming!

The announcement caused a buzz of excitement. A dozen fellows turned their heads to look at Harry Vane, who was seated on the edge of the long table, swinging his legs, and talking to Tom King, goalkeeper in the Fourth A team. Bob Hood was not in the Jungle: he had stopped in the changing-room to speak to Tunstall, the captain of Fourth B, about the Form match booked for Wednesday. Vane was waiting for him to blow in, to go up to Top Study for tea: when Bunny's announcement that "he" was coming caused such a flutter of excitement in the Jungle. Vane easily guessed who "he" was—Randolph Picton-Brown—he was well aware that all the Remove were eager to see what would happen when Randy saw the new name in the football list, now pinned up on the wall in the day-room.

Vane had had little to do with Picton-Brown so far since he had been at Topham School. He was merely a new fellow—and Picton-Brown was a great man in the Remove—filling a larger space in the public eye, in that form, than even its captain, Bob Hood. Randy had many claims to distinction—he was wealthy, and had more money than was good for him: his study, No. 3 in the Remove, was lavishly furnished and fitted up: he was a first-class footballer, when he took the trouble to keep fit, which was not always: he was a fearless fighting-man, and had a fierce temper which he did not always keep in control: and in addition, he was known as a reckless breaker of bounds, popularly supposed not to care a boiled bean for beaks or prefects. Remove fellows had stared when they saw his name crossed out of the football list, and predicted trouble—especially for the new junior whose name was written in its place. Randy, no doubt, had asked for it: but he was not the man to take patiently that for which he had asked.

"Look out, Vane!" squeaked Bunny from the bay window, "He's coming."

Harry Vane affected not to hear that warning from the fat Bunny. His look was quite unconcerned. In fact he could hardly believe that Randy, great man as he was in his own esteem, would be ass enough to kick up a row over a decision of the football captain. But if Randy did, the new fellow at Topham was quite prepared to face the music without turning a hair.

"Here he comes!" said Tom King, as a figure appeared in the doorway of the Jungle, "Here's the Dandy, Vane."

Vane did not look round. He did not seem to be interested in the arrival of Randolph Picton-Brown. But every other fellow in the Jungle turned his eyes on him at once as he came in with Cyril Caffew.

Picton-Brown strolled in, his hands in his pockets as usual, with Caffew at his heels, and glanced round the room with a slightly puzzled expression on his strongly-marked but handsome face. He could see at a glance that the Jungle was thrilling with excitement, and wondered why.



"Anythin' up, you men?" he asked, in his drawling voice.

"Yes, something's up!" grinned Tom King.

"What is it?" asked Caffew.

"The football list for Wednesday."

"Oh!" Picton-Brown's expression changed a little, and a flash came into his dark eyes. Perhaps, in his arrogance, he had forgotten what had been said in Top Study that afternoon, assured that the captain of the Remove would never venture to take the drastic step he had threatened. But he could guess now what the excitement in the Jungle meant, and his brow was dark as he walked across to look at the paper pinned up on the wall. He stood in silence reading the names, the other fellows watching him breathlessly.

Picton-Brown stood very still. His name, in that paper, was crossed out. Under it was written the name of a fellow who had been only two or three weeks in the school. There was a dead silence in the Jungle, as he stood there, looking at the paper, his brow growing darker and darker.

He turned, at last, and looked round the room. Then he walked across to where Harry Vane sat on the corner of the table.

"You're Vane, I think?" he said. His voice was very quiet, but his dark eyes were glittering.

Harry looked at him smiling faintly. It suited the lofty Randy to appear hardly aware of his name, which he knew perfectly well. But he was welcome to put on all the "roll" he liked, so far as Vane was concerned.

"Yes, I'm Vane," assented Harry, politely.

"Your name seems to be in my place in the list yonder. Is it a joke?"

"Better ask the skipper," suggested Harry, "He put it there."

"You're not taking my place."

"Your place?" asked Harry.

"You're down as inside-right, according to that scrawl. You're a new man here, but I suppose you've heard that I play inside-right for the Form," said Picton-Brown, contemptuously.

"I've heard so, certainly," agreed Harry, "I've not been long here, but I played Soccer before I came to Topham. I had a sort of idea that a football captain picked out a team, and that his word goes. But if you bought and paid for the place, of course, it's yours. Did you?"

There was a laugh from some of the juniors, and Picton-Brown flushed crimson.

"You're not playing inside-right on Wednesday," he said.

"I rather think I am."

"I've told you it's my place."

"You can tell me till you're black in the face, and it won't make any difference," answered Vane. "You can shout it from the top of the clock-tower if you like—or have it set to music and sing it in the quad. I shall play inside right on Wednesday just the same, unless my skipper tells me I'm not wanted."

"I'm telling you you're not wanted, you new scum."

"And I'm telling you to mind your own business, you old scum!"

"He, he, he!" came from Bunny Binks.

"Chuck it, Randy, old man," said King, "Hood's skipper, you know—and you cut games-practice this afternoon—"

"You can shut up," said Picton-Brown, "Now, look here, Vane, if that's your name—"

"I'm looking, Picton-Brown, if that's your name."

The Dandy's eyes flashed fire.

"You cheeky smear! Will you tell Hood that you're not playing on Wednesday, or 'not?" he almost shouted.

"No!" answered Harry Vane.

"You fancy you're goin' to pinch my place in the eleven?"

"Oh, don't talk rot!" exclaimed Harry, "You've been chucked, and your place had to be filled. If Hood wasn't the best-tempered fellow at Topham, he'd have booted you out of his study for your cheek, as well as out of the team. You've asked for it, and got it, and now you had better shut up."

That was more than enough for Dandy Randy. He came at the new junior like a tiger, grasped him, and wrenched him off the table. Vane went spinning to the floor: but his grasp was on Picton-Brown, and his grasp was strong: and the Dandy rolled on the floor with him. For a moment they sprawled, amid a buzz of excitement from the crowd of juniors: then scrambled panting to their feet, and in a split second were fighting furiously.

### CHAPTER III.

#### SIX UP!

**B**OB Hood stepped in at the door of the Jungle, and stared. "What the thump—!" he ejaculated. "Who's fighting? What—?"

He ran forward.

Neither Picton-Brown nor Vane heeded him—or even saw him. They had closed in fierce strife: trampling, panting, punching. Already a stream of red was spurting from Harry Vane's nose, and one of Picton-Brown's eyes was winking and blinking. In less than a minute, they had given one another punishment: the bare knuckles taking severe toll. "Scraps" were not uncommon on the Topham Remove: but it was an invariable rule to have the gloves on in a scrap. But in that, as in other matters, the Dandy was a law unto himself. What he chose to do, that he did—and what he chose now was to administer a terrific thrashing to the new fellow who had had the nerve to "pinch" his place in the Form eleven. That, at least, was his intention: but Harry Vane seemed to be giving as good as he received.

"Stop that!" roared Bob, "What's the row about?"

"Didn't you expect a row?" grinned Tom King, "Randy doesn't like a new man in his place, you know."

"Is that it?" Hood's face grew thunderous, "By gum! Vane—Dandy—stop that at once! Pull them apart, you fellows."

Bob Hood laid his strong grasp on Picton-Brown, and fairly wrenched him away from Vane. The Dandy was strong: but Bob was stronger, and he spun away in the grasp of the captain of the Remove. Two or three fellows pushed Vane back.

"Let go!" yelled Picton-Brown. The Dandy's fierce temper was fully roused now: his face crimson, his eyes flaming, "I'm goin' to thrash that rat—."

Bob Hood swung him away, and he staggered against the table, panting. Bob's blue eyes fixed on him with angry scorn.

"You're pitching into Vane because he's put into the eleven, are you?" bawled Bob. "By gum! Are you running this show, Picton-Brown? By gum! I'll let you see who's skipper in the Remove."

"Let him come on, Hood!" panted Harry Vane.

"You shut up!" roared Bob, "This is my business, not yours. Now, Picton-Brown, you've taken it on yourself to punch a man because I've put him into the eleven. I daresay you'd be punching King next, if you had a fancy to keep goal, what? You're going to learn where you get off. I'm running football in the Remove, not you. You're out of the team, and you stay out. And you're going to have a lesson about meddling in what doesn't concern you." Bob glanced round at



the staring juniors, "Collar that cheeky smudge, and put him across the table. Bunny, find me a ruler."

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunny.

"Any man who lays a finger on me—!" panted Picton-Brown.

"Shove him across the table, face down!" roared Bob.

Bob Hood's word was law in the Topham Remove. It was seldom very seldom, that Bob was seen in a rage—but he was in a rage now, his cheeks red and his blue eyes flashing. Five or six fellows rushed to carry out his order: and Randolph Picton-Brown struggled fiercely, but unavailingly, in their hands. King, Didcot, Flynn, Hobbs, and Smithson, grasped him, whirled him off his feet, and slammed him on the big table, face down. He struggled and kicked and panted, but he was held fast.

"Look here, Hood—!" began Caffew, putting in a feeble word for his pal. Bob turned on him fiercely.

"Do you want some of the same?" he roared, "If not, you'd better pack it up, Caffew! Get out of the way."

A shove helped Cyril Caffew out of the way: and he said no more. Bunny Binks rolled up with a ruler in his fat hand.

"Here you are, Bob," he squeaked.

Bob grasped the ruler.

"Now, Picton-Brown, you cheeky rat—!"

"Let me go!" yelled Picton-Brown, struggling frantically.

"Hold him!" said Bob, "Now, Dandy, you're going to have six on the bags—six of the very best. And if that doesn't teach you not to throw your weight about in football matters, you'll get a dozen next time. Hold him!"

Bob Hood swung up the long, heavy ruler. It came down with a terrific swipe on Picton-Brown's elegant trousers. There was a sound like a pistol-shot in the Jungle as it landed. Bob put his beef into that swipe—and he had plenty of beef. Up went the ruler again, and down it came.

Swipe! swipe! swipe! swipe! swipe!

Picton-Brown kicked and struggled and yelled. More than once, the Dandy had had to "bend over" and take "six" from Mr. Carfax's cane. But "six up" from Carfax was nothing to this. It was a record swiping.

"Now let him go!" growled Bob.

Picton-Brown rolled off the table. His face was almost convulsed with fury. But the swiping had taken the vim out of him. He leaned on the table, panting and gasping. Bob Hood gave him a grim glare.

"Now get this clear, Picton-Brown," he said, "You've chosen to kick yourself out of the football team, and that's that. You're not going to pick rows with any man in the team because you don't like it. You're not going to fight Vane. You're going to toe the line. If the fellows choose to elect you form-captain, you can chuck your weight about,—until then, you'll cut it out. Any more cheek from you, and I'll give you a dozen with a fives bat. That's enough for you."

Picton-Brown looked at him—a long look. Then he gave Harry Vane a look—black and bitter. Then, without a word, he went out of the Jungle. Bob threw down the ruler, with a grunt. Harry Vane glanced at him, with a faintly amused smile.

"Coming up to tea?" he asked.

"Eh!" Bob stared, "Oh! Yes! Right-ho!" And they went up to Top Study to tea, the fat Bunny rolling in their wake.

The Jungle was left in a buzz of excitement. Seldom or never had Bob Hood been seen with his "rag" out to such an extent; and never before had the arrogant Dandy gone through such an experience as a

"whopping" at the hands of his form-captain. The general opinion in the Remove was that there would be trouble to follow—especially for the new fellow. But on one point there was no doubt at all—Bob Hood had made it clear who was captain of the Remove: and that he meant business when he put his foot down. Even Randolph Picton-Brown was left in no doubt about that!

## CHAPTER IV.

### ALL RIGHT FOR BUNNY!

**B**UNNY Binks looked this way, and that way, and saw no one. And he grinned with satisfaction, and emerged from No. 3 Study in the Remove, with a parcel under his arm.

Bunny had no business in No. 3 Study, which belonged to Picton-Brown and Caffew. That was why he looked to and fro so cautiously before emerging. Had the Dandy been in the offing, Bunny certainly would not have got away without a kicking,—and certainly not with the parcel under his arm. But no one was to be seen in the Remove passage, and Talbot Howard Binks rolled out, and rolled hurriedly up the passage to Top Study. Once inside that study, Bunny would feel safe—he had left no clue in No. 3, and Picton-Brown would never guess where that big box of chocolates had gone.

It was Tuesday, after class. Most of the Remove men were thinking about the Soccer match of the morrow, when Fourth A were to meet Fourth B, with Harry Vane playing in the place that had once been Picton-Brown's. But the fat Bunny was not thinking about Soccer. Bunny had been thinking of that parcel in Picton-Brown's study ever since he had seen Phipps, the house-porter convey it there. He had waited and watched for an opportunity, and found one. Bunny Binks loved chocs. But the course of true love never did run smooth: Bunny never had all the chocs he wanted. But in the matter of annexing "stickies" Bunny was absolutely without scruple. Nobody's chocs, or toffees, were quite safe from Bunny.

He rolled into Top Study. He expected to find that apartment vacant, having, ten minutes ago, left Bob Hood and Harry Vane downstairs. But Vane seemed to have come up while Bunny was rooting in No. 3—for there he was: and he stared at Bunny as the fat junior rolled in, parcel under arm.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunny, "I didn't know you'd come up, Vane. I say, Carfax wants you in his study old chap."

"Does he?" said Harry, "He didn't mention it when I passed him five minutes ago."

"Oh! I—I mean Hedley—Hedley told me he wanted you. I'd cut off, if I were you—you can't keep the captain of the school waiting."

Harry Vane laughed. It was plain that Talbot Howard Binks wanted to clear him out of Top Study: and he hardly needed telling the reason why.

"Whose parcel is that?" he asked.

"Mine!" hooted Bunny, "Think I've got somebody's chocs here? It's my shoes just come back from being soled and heeled."

"In a chocolate box?" asked Harry.

"Oh!" gasped Bunny. He had wrapped the wrapping-paper round the box again, after investigating the contents of the parcel in No. 3. But he had wrapped it hurriedly and carelessly, and the end of the box was visible to the eye. "Oh! I—I mean—yes—exactly! They—they often send home the shoes in—in chocolate boxes, you know!"

"With another fellow's name on the wrapping-paper?" asked Harry.



"Oh!" repeated Bunny. He had overlooked the name of R. Picton-Brown in plain letters on the paper. "I—I mean—I—I—look here, Vane, you mind your own business, see? Dandy Randy ain't a friend of yours."

"Not at all," agreed Harry, "But you're not pinching his tuck and bringing it to this study. Take it back at once."

"I'll watch it!" exclaimed Bunny, warmly, "Look here, old chap, I'll let you have some of the chocs. They're tip-top, I can tell you—Randy gets no end of good things, always the best. You owe him one, old fellow—look how he pitched into you for pinching his place in the eleven—"

"I've been here only two or three weeks," said Harry, "But in that time I've seen Hood bat you three or four times for grub-raiding in the studies. As Hood's not here now, I'll bat you instead, if you don't take that box of chocs straight back to Picton-Brown's room."

"Shant!" roared Bunny, defiantly. And he turned and rolled out of Top Study with the parcel—not, certainly, to take it back to No. 3. Harry Vane made a stride after him, and grasped him by a fat shoulder.

"This way!" he said, leading Bunny down the passage.

"I—I'm going to the box-room—"

"You're going to Picton-Brown's study!" said Harry, and with the grip of a vice on Bunny's podgy shoulder, he led him in that direction.

"Leggo!" roared Bunny, as they arrived at the door of No. 3, "I tell you—Will you leggo, you swob? I'll hack your shins, you tick. Leggo!"

"Hallo, what's the row?" Two fellows had just come up: Picton-Brown and Caffew, and they entered the Remove passage, as Bunny roared and wriggled in Vane's grasp outside the door of No. 3 Study. Picton-Brown took in the little scene at a glance, and came striding forward, "Let Binks go at once, Vane! Do you hear?"

Harry Vane looked round at him, his eyes gleaming.

Picton-Brown, certainly, had no idea why the new fellow was "handling" Bunny, or that the parcel under Bunny's fat arm was his property. He did not even look at the parcel, or notice it. This was an opportunity to make himself unpleasant to the fellow who had, as he chose to regard it, "pinched" his place in the Remove eleven: and Picton-Brown fairly jumped at it.

"Oh, crikey!" gasped Bunny, at the sight of the owner of the parcel. "I—I say, I—I didn't—I mean I wasn't—"

"Let him go!" said Picton-Brown, in his most bullying tone, "If you're looking for trouble, Vane, pick a fellow of your own size. You won't have far to look. If you fancy you can bully a Remove fellow because he's fat and clumsy—"

Harry Vane flushed crimson. But he burst into a laugh the next moment and dropped his grasp from Bunny's fat shoulder.

"O.K." he said, "Just as you like, Picton-Brown! I'll mind my own business."

Bunny, with a gasp of relief, shot away across the landing to the stairs. Bunny was only anxious to get that parcel away before Picton-Brown noticed it—and recognised it. Bunny's one idea was to get that parcel into a safe place before Picton-Brown missed it and looked for it. The fat junior did the staircase in record time, and rolled out of the House with the parcel under his arm.

Picton-Brown did not heed him. He was not in the least interested in Bunny Binks, except as an excuse for picking trouble with Vane. He gave the new junior a mocking, sneering look. Since Bob Hood had put his foot down in the Jungle on Saturday, the Dandy had steered clear of Vane—the lesson of "six up" had not been lost on

him. But if Vane chose, on his side, to look for trouble, that was a different matter—the Dandy was more than ready.

"You won't find bullyin' pays here, Vane," he said, "You'll let that fat ass alone, see?"

Vane laughed again.

"Quite!" he assented. And to Picton-Brown's surprise, and disappointment, he turned and walked back to Top Study. If Picton-Brown chose to butt in, and give the fat Bunny the chance of getting away with the purloined tuck, that was his own look-out—and the new junior let it go at that. He went back into Top Study and shut the door, leaving Dandy Randy staring and scowling.

## CHAPTER V.

### TRAPPED!

**H**ARRY Vane fairly jumped.

Why Caffew of the Remove did it, he could not begin to guess. He stood bareheaded, staring, while the Dandy's pal raced off with his cap.

It was after dinner on Wednesday, Harry Vane had walked down to the junior ground, where the Form match was to take place that afternoon. Kick-off was not till three. He was strolling back to the House, when Caffew came along, and passed him. To his utter astonishment, Caffew suddenly snatched the cap from his head, and bolted with it. He stood staring blankly.

Caffew was Picton-Brown's pal—more of a toady than a pal, as a matter of fact, his chief regard being for the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. As the Dandy was "down" on the new junior, Caffew was "down" on him also as a matter of course. But why he played such a childish trick as this, worthy only of a fag in the Second Form, was quite a mystery.

"Stop!" shouted Harry, "Give me my cap, you ass."

Caffew, unheeding, ran on. The new junior ran in pursuit. He was a good deal fleet of foot than Picton-Brown's pal, but Caffew had a good start, and he vanished round the school buildings, waving the cap in triumph. Vane put on speed and raced after him, angry, though more surprised than angry.

Caffew glanced back. Vane was close behind him: and, passing the open doorway of a gardener's shed, at a distance from the buildings, Caffew flung the cap into the shed, and ran on. Harry Vane slowed down. He was greatly inclined to keep up the pursuit, and smack Caffew's head for playing such a trick. However, he wanted his cap, and he stopped, and went into the shed to pick it up.

What happened next took him utterly by surprise. He had not supposed that that remote shed was occupied, unless by a lawn-mower, a garden-roller, and other such things. But as he stepped in, and looked round for the cap, a figure suddenly leaped upon him, and before he realised what was happening, he was on his back on the brick floor, with a knee planted on his chest.

"Got the cad!" breathed a voice he knew. He stared up at the face of Randolph Picton-Brown.

It was the Dandy's knee that was planted on his chest, pinning him down. The Dandy grinned down at him unpleasantly.

"You silly ass!" panted Vane, struggling, "Let me get up! What are you playing this mad trick for, you dummy?"

"Guess!" grinned Picton-Brown.

The new junior struggled savagely to rise. On his feet he was at least a match for Picton-Brown. But the Dandy of Topham had him



at a disadvantage now. Grinning savagely, he kept the new junior pinned down, and called out to his pal.

"Caffew! Quick—here—!"

Caffew, grinning, came in, and slammed shut the door of the shed. Then he too grasped the struggling junior.

"Worked like a giddy charm, what?" he chuckled.

"We've got the cad," said Picton-Brown, "Get the cord, quick."

"I've got it here."

"Are you mad?" panted Harry. He exerted all his strength to tear himself loose. Picton-Brown rocked—but he kept him pinned down: and two pairs of hands were too much for Vane. In spite of his fierce resistance, his hands were dragged together, and Caffew knotted the cord round his wrists. Then another length of cord was knotted round his ankles. And then, at last, Picton-Brown rose to his feet, panting for breath.

He stood looking down at the bound junior, with a gloating look. Caffew chuckled breathlessly. Vane, crimson with anger, stared up at them. It was useless to struggle with his bonds: Caffew had tied the knots safely enough.

"Are you mad?" repeated Harry, "What do you mean by this?"

"Think you'll be playing inside right this afternoon?" asked Picton-Brown.

"Wha-a-t?" stammered Harry.

"Prospect doesn't look so good, does it?" asked the Dandy.

Vane understood. Since the scene in the Jungle on Saturday, Randolph Picton-Brown had taken the new state of affairs quietly—very quietly. Fellows who knew that Dandy better than Vane did, knew that he was most dangerous when he was most quiet. But it was all clear to the new junior now—he knew why Caffew had snatched his cap and bolted with it—leading him into the trap already laid. He had run blindly into the trap: and now he was a prisoner in that remote shed—yet even now that he knew the Dandy's intention, he could hardly believe that Picton-Brown was really in earnest.

"You mad fool!" he panted, "Do you think you'll keep me here, and keep me out of the Form match?"

"What's to stop me?" grinned the Dandy.

"You'd be sacked for this, if the Head knew."

"Are you goin' to tell him?" sneered Picton-Brown, "Tell him if you like—I'm not askin' you to keep it dark."

"No! You know I won't! But Hood—you've got to deal with our skipper if you keep one of his men away from a match. Have you thought of that?"

The Dandy snapped his slim fingers, contemptuously.

"That much for Bob Hood!" he said.

Vane stared up at him. He knew now why the Dandy had taken things so quietly and calmly: he had had this in mind. Picton-Brown was not only reckless—he was utterly indifferent to consequences, in following the dictates of his own arrogant temper. Not only Bob Hood, but every man in the eleven, would be furious, when it was known what he had done. Obviously there would be very serious and painful, consequences for the Dandy to face. And he did not care!

"Look here, Picton-Brown." Vane tried to calm himself, "You can't do this! It's a dirty, rotten trick—it's not good enough for Topham! No decent fellow would speak to you afterwards. For goodness sake, chuck it—for your own sake, if not for mine."

Picton-Brown shrugged his shoulders.

"If that's the lot, we'll be pushing off!" he said.

"If you leave me here like this, I'll shout for help!" exclaimed

Vane, savagely, "If you want the whole school to know what you've done—!"

"Will you?" grinned Picton-Brown. "I don't think you'll do a lot of shoutin', my pippin. I fancy you'll be quiet enough. Hold his jaw, Cyril."

"Oh!" gasped Vane, "You—you——urrrrggh!" He struggled, but it was in vain, as his mouth was forced open, and a folded cloth thrust in and tied by a string round his head. Silent now, as well as helpless, he could only stare up at the cool, grinning Dandy, with burning eyes.

"That's that!" drawled Picton-Brown. And without wasting another glance on the prisoner, he lounged out of the shed, followed by Caffew. A key turned in a lock, and was withdrawn. There was a sound of departing feet. And Harry Vane was left alone—to lie there, a helpless prisoner, while the Form match was played without him.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MAN MISSING!

"SEEN Vane?"

"No!"

"Where the dickens has he got to?" growled Bob Hood.

Fourth A and Fourth B were in the changing-room, getting ready for the Form match. It was a quarter to three, and kick-off was at three o'clock. Why Harry Vane had not turned up with the rest, nobody knew—unless it was Randolph Picton-Brown, who was lounging with his hands in his pockets. Other fellows, as well as the footballers, were in the changing-room—Picton-Brown among them. Bob Hood gave no heed to the discarded winger: he was wondering why Vane did not turn up. He was not likely to guess!

The minutes passed, as the juniors changed for football. Still Harry Vane did not appear. Bob Hood stepped to the window and looked out. He saw nothing of Vane: but he called to a fat junior who had come out of the House.

"Here, Bunny——seen Vane?"

"No!" squeaked Bunny, over a fat shoulder.

"Cut up to the study and see if he is there."

"He ain't—I've just come down from the study."

"Well, look for him—! Do you hear?" roared Bob, as the fat Bunny rolled on, and disappeared round the buildings. Bunny, apparently, had business of his own on hand that afternoon, and was not disposed to waste time looking for Vane.

Bob turned from the window with a grunt.

"Five minutes to!" said Didcot, "Look here, if the silly ass doesn't turn up, you'll have to play another man, Bob."

Bob grunted again. He was surprised and irritated, utterly unable to account for the new man's absence. Randolph Picton-Brown was watching him, covertly, with a faint smile on his handsome face.

Tunstall and his men, of the Upper Fourth, streamed out of the changing-room. All the Remove men fixed their eyes on Bob Hood. It was a matter of minutes now, and if Vane did not come—!

"What on earth can have become of the fellow!" muttered Bob, "He can't have gone out and forgotten the match, I suppose."

"Sure he's not here," said Flynn, "and we can't wait for the silly spalpeen."

"Look here, he's not coming," said Tom King, "We can't keep Fourth B waiting, Bob. Vane's not here—and the Dandy is!"

Picton-Brown's eyes glimmered. That was what he was expecting,



and waiting for. Vane was absent: the old winger was available: the Dandy was going to play in his old place. Picton-Brown had banked on that as a certainty. Perhaps he had banked, too, on his brilliant play, and victory over the Upper Fourth, helping to see him through, when the time came to face the music for what he had done. But he had counted without the grim determination of Bob Hood's character, which was inflexible, under all his easy-going good-nature. The captain of the Remove did not even glance at Picton-Brown.

"You'll have to play another man, Hood!" urged Hobbs.

"I know that!" grunted Bob. And he cast his eye over fellows in the changing-room—but he did not look at Randolph Picton-Brown. The Dandy of Topham drew a deep breath.

"I'm ready if you want me, Hood!" he said, quietly.

"I don't want you!" answered Bob, gruffly.

"You want a man—!" breathed the Dandy.

"Oh, cut it out!" snapped Bob, "I told you last Saturday that if you cut games-practice to go blagging, you were out of the team. Well, you're out! That's that."

"Look here, Hood—!" exclaimed Didcot. "The Dandy's our best man—."

Bob stared at him.

"Are you the captain of the Remove?" he demanded.

"No, you ass. But—."

"Then pack it up!" growled Bob, "When you're skipper, Didders, you can take back-chat from a cheeky fool, if you like—I won't! Here, Smithson, you get into your things—you're wanted."

"You won't have to ask me twice!" chirruped Smithson. His jacket was off, before he had finished speaking: then his shoes flew.

"Hood!" Dandy Randy's voice was thick with rage, "You're goin' to leave me out, and play a dud like Smithers—."

"I'm going to play a man I can trust!" growled Bob, "How often do you need telling that you're not in this team, Picton-Brown?"

The Dandy of Topham stood looking at him, in savage silence, for a moment. Then, driving his hands deep into his pockets, he tramped out of the changing-room—leaving Bob frowning, the other fellows looking dubious, and the happy Smithson bolting into his football rig at express speed.

## CHAPTER VII.

### BUNNY COMES IN USEFUL!

"OH, blow!"

Harry Vane gave a sudden start.

He had lain on the brick floor of the shed, a helpless prisoner, for nearly an hour. At first he had striven, fiercely, almost madly, to unloosen the cords on his limbs, and eject the gag from his mouth. But he had failed to accomplish either: the Dandy and Caffew had been too careful for that. Then he lay, spent with his efforts, while the minutes passed—wondering what Bob Hood was thinking of his absence: too miserable even to feel enraged. It had been such an unexpected chance—and he had looked forward to it keenly, determined to play the game of his life, to justify his place in the eleven, and make old Bob glad that he had picked him out. And now——!

The minutes dragged by. He heard the half-hour chime from the distant clock-tower: and then the three-quarters. Next time he heard the clock strike, it would be three: and the game would be beginning on the junior ground. What were the fellows thinking of him—what

was Bob thinking? He writhed helplessly in his bonds, as the minutes passed. If somebody would only come—but no one was likely to come to that remote shed: the Dandy must have picked it out because he knew that: he would not take chances. No one would come—no one, till the match was over, when no doubt they would come and release him—after he had failed the skipper who had picked him out to play.

And then, suddenly, he heard a sound of shuffling footsteps outside the shed. Someone was passing—and he would have given all he had to call out—but he could not utter a sound. And then, to his delight, the footsteps stopped at the door. It was not yet three—the clock had not yet struck the hour. If somebody, after all, was coming to the shed—

The door rattled. Vane remembered that Picton-Brown had locked the door and taken away the key. Would whoever it was pass on—not being able to enter? It was sheer anguish to lie there, silent, helpless, while a hand fumbled with the locked door outside. Then, to his utter amazement, he heard a fat familiar voice ejaculate "Oh, blow!"

What could imaginably have brought Bunny Binks to that remote shed, was an utter mystery to Harry Vane. But it was Bunny. If only he could have uttered a sound—!

"Blow! The beastly door's locked! Where's the key, then? Where's the beastly key! Oh, blow!"

Bunny, evidently, was surprised and annoyed. Why Bunny wanted to get into that shed, Vane could not begin to guess. But plainly he did.

He listened. Bunny gave the door an irritated kick, and moved round the little building. Vane heard him stop at the window. The window was an open space, covered by a wooden shutter, which was merely latched. Was Bunny coming in at the window? Harry Vane could hardly believe in such good luck—but Bunny was!

There was a creak of wood, and the shutter swung open, the sunlight streaming into the dusky interior of the shed. A fat face and a fat head appeared in the aperture. There was a grunt, as Bunny clambered in. Bunny was not good at climbing. But evidently he had a powerful reason for wanting to get into that shed, for he exerted himself, and clambered in. It was like Bunny to slip and lose hold, and land on the brick floor with a bump.

"Oooooooooogh!" spluttered Bunny.

He picked himself up, spluttering. Vane's eager eyes were on him—but his eyes were not on Vane. It was dusky in the shed, after the sunshine—and Bunny did not notice the figure that lay on the brick floor. He plunged across the shed without even seeing Vane, to a pile of faggots at the back. He stooped, thrust a fat hand under the faggots, and to Vane's utter amazement, drew out a large cardboard box. The next moment, the box was open, and the fat hand was grabbing chocolates: and there was a sound of mumbling and guzzling as Bunny disposed of them.

Then Harry Vane understood. He had utterly forgotten the incident of the box of chocolates Bunny had raided from the Dandy's study the day before. Bunny had dodged out of the House with his plunder, and Vane, if he had thought of it, would have guessed that the fat junior had parked it in some safe spot, out of the ken of its owner—to visit and revisit so long as that ample supply of chocolates lasted. It was in that shed that Bunny had parked it—and here he was, greedily devouring chocolates, utterly unconscious of the bound schoolboy who lay within a couple of yards!

But he did not remain long unconscious of him. Vane could not speak, and he could not rise to his feet—but he could roll over on



the floor, and he rolled over towards Bunny. At the sound of his movement, Talbot Howard Binks gave a jump, and stared round.

"Oooooogh!" gasped Bunny.

Bunny's eyes almost popped from his fat face at the sight of Vane. He stared at him, blinked at him, goggled at him.

"Whaaa-t—!" stuttered Bunny, "I—I say, is—is that Vane? Oh, crikey! I say, these ain't Picton-Brown's chocs! I never hid them here, you know. Besides, I had to hide them somewhere, when you kicked up a row in the study—I—I—I mean to say, these ain't the Dandy's chocs at all——."

Then it dawned upon Bunny that Vane was tied hand and foot, and could not speak, and Bunny almost fell down in his astonishment. Harry Vane's look was eloquent—as eloquent as words could have been. Staying only to cram one more chocolate into his capacious mouth, Bunny came across to him.

"Oh, crikey! How did you get like this, Vane? Bob asked me if I'd seen you—he, he, he! I say, how did it happen?"

Bunny's fat brain did not work quickly! Still, it did work! He stooped over Vane at last, untied the string, and jerked the gag from his mouth. Vane gasped.

"Get me loose, Bunny! Quick! Got a pocket-knife? There's one in my pocket! Get it out—get me loose——"

"O.K." said Bunny, "But look here, first of all, you ain't going to make a row again about these chocs? Honest Injun?"

"Yes, you fat ass—No! No! Get me loose! I've got to get to the football—get me loose!" panted Vane.

"Oh, all right! Wait a tick till I get another choc."

Another choc having been crammed into Bunny's mouth—first things came first of course!—the fat junior set to work with the pocket-knife. He sawed at the cord knotted round Vane's wrists, and in hardly more than three times as long as any other fellow would have taken, cut it through.

The moment his hands were loose, Harry Vane snatched the knife from Bunny's fat hand, and slashed at the cord round his ankles. Then he leaped to his feet. Bunny rolled back to the chocolate-box.

"I say, old chap, who fixed you up like that?" he squeaked, "I say, Bob was looking savage—you've let him down! I say, who——?"

Harry Vane did not stop to answer Bunny's questions. Any second now might come the stroke of three, and he would be too late. He was stiff and numbed, but he was hardly aware of it, as he bounded to the window. Bunny watched him with staring eyes, as he plunged through the window, and disappeared.

"Oh, crikey!" ejaculated Bunny.

And he turned his attention to the chocolate box again. There was still a good supply of chocs in that box: more than even Bunny could dispose of at a sitting. But Bunny did his best—and it was a happy, sticky, shiny Bunny that sat bolting chocolates, while Harry Vane raced away for the changing-room at desperate speed, his feet seeming hardly to touch the ground as he ran.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GOALS FOR THE REMOVE!

"**O**H!" gasped Bob Hood.

He staggered.

It was just on three. Tunstall and his men were on the ground: Brav of the Fifth, the referee, was there: and only one more minute remained before three would boom out from the clock-tower.

And Bob, with a frown on his rugged face, was leading his men out at the doorway of the changing-room, when a figure suddenly bolted in—crashing right into the captain of the Remove and sending him spinning at the other footballers.

Harry Vane too staggered from the shock. He caught hold of the door-post, panting. Bob Hood caught hold of Didcot and King, and nearly dragged them down. Then he righted himself, and glared at the late-comer.

"Vane! You mad ass—!" he spluttered.

"Oh! Sorry!" gasped Vane, "I—I—I was in a hurry. I was afraid I was late—I—."

"And you are late!" growled Bob, "Charging in at the last minute like a mad bull doesn't alter that! You're late—too late! Your place is filled."

"But look here—!" panted Vane.

"Like us to hang about and keep Fourth B waiting, while you change because you couldn't turn up on time?" roared Bob, "If that's the idea, think again. Come on you men—we're late already."

Harry Vane caught him by the arm, as he started through the doorway. Bob Hood, generally the best-tempered fellow at Topham School, was plainly not in a good temper now. He shook his arm angrily.

"Get away!" he snapped.

"I tell you, I couldn't help it!" panted Vane, "I've only just got away—I've been prevented from turning up, Bob—kept away—"

"What rot! How could you be kept away?" snapped the captain of the Remove, "What the thump do you mean?" But he paused.

"I was tricked into going round to the gardener's shed—and they nailed me there, got me down and tied me up!" panted Vane.

"What?" yelled Bob.

"Picton-Brown and Caffew—I hadn't a chance! If Bunny hadn't barged in by accident, I should still be there now!" Vane panted breathlessly, "I couldn't help it, Hood—you can't think I'd let you down if I could help it—I was tricked—trapped—tied up like a turkey—I've only just got away—"

Bob stared at him, almost stupified. There was a buzz of amazement in the crowd in the changing-room. From the clock-tower came the first stroke of three. Bob started as he heard it.

"Time!" he exclaimed, "But—but if it's as you say, Vane—you play! Smithers, old chap, it can't be helped—Vane's here, and—"

Albert Smithson made a grimace.

"O.K." he said, "I'll stand round and cheer your goals, Vane—if you get any."

"Get into your things, Vane," rapped Bob, "Sharp's the word. Didders, cut down to the ground and tell them we're coming. By gum!" Bob Hood's brow was black as thunder. "So that was the Dandy's game, was it—and he was here, ready to fill the place—the rotter—the rascal—the scheming toad! By gum! Keeping a man away from a football match!" Bob clenched his hands. "That's the limit—even for Dandy Randy! By gum, he will learn that it won't do for Topham."

Harry Vane did not speak—he was breathless after his desperate race against time: but he was changing at lightning speed. There was a buzz among the footballers: and it was, perhaps, as well for Dandy Randy, that he was no longer on the scene, now that the Remove men knew what had delayed the latest recruit to the eleven. Many a time had Dandy Randy, in his lofty arrogance, gone near the limit: this time he had gone over it: and the excited voices on all sides told that he had had trouble to expect—after the match. But Tunstall and



His men were waiting, and Dandy Randy had to be left for the present.

Vane's change was through in record time, and he left the changing-room with the rest of the team. He was breathing quickly, and Bob Hood gave him rather an anxious glance.

"Feeling fit, after what you've had?" he asked.

"Fit as a fiddle," answered Harry, cheerily, "I was a bit stiff, after being tied up—but it's passed off. Right as rain."

"Good man!" said Bob.

The Remove footballers were losing no time now. They were lined up only five minutes late for the kick-off. A good many fellows gathered round the field, curious to see how the new man would shape in the place of the absent Dandy. Bob Hood, from his place at centre-half, gave Vane a last look, and was satisfied; the new junior looked, as he felt, at the top of his form. And that he was, as he had said, as fit as a fiddle, was soon proved, when Bray blew the whistle, and the ball rolled. The Fourth B forwards got away with a rush, but the Remove centre-half drove the ball to the right wing, and Vane was on it like a shot. In a split second he was racing the ball up the field: and as the Fourth B backs rushed him down, he centred to Didcot, and "Didders" rushed it on. It went out to the left wing as Didcot was tackled, and Flynn spun it back to the right wing as he went down under a charge, and Vane had it again.

"Oh, good man, good man!" roared Bob Hood, in delight, as Vane ran in and kicked: beating the Upper Fourth goalie, who jumped at it a second too late, and landing the leather in the net.

"Goal!"

"Good man, Vane! Goal!"

Bob Hood rushed up to his new recruit, as the whistle rang out, and thumped him on the shoulder—with a thump that made his winger stagger.

"Good man!" gasped Bob, "Keep it up! We shan't miss Dandy Randy at this rate! Keep it up, old man."

Harry Vane laughed breathlessly. The sides lined up again: the Removites merry and bright: the Upper Fourth glancing curiously at the new junior, who had not played in a match before, and who had captured a goal in the first five minutes of the game. From that moment Tunstall and Co., paid Harry Vane the compliment of marking him very specially.

The game went on, the crowd of juniors thickening round the field, and some of the seniors too coming to look on. The news spread that a new man in the Remove was playing in a style that equalled even the Dandy, if it did not beat him: and fellows who had been rather dubious about Bob's wisdom in playing the new man at all, now had to admit that after all the captain of the Remove knew what he was about. Even Hedley of the Sixth, the captain of Topham, did the Fourths the honour to stroll down to the ground and give them the once-over: and the great man was heard to remark, to another Sixth-Form man, that the Remove had a prize-packet in that new kid! And the other Sixth-Form man replied that the kid really was worth watching!

And that was true: for Harry Vane was a born footballer, and he was going strong all the time: enjoying every minute of a hard and strenuous game. The next goal came to Fourth B, Tunstall putting in a shot that beat Tom King, good man as he was: but within a few minutes, the Remove were up the field again, and Didcot scored from a pass from inside right. Then the game went on ding-dong till half-time: the Remove two to one when the whistle went.

In the second half, there was a roar from the crowd, as the ball

went in again from Harry Vane's foot: a roar that made a suited fellow who was smoking cigarettes in No. 3 Study step to his window, to see what the hullabaloo was about. And Randolph Picton-Brown stared blankly, with unbelieving eyes, at what he saw.

He wondered for a minute, whether his eyes deceived him. Was that Harry Vane—Vane whom he had left tied up in the shed—Vane, whom he had kept out of the match—Vane, the rival with whom he had dealt with utter unscrupulousness—was it Vane, handsome and flushed, among the footballers? It was—and the brow of the Dandy grew black as thunder as he watched. Somehow—he could not guess how—the fellow had got free—the treacherous scheme had been defeated—and there he was—playing for the Remove—a winning game. From the distance the roar from the field reached the Dandy's ears:

"Goal! Good man, Vane! Bravo! Goal!"

Dandy Randy bit his lip till it spurted red. He forgot his cigarettes—he stood at the study window, watching the distant game, with burning eyes, as it wore on to the finish. And when the final whistle went, and the Remove came off winners by three goals to one, he watched them, as they headed for the changing-room: Harry Vane, looking fresh as paint after a gruelling match, walking as if he were walking on air—utterly oblivious of the dark face that stared blackly at him from the study window.

Randolph Picton-Brown drew a deep, deep breath. He had to face the music—it would not be long in coming—and all for nothing—nothing but to see his rival play a winning game for the Remove! And that that was exactly what he deserved was no consolation whatever to the Dandy of Topham.

THE END.

**BOYS!!**

ALWAYS TRY TO GET THE

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**SERIES**

ALL WRITTEN BY

**FRANK RICHARDS**

AUTHOR OF

**BILLY BUNTER**