

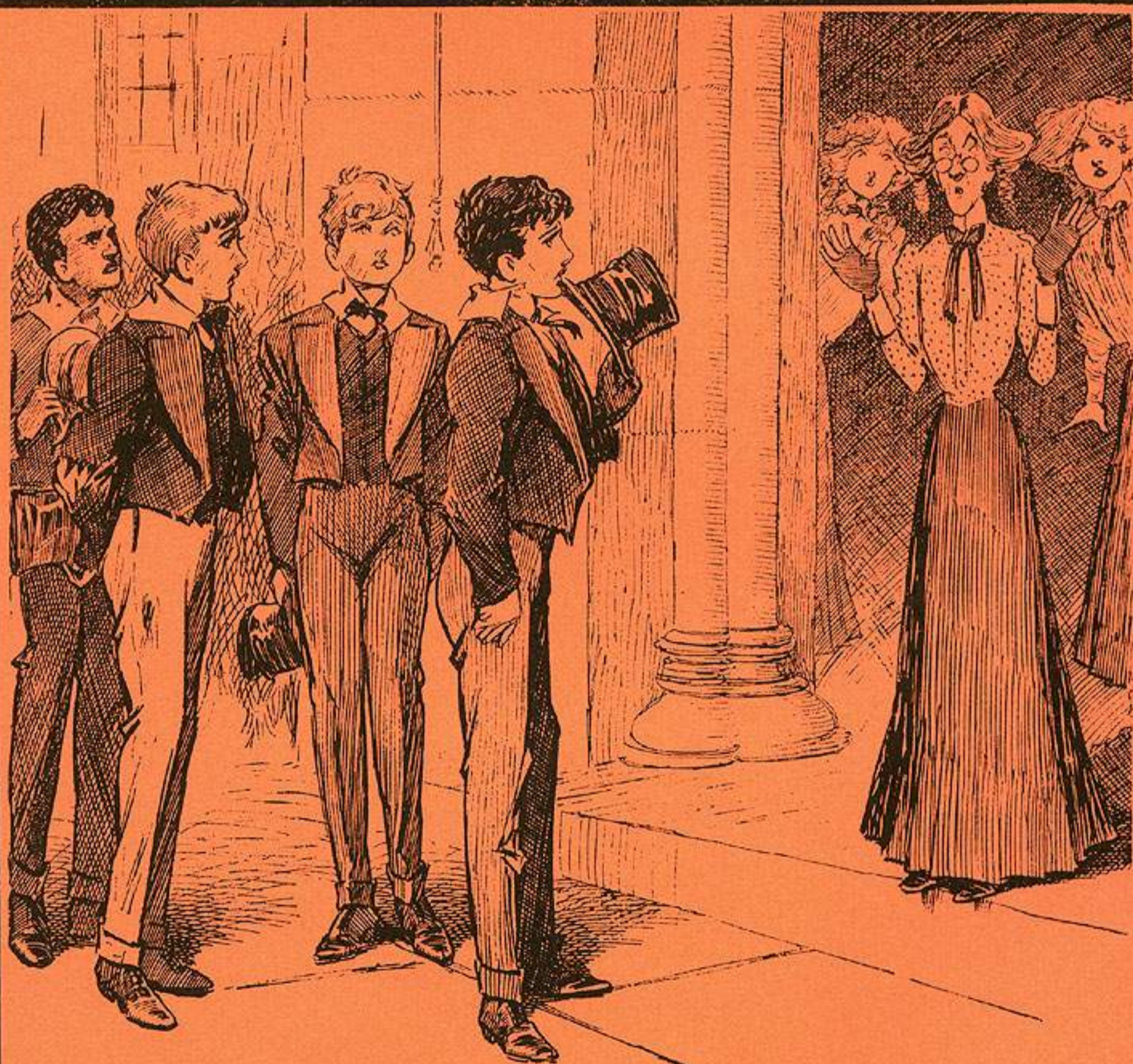
SPLENDID LONG, SCHOOL-CRICKET STORY.



No. 131 |

Grand, Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.

| Vol. 4.



"Unfortunate youths," said Miss Penelope Primrose, "I am afraid you have been fighting, to judge by your looks. I am sorry to see this. The evils of poverty can be borne very much more easily when there is love in our hearts!" Harry Wharton & Co. stood crimson. Miss Primrose evidently did not recognise them, for she spoke as though the juniors were vagrants begging their way.



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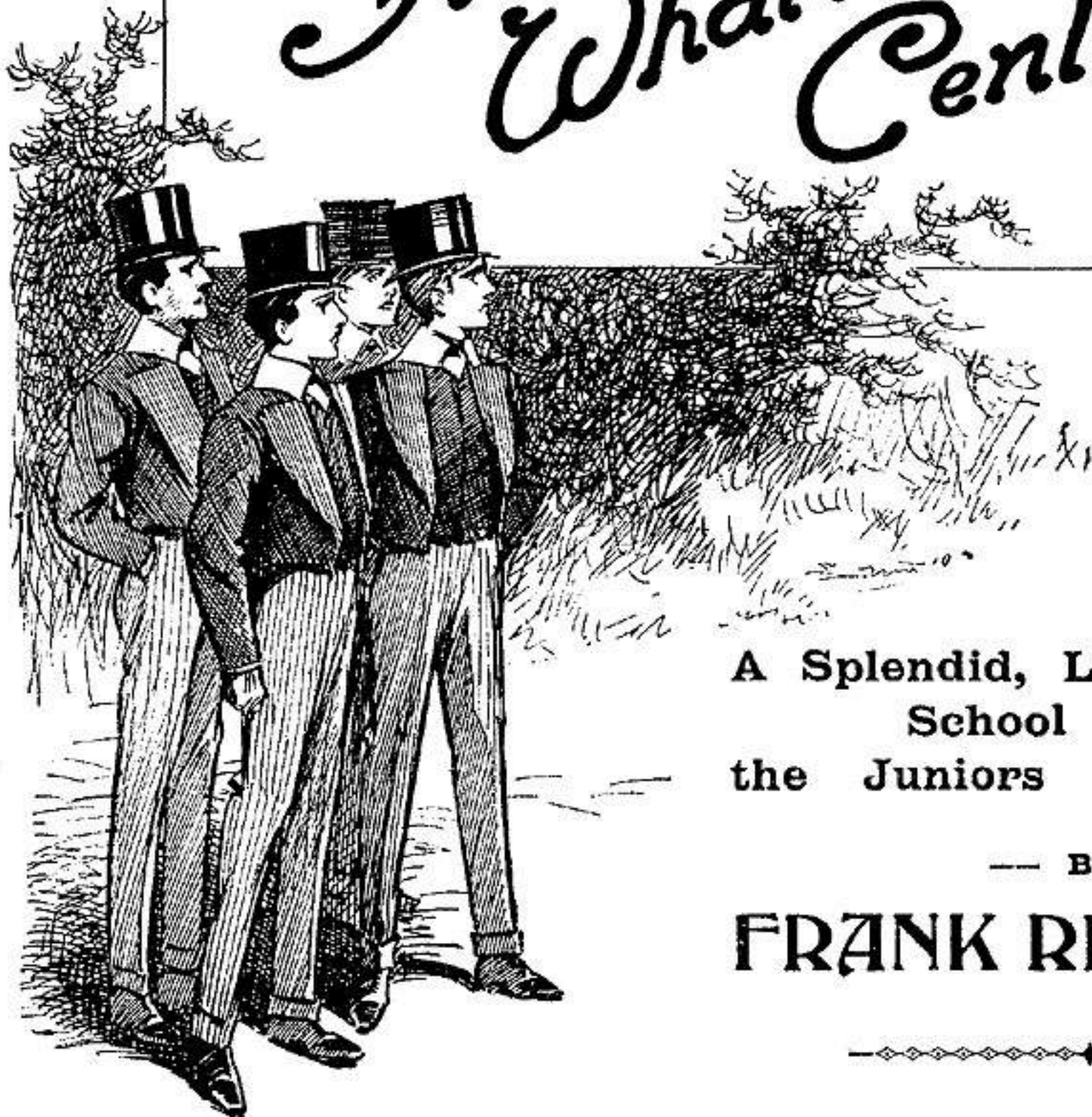
NEXT
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"ALONZO'S PLOT." A Splendid, Complete, School Tale
of Harry Wharton & Co.



The Editor will be obliged if you will hand this book, when finished with, to a friend.

Harry Wharton's Century



A Splendid, Long, Complete
School Tale of
the Juniors of Greyfriars.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER, The Lambs.

"HALT!"

Harry Wharton and his chums halted, in sheer surprise.

They were coming down the lane from Greyfriars to the village of Pegg, with the intention of paying a visit to their friends at Cliff House—the girls' school presided

over by Miss Penelope Primrose. That they were going to visit Marjorie & Co. might have been guessed, by anyone that knew them, from the state of their attire. The four juniors of Greyfriars all wore shining silk topers, and had their neckties tied quite straight—even Bob Cherry's necktie being perfectly in order, a matter to cause surprise to any of his acquaintances.

Frank Nugent, too, had a rose in his buttonhole, which

was most likely to pass later into the possession of Miss Clara. And Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, wore an even more expansive smile than usual.

The four juniors of the Greyfriars Remove were looking, and feeling, very nice and select, and quite in order to take tea with their lady friends at Cliff House; and at that moment—contrary to habit—they were desirous of avoiding rows of any kind.

At any other time they were ready—perhaps a little too ready—for a scrimmage with the Upper Fourth fellows at Greyfriars, or with the Boy Scouts of Pegg, or with any other youths who might come along looking for trouble.

But just now they were very peaceably inclined. They did not want to arrive at Cliff House with their hats knocked in, and dark shades round their eyes, and the claret dripping from damaged noses.

But it is sometimes at the most quiet and peaceable moments that trouble falls upon us, like a bolt from the blue; and so it was in this case.

At the cry of "Halt!" the chums of Greyfriars halted, amazed.

It sounded like the stern challenge of a highwayman of olden times; but as there were hardly likely to be highwaymen in Pegg Lane, the juniors concluded at once that it was a jape.

They stopped and stared about them.

The call had come from one of the high hedges bordering the road, but not a soul was in sight. In an adjoining field a cow was gently browsing, but no other living creature could be seen.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Where are you?"

There was no reply.

Not a twig stirred.

"It's some silly ass larking!" said Nugent. "Let's get on!"

"Some of the Pegg chaps, perhaps," said Harry Wharton. "I hear that Pegg is very full of visitors just at present, too. It may be some seaside bounder."

"Very likely!"

"The likefulness is terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur, in his peculiar English.

And the chums of the Remove walked on.

Immediately, from the high hedge, came a warning shout. "Halt!"

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

"Who's that playing the giddy goat?" he called out, without stopping. "Come out and show yourself!"

"Halt!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry.

"And many of 'em!" added Nugent.

There was a rustle in the hedge, and three or four fellows sprang out into view. They were followed by several more. The chums of Greyfriars halted. They had no choice in the matter, because the new-comers blocked up the lane in front of them.

Harry Wharton looked at them curiously.

They were fellows ranging in age from fifteen to eighteen, somewhat loudly dressed, with straw hats on the backs of their heads, and mostly with cigarettes in their mouths, in spite of their youth.

They had a rollicking, devil-may-care look about them, which they evidently cultivated for effect.

In short, they plainly belonged to a class of visitors who had of late begun to invade the village of Pegg very thickly, and whom Harry Wharton had characterised as "seaside bounders."

The leader was a loose-jointed fellow of about eighteen, who stood a head taller than Harry Wharton. He wore a blazer and a loose tie, and wore a straw hat like the rest, cocked at a still more rakish angle. His face was not unprepossessing, and there was a gleam of humour in his eyes; but to judge by his looks, and those of his companions, their humour was not likely to agree exactly with Harry Wharton & Co.

He held up his hand to the juniors to stop; a somewhat soiled hand, and quite innocent of a glove.

"Halt!" he said dramatically.

"Oh, rats!" said Harry impatiently. "What's the game?"

"Youth!"

"Oh, come off!" said Harry. "What are you playing the giddy goat for?"

The bounders burst into a laugh, and the tall fellow grew red.

"Knock his 'at over his eyes, Bunny," said one of them.

Bunny made a movement, as if to do so, and Harry Wharton drew back.

"Look here," he said, "we're not looking for a row. But —"

Bunny grinned at his companions, and made a sign. Immediately the whole crew burst into a sort of chanting chorus.

"They're not looking for a row! But——"

"Look here, don't play the giddy ox!" exclaimed Harry angrily.

The chorus burst out again.

"Look here, don't play the giddy ox!"

The Greyfriars juniors were red with wrath. Had the numbers of the enemy been equal, they would have charged them, reckless of the result to their nice ties and silk hats.

But there were seven or eight of the bounders.

"Who are you?" exclaimed Nugent.

Bunny grinned.

"We're the Lambs," he said.

"The what?"

"Lambs!"

The juniors stared at them.

"Lorrell's Lambs!" explained Bunny. "Haven't you heard of them? Where were you brought up? Haven't you ever been to Margate, or Yarmouth, or Southend? My dear young person, you haven't lived! Give 'em a yell, Lambs!"

"Baa-baa-baa!" yelled the Lambs.

"We are running this place," said Bunny, if that was his name, with a wave of the hand that included the whole fishing village and the district. "There are dozens of us, and we're at the Anchor. We always run a place when we get to it. We are out for scalps, you know. Now, who are you?"

"Mind your own business!" said Harry.

"Who are you?" repeated Bunny serenely. "Give an account of yourself."

"You ass——"

"We belong to Greyfriars," said Nugent, thinking it best to get out of the affair with words only if possible.

"And what is that?"

"A school, ass!"

"Oh! Gentlemen, these are innocent schoolboys, out for a lark," said Bunny, turning to the waiting Lambs.

"Baa-baa!" said the Lambs in chorus.

"And where are you going?" asked Bunny, in honeyed tones.

"We're going to Pegg."

Bunny shook his head.

"No, upon the whole we can't allow you on the front," he said.

"You ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Look here, we're going to Cliff House, and if we were not bound to show up pretty decent there, we'd wade in and wipe up the ground with you. Get out of the way!"

"Baa-baa!" said the Lambs.

"Cliff House!" grinned Bunny. "That's the girls' school—hey?"

"Yes."

"Then you shall go. We'll take you!"

"Baa-baa!" yelled the Lambs, in delight.

"Don't play the giddy ox!" said Harry, frowning. "Let us pass!"

"We're going to take you to Cliff House, and deliver you there, this side up with care!" said Bunny solemnly.

"Don't be an ass! Get out!"

"Gentlemen——"

"Will you let us pass?"

"Collar them!"

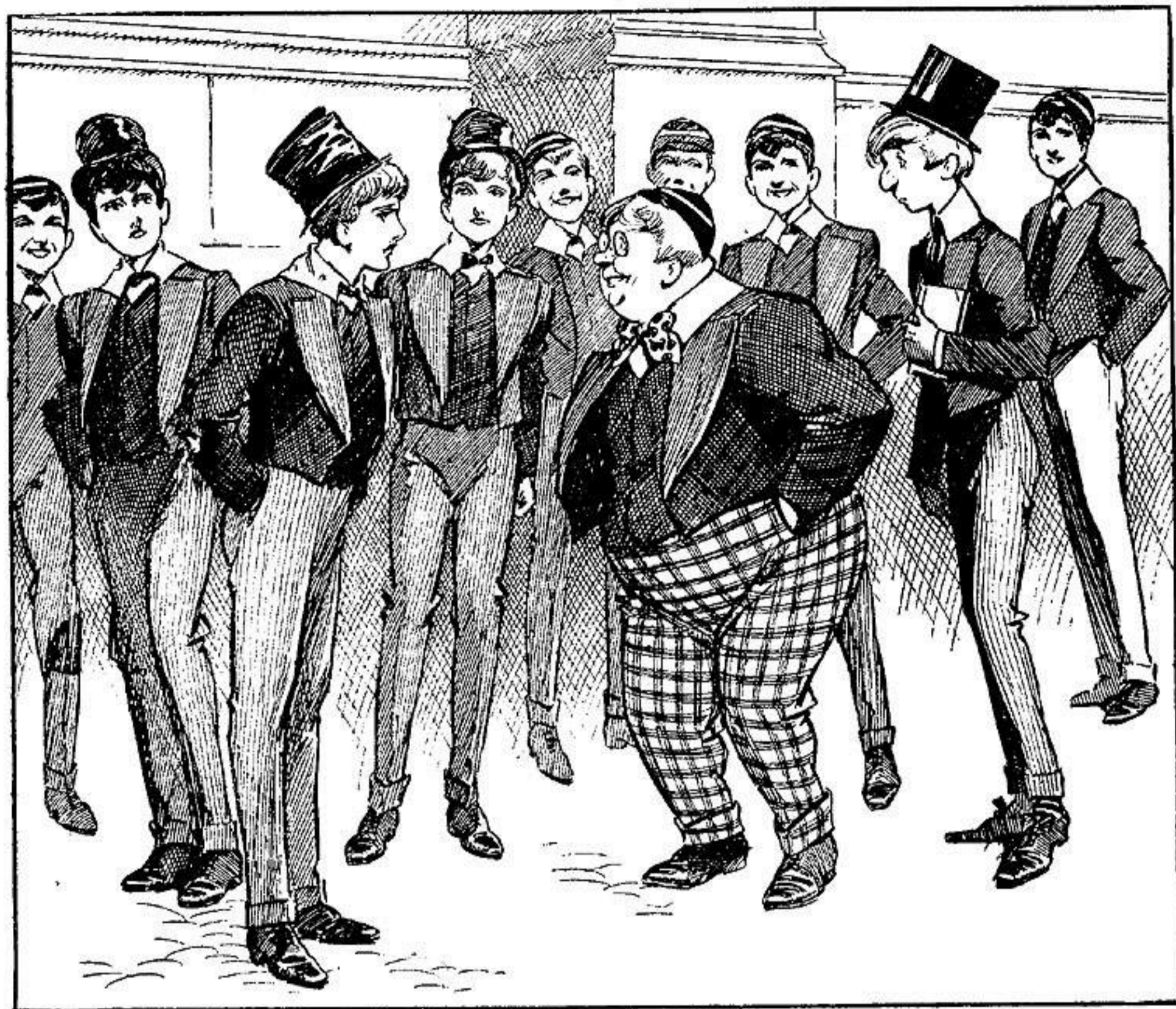
The Lambs made a rush, and the Greyfriars juniors stood shoulder to shoulder and met them; and in a moment more the two parties were mingled in a wild and whirling fight.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Taken to Tea.

LORRELL'S Lambs, although Harry Wharton & Co. knew nothing of them, were not otherwise unknown. At many a seaside place they had made their mark. As a rule, their visits and their curious little manners and customs were confined to places like Margate, Yarmouth, Southend-on-Sea, or Blackpool. But this summer they had evidently come further afield; perhaps sighing, like Alexander, for fresh worlds to conquer. They were for the most part good-natured fellows enough, though not over-gifted with sense; and after weeks of hard work in City or workshop, they fairly let themselves go on their holidays.

Lorrell's Lambs had a reputation—and they did their best to live up to it. To parade a street arm-in-arm, taking up all the pavement and forcing unoffending passengers into the road, to interrupt Salvation Army meetings by yelling



"Well of all the guys!" exclaimed Bunter, looking at Harry Wharton & Co. "You had better stay indoors until you can learn to take care of yourselves. Nice disgrace this is for Greyfriars. Yah!"

out in a tuneless chorus, to snatch caps from the heads of strangers and hurl them far, to pass remarks upon people in a curious chant sung in unison—such were among the amusements of the Lambs—amusements not particularly harmful in themselves, but certainly not calculated to make them popular.

But the choice spirits of the Lambs had "run up against" something unusually tough in Harry Wharton & Co.

They had been out for fun—what they regarded as fun—and the ragging of a party of schoolboys in their best clothes seemed to the Lambs a particularly attractive sort of fun.

It did not seem so attractive when the Greyfriars juniors began to hit.

The juniors were in no mood for practical jokes just then, and when the Lambs rushed upon them, they greeted the seashiders with scientific hitting.

Bunny, head taller than Wharton as he was, went down before his fists like grass before the mower, stretched on his back by a powerful upper-cut.

Three or four more of the Lambs were knocked flying.

Had the numbers been equal, there was no doubt that the victory would have rested with the heroes of the Greyfriars Remove, and that the Lambs would have fled in ignominious disgrace.

But the odds were great.

With three of the Lambs rolling blindly in the dust, the juniors still had a foe each to tackle. And before they could dispose of them, the fallen Lambs were up again, and renewing the conflict.

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WEEK:

"ALONZO'S PLOT."

"Sock it to 'em!" panted Bob Cherry.

"Knock 'em out!"

"Go for 'em!" roared Bunny. "Ow!"

Bunny dropped again with hard knuckles in his eye. But the odds were telling.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was on his back in the dust, with a Lamb sitting on his chest, and keeping him there in spite of his struggles.

Nugent was being borne into the grass beside the road, with two Lambs clinging to him, and getting rapidly the worst of it.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry stood back to back, with three or four Lambs hard at them, and both were showing signs of wear and tear.

The silk hats were all on the ground, and had been trampled upon, and had lost all semblance to hats.

The natty attire of the Greyfriars juniors was sadly disarrayed.

Collars were torn out, neckties fluttering, jackets ripped, trousers baggy and dusty, boots trampled and scratched.

The Lambs were suffering quite as much, but they stuck gamely to the attack, and the odds triumphed at last.

Harry Wharton went down, and two Lambs scrambled over him, and kept him on his back by sheer weight.

"Keep him down, Ikey!" gasped Bunny. "Sit on his head, 'Erbert!"

"What-ho!" chuckled 'Erbert.

"You bet!" said Ikey.

Bunny hurled himself afresh upon Bob Cherry. Bob was

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS

already in the grasp of two Lambs. The sturdy junior went down.

The Greyfriars party were all down now, and the Lambs were sitting on them. Bunny rubbed a spout of red from his nose, and grinned—a little sideways, for his face was badly knocked about.

"My only 'at!" he ejaculated. "Troublesome little beasts! Fancy four kiddlets giving us all that trouble!"

"Only fancy!" said 'Erbert.

"Squash 'em, now we've got 'em!" growled another of the Lambs, a short, thick-set fellow, who was nursing a black eye very tenderly.

Bunny shook his head.

"No, play the game," he said. "That's the motto of Lorrell's Lambs; play the game. Never hit a chap when he's down."

"But—"

"Shut up, Boxer!"

"Look here—"

"Cheese it! Hold the young ruffians while I tie their hands!" said Bunny.

Harry Wharton struggled.

"Chuck it!" he exclaimed. "How dare you tie our hands? We'll squash you for this some time."

"We'll risk that," grinned Bunny. "If you ever want to find us, we're staying at the Anchor Inn, in Pegg, and we shall be there for a week."

"What-ho!" said Ikey.

"Look here," gasped Harry. "If you like to fight us fairly, man to man, we'll undertake to lick you hollow any day; but—"

"Silence, the prisoners!" said Bunny.

And he coolly proceeded from one prisoner to another, and tied their wrists together with string.

Then the dusty and rumpled juniors were allowed to rise.

The Lambs stood round them in a circle, grinning.

"Look pretty, don't they?" chuckled Bunny. "I've heard that you fellows from Greyfriars carry things with a high hand round these parts. I consider it the bounden duty of the Lambs to take you all down a peg or two."

"Baa-baa!" said the Lambs in chorus.

"This is a beginning," said the leader. "Now, I think you said you were going to Cliff House?"

"We don't want to go in this state," said Harry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're going, all the same," said Bunny cheerfully.

"We'll escort you. Walk!"

"Rats!"

"Get a move on!"

"We won't!"

"Not a step!"

"The refusefulness is terrific."

"Hallo, Snowball! What have you got to say?"

The Nabob of Bhanipur glared indignantly at the speaker. "If my esteemed hands were free, I would reply with the fistful punch," he said. "As it is, I can only exclaim that the scorn and despisefulness are terrific."

"Walk, you bounders!"

"Rats!"

"Kick 'em along!" said Boxer, who seemed to be rather given to suggesting drastic measures.

"Hold on!" said Bunny. "Now walk, my dears—"

"Go and eat coke!"

Bunny looked reflective.

He clearly did not want to hurt his prisoners while they were tied up, but at the same time he was determined to carry them to Cliff House. The sight of the girls' faces when they received their visitors would be worth a fortune, in the estimation of the worthy leader of the Lambs.

There was a crack of a whip on the road, and a sound of wheels. A donkey cart, with a diminutive youth in a barred jersey driving it, came into sight. There were cocoanuts piled on the cart. The diminutive person was evidently one of the itinerant merchants attracted to the village of Pegg by its growth as a summer seaside resort.

Bunny grinned at sight of the donkey cart.

"Hallo, keb!" he called out. "Stop!"

"Garn!" replied the youth on the cart.

"I want a cab," said Bunny. "Stop, and get down!"

"Who yer gettin' at?"

Bunny took the donkey's head, and forcibly stopped the cart.

"We'll buy all your cocoanuts, if you give our friends here a drive to the village," he said.

The cocoanut youth looked at the Greyfriars juniors, and grinned.

"Done!" he said.

The cocoanuts were soon distributed among the Lambs, and honourably paid for, and then the Greyfriars juniors were helped into the little cart.

They did not go willingly.

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NEXT WEEK: "ALONZO'S PLOT."

On the other hand, they kicked and struggled and fought, and it was not easy for the Lambs to get them into the vehicle.

But got into it they were at last.

Jammed together in the little cart, the Greyfriars juniors gasped for breath, and vowed future vengeance.

"This way," said Bunny. "I'll show you the way; and when you've delivered your goods, I'll stand you a bob for your trouble."

The Greyfriars juniors looked at one another in silent wrath and dismay. To be taken to Cliff House in such a state was a terrible blow to their dignity. But there was no mercy to be expected of the hilarious Lambs. They had entered into the joke with great zest.

The donkey cart rolled on towards Pegg.

Harry Wharton & Co. glanced round in a wild hope of seeing friends who might rescue them, but they passed no Greyfriars fellows on the road.

One or two country people were passed, who stared at the donkey cart and its curious cargo, and grinned.

Cliff House came in sight.

Then Wharton, swallowing his pride with a big effort, spoke to Bunny, who was walking beside the cart, caressing his swollen nose and grinning.

"I say," exclaimed Wharton, "you might chuck this, you know; the joke's gone far enough. We don't want to go to Cliff House like this."

The Lambs leader chuckled.

"I dare say you don't," he remarked.

"I dessay not," grinned Ikey.

"But it will be funny!" giggled 'Erbert. "Only fancy!"

"Will you let us go?"

"Not much!"

"Then we'll make you sit up for it!" exclaimed Harry.

"If you're staying in Pegg, we'll make you sorry for this!"

"Baa-baa!"

"We're staying a week, at the Anchor," grinned Bunny.

"You'll always find us at home if you look for us—eh, chaps?"

"Baa-baa!" said the Lambs in chorus; this apparently being a sort of war cry with them.

The cart rolled up to the gate of Cliff House.

The juniors' heart almost stood still in dismay.

"Take 'em up to the door, and come back for your bob," said Bunny to the lad.

The latter grinned.

"What-ho!" he replied.

The gate was open, and the cart rolled in. The Lambs stood grouped round the gateway, watching.

As the donkey trotted on towards the door, the juniors saw faces at several of the windows, and from one window that was open there floated the unmistakable sound of laughter.

The cart halted at the door, and the cocoanut youth rang the bell, with a loud, reverberating peal that echoed through the big house.

The door was opened by a trim maid.

She almost fell down when she saw the donkey cart and its occupants.

"These 'ere goods for you," said the cocoanut merchant.

He tipped the juniors one by one off the cart, and led his donkey back to the gate. There the delighted Bunny pressed a shilling into his hands, and the Lambs gave a yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Baa-baa!"

Then they disappeared, tramping off arm-in-arm down the street of Pegg, roaring out a music-hall chorus at the top of their voices, to the effect that to escape all the troubles of life it was only necessary to lose oneself with Lucy at Lucerne.

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By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Not a Happy Tea-Party.

HARRY WHARTON stood crimson and enraged. As a rule, the chums of the Remove could take a joke with anybody; but this was going a little too far.

Never in their lives had the juniors felt such complete and utter asses.

It was too late to think of escape, for the bewildered maid had summoned Miss Penelope Primrose, and with her a dozen of the girls had crowded out.

Marjorie Hazeldene and her friend Clara, and some of the others, had been expecting the juniors to tea, and they had arrived about the time they were expected.

But they had not arrived as they had intended.

Harry Wharton, usually handsome and very clean and presentable, looked a fearful object now, with his clothes rumpled and dusty, his collar torn out, his battered hat stuck on the back of his head, and his nose red and swollen.

The others looked just as dilapidated and forlorn.

Marjorie was kind and sympathetic. But it would have required superhuman efforts to restrain a smile. As for Clara, she laughed. Miss Wilhelmina Limburger, the German girl, chuckled loudly. There were smiles on all faces, except Miss Primrose's. Miss Primrose looked puzzled and alarmed.

She did not even recognise the juniors as belonging to Greyfriars.

"Dear me, dear me!" exclaimed Miss Primrose. "There is some mistake! What have you come here for?"

"If you please—" began Harry.

"This is not the workhouse!" said Miss Primrose, very much flurried. "The workhouse is at Mountford, some miles from here. But if you are hungry and tired, I will order some refreshment for you before you go on your way. Is that what you want?"

Miss Clara had to almost swallow her handkerchief to keep from screaming. Marjorie suppressed a laugh.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood crimson.

To be mistaken for vagrants begging their way to the union was the last drop in the cup for them.

"Unfortunate youths!" went on Miss Primrose. "I am afraid you have been fighting, to judge by your looks. I am sorry to see this. The evils of poverty can be borne very much more easily when there is love in our hearts."

"If you please, Miss Primrose—"

"Dear me! You know my name!"

"I should think so!" exclaimed the junior, exasperated. "I'm Wharton!"

"What!"

"I'm Harry Wharton!"

"Bless my soul!"

"We've been ragged by a gang of blessed roughs," said Harry. "We didn't mean to come here in this state, but they brought us here. They were too many for us. We'll get off now."

"Bless me!"

"Good-bye, ma'am!"

"You cannot go home in that state, Harry," said Marjorie. "Nonsense! You have come here to tea, too."

"But—"

"You must stay."

"What-ho!" said Miss Clara, in her slangy way. "Now you're here, you're going to have tea. What?"

"Certainly," said Miss Primrose, recovering herself a little. "Decidedly. You can wash and brush yourselves here, my dear boys, and I will telephone for the police, to put them on the track of the ruffians who have assaulted you."

The juniors grinned ruefully.

"Oh, no, no, please!" said Harry eagerly. "It was rough fun, but it was only fun, you know. We don't want anything of that sort. We can look after ourselves, you know."

"I am glad to see that you forgive your enemies," said Miss Primrose, very pleased. "But come in, my dear boys."

The dear boys came in. The dear girls were trying not to giggle, without much success. Harry Wharton & Co. looked almost piteously at Marjorie. They felt that they looked absurd, but it was really not their fault.

The smiling maid showed them up to a bath-room, where they were provided with brushes and combs and other necessities, and they proceeded to put themselves into something like order.

But after endless washing and rubbing, and dusting and brushing, their clothes were still in a dilapidated state, and their faces, though clean, were disfigured with bruises, which, in fact, seemed to show up more clearly than ever on the clean skin.

They looked in the glass, and growled.

"Precious objects we look," grunted Bob Cherry.

"Well, that's nothing new for you!" growled Nugent.

"But look at my nose! Like a blessed crushed strawberry!"

"Well, it's never much better!" retorted Bob. "But look at my eye."

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NEXT WEEK: **"ALONZO'S PLOT."**

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

"Ha, ha! It's comic."

"And our hats," said Harry. "Ruined! We shall have to go home without them; they're past hope. Seven-and-six each!"

"The seven-and-sixfulness is terrific."

"We'll make those rotters sit up for this!" growled Nugent.

"What-ho!"

Upon that point the Greyfriars chums were cordially agreed. From that day they were "up against" the Lambs, and the Lambs were likely to have a warm time, if the juniors could contrive it.

And they generally managed any little duty of that sort quite successfully.

Their toilet was finished at last, as well as it could be done, and the juniors descended to the garden, where they were to have tea under the trees in the summer sunshine.

The tea was ready, the tables set, and the girls were there, looking very fresh and pretty in their summer frocks.

Their neatness made the dilapidated state of the Greyfriars chums more conspicuous than ever. And the juniors were suffering personal discomfort, too—for black eyes pained, and swollen noses ached, and bruised chins and cheeks were not pleasant.

But they tried to be cheerful.

Marjorie & Co. were all that could be desired—sweet and kind and cheering—but the juniors felt that the tea was not a success.

For once in their lives they were not sorry when it was over, and the time came to take leave of the girls of Cliff House.

Marjorie smiled as they said good-bye.

"I'm afraid we've been a bit—a bit dull," said Harry Wharton desperately. "We're feeling rather rocky, you know."

"It is a shame," said Marjorie softly.

"Oh, we'll get our own back," said Harry. "We sha'n't feel so bad, then. But they were two to one, you know, and mostly big fellows, and—well, we'll make them sit up, anyway. I'm sorry we've spoiled the tea-party."

"Not at all," said Marjorie.

The girls all looked sweet and sympathetic as the juniors departed. But it must be confessed that when Harry Wharton & Co. had disappeared, long-suppressed giggles burst forth, and for some time the only sounds in the garden were sounds of merriment.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Chance for Bunter.

I SAY, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the group of juniors standing at the gates of the school, and did not shut up. Bunter very seldom did shut up, excepting when he was sitting down to a meal; and then he would shut up as long as the meal lasted.

There were half a dozen juniors lounging at the gate in the sunset, fellows belonging to the Remove—Mark Linley, who was Bob Cherry's chum in No. 13 Study, and Ogilvy, the Scottish junior, Micky Desmond and Morgan, and Tom Brown of New Zealand, and Bulstrode. Cricket practice was over, and most of the juniors had had their tea, and they were looking idly out of the gates and chatting when Bunter came rolling up. Billy Bunter was so fat that he always appeared to roll rather than to walk.

"I say, you fellows," he went on, "it's half-past six."

Mark Linley nodded towards the clock tower.

"We can see that, Bunter," he remarked. "Besides, it's just chimed."

"We usually have tea at six."

"I knew he'd begin to talk about eating," said Ogilvy. "That's one thing you can always rely on about Bunter."

"Oh, really, Ogilvy! You see, I haven't had my tea, and I'm feeling faint. I suppose you wouldn't like me to fall in a swoon at your feet, would you?" asked Bunter pathetically.

"I shouldn't mind," said Ogilvy. "Go ahead!"

"Oh, really—"

"I've never seen a porpoise swoon," remarked Bulstrode. "I should think it would be interesting. You can start, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I say, you fellows," said the fat junior, changing the subject. "Have you seen Wharton lately—or Nugent or Inky?"

"I have," said Bulstrode.

"Where?"

"In the Form-room."

"Good! Are they there now?"

"Can't say."

"When did you see them there?" asked Bunter, turning to make off towards the School House, but pausing for Bulstrode's reply.

"Half-past four," said Bulstrode, with a grin. "When Mr. Quelch was dismissing the Form, you know."

Bunter turned back, with a reproachful blink.

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"They're gone out!" said Ogilvy. "I understood they were going out to tea."

Bunter jumped.

"Going out to tea!"

"Yes."

"Where?" asked the Owl of the Remove anxiously.

"Cliff House."

"Oh, the rotters! The spoofers! The beasts!"

"Hallo! What's the matter with you?" asked Bulstrode, staring at him. "Anything biting you?"

"The bounders!" howled Bunter. "The—the swindlers."

"What have they done?"

"I told Wharton I was hungry, and—and he told me to go and get some tarts in the tuckshop, and—and gave me a tanner," said Bunter. "I—I mean, he lent me a tanner. I'm to settle it out of a postal-order I'm expecting this evening. Well, when I'd had the tarts, I looked for them, and couldn't find them. I've been looking for them everywhere ever since."

The juniors roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at," growled Billy Bunter. "I've been spoofed. They sent me to the tuckshop to get rid of me, so that they could get off to Cliff House without taking me with them."

"Were you invited?" asked Bulstrode.

"Well, a sort of general invitation," said Bunter cautiously. "Marjorie is always glad to see me. Wharton can't see it. You notice that sort of thing about chaps like Wharton. You can never get 'em to believe that it's us well-built, medium-sized fellows who catch the eyes of the girls."

Bulstrode snorted.

"Yes, you can grunt if you like," said Bunter, blinking at him through his big spectacles. "I assure you I've walked along the front at Brighton, and all the girls have turned their heads to look at me as I passed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nothing surprising in that," grinned Ogilvy. "They may have been wondering how you got outside the Zoo, you know."

"Oh, really, Ogilvy—"

"Or whether you were going to burst through your clothes," said Bulstrode. "I've often looked at you and wondered myself."

"Oh, really—"

"And I'm not surprised at Wharton leaving you behind, either," went on Bulstrode. "You're not fit to talk to a girl!"

Bunter smirked.

"The girls think differently," he remarked.

"I don't see it. Marjorie always gives you the cold shoulder, as far as I've been able to observe."

"That's in public," said Bunter. "Girls have that way of being cold to a chap in public, when they're awfully chummy with him in private—Yow!"

Bunter broke off suddenly as Bulstrode's finger and thumb closed upon his ear. Bulstrode was often called the bully of the Lower Fourth, and he had rather a "penchant" for twisting the ears of smaller boys. But on this occasion no one there found any fault with Bulstrode; for if ever a fellow wanted his ear pulled, it was William George Bunter at that moment.

"You dirty fat cad!" said Bulstrode.

"Ow!"

"You're lying, and you know it."

"Yow!"

"Marjorie looks on you as a pig, and she'd never speak to you at all if she could help it."

"Yarrah!"

"Isn't that true?"

"Yow!"

"You've got to own up before I let your ear go," said Bulstrode, pinching the fat ear at every word. "You can take your time."

The juniors grinned as Bunter turned an agonised look upon them. There was no rescue possible for Bunter. No one was likely to stand by him for speaking disrespectfully of Marjorie, who was popular with all the Removites.

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "Leggo! I—I was only joking."

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"You were lying?"

"Ow! No—yes!"

"Good! Like a dirty cad weren't you?"

"Ow! Yes."

Bulstrode released the fat ear of the Owl of the Remove, and carefully wiped his hand on his sleeve, as if the touch of Bunter were contagious.

"Blessed if I know how Wharton and the others stand you in their study," he said, in disgust. "I'd wallop you ten times a day if you were in mine."

Bunter edged away from the burly Removite. He let the subject of Marjorie drop, as he stood ruefully rubbing his ear.

He blinked down the road, but there was no one in sight yet. Then he blinked up at the clock tower.

"I suppose it's too late to go over there to tea," he remarked. "It's rotten to be left behind like this. I've been spoofed, and it's a disappointment for Mar— Ahem! I wonder when those rotters will be back?"

"Here they come, I believe," said Morgan.

"Looks like 'em," said Bulstrode. "But what on earth's the matter with them?"

Bulstrode might well ask the question. The four juniors who came in sight round the bend of the lane presented a most remarkable appearance.

Their hats were gone, and their clothes were rumpled, and their faces bruised, and black eyes and cut lips and swollen noses were liberally distributed among them.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Tom Brown.

The four dilapidated wrecks seemed hard to recognise for a moment as the four juniors who had sallied forth from Greyfriars in all the glory of Sunday bags and toppers.

A shout of laughter burst from the juniors at the gate.

The returning heroes heard it, and their faces went very pink. They tramped on doggedly up to the gates of the school.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bulstrode. "What's happened?"

"Been boxing with lawn-mowers or wrestling with motor-cars?" asked Ogilvy.

"Faith, and they've been in the wars intirely!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, cheese it, all of you!" said Harry Wharton, rather crossly. "We've been in a row with a gang of seaside bounders, and they were two to one."

"Hence these tears," said Bob Cherry, pronouncing the word "tears," and indicating his torn jacket. Bob Cherry was never to be deprived of his little joke.

"Oh!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "I suppose you mean the Lambs. I heard there'd been a row between that gang and the Boy Scouts in Pegg."

Wharton nodded.

"That's the lot!"

"And they've used you up like that!" grinned Morgan.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Harry tartly. "I tell you they were two to one. But we gave them as good as we got, anyway."

"But the gotfulness was terrific," murmured Hurree Singh.

"I say, you fellows, I suppose you haven't had tea?" exclaimed Bunter, brightening up. "You haven't been to Cliff House in that state."

"We just have," replied Bob Cherry. "You can go and eat coke."

"But—"

"Come on, you chaps, let's get in!"

"But I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up!"

"I haven't had my tea, except a few tarts and tea in Hall—"

"Well, that's enough for an average boa-constrictor," said Harry.

"Look here—"

"Sheer off! You make me tired."

Bunter blinked angrily at the chums. He saw that they were not in their usual pliant mood, and that there was nothing to be extracted from them.

"Well, of all the guys!" he exclaimed. "Yah! Nice set of asses you are to go out and get licked by a lot of seaside bounders, and come crawling home in that state. Yah!"

The chums of the Remove stared at Bunter. They had expected chipping from most of the fellows, but this was a new line for Bunter to take.

"Go it, Bunter!" said Bulstrode encouragingly.

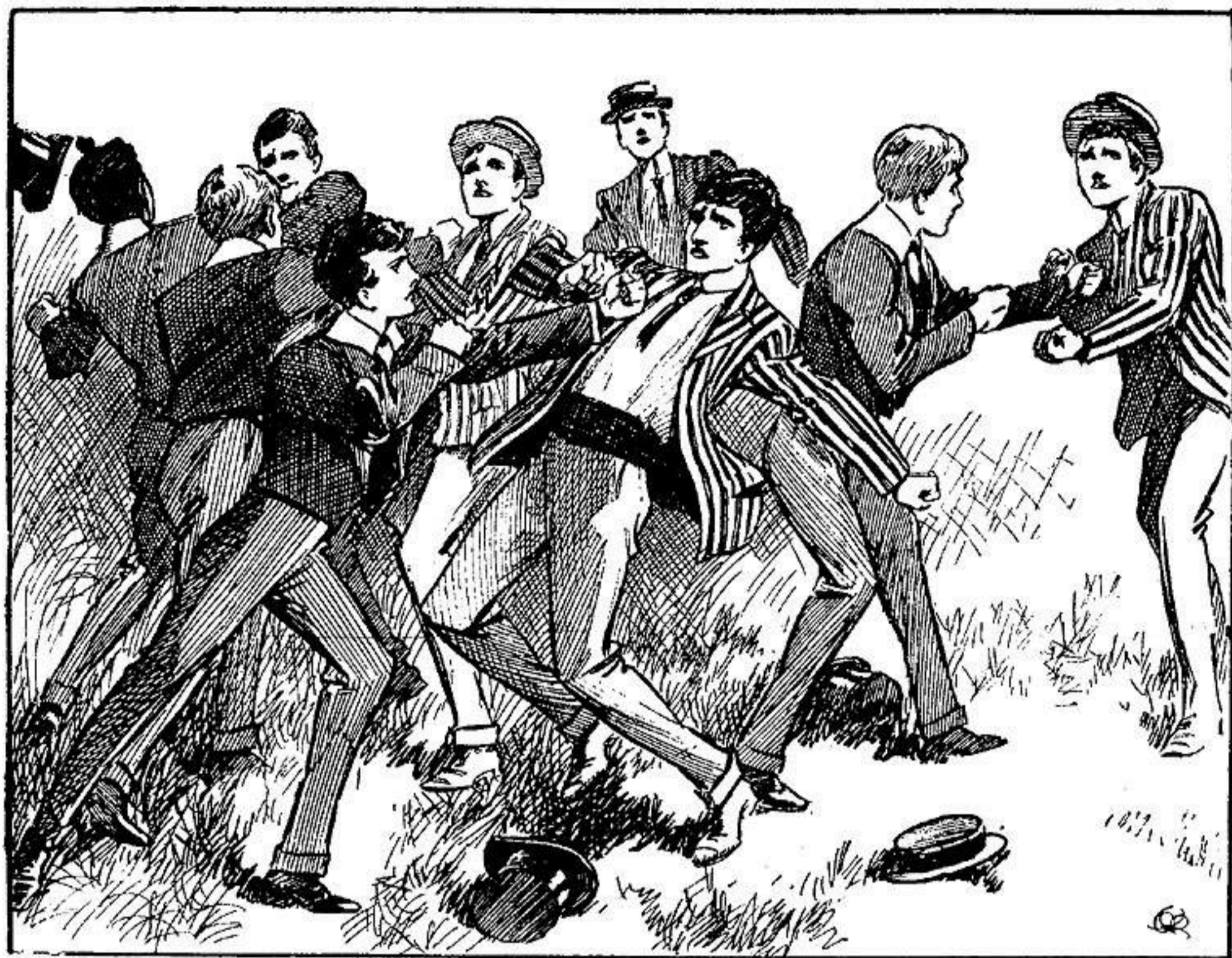
"Blessed guys!" said Billy Bunter, thus backed up. "Rotten spoofers! You'd better hide indoors in future till you can learn how to take care of yourselves. Nice disgrace this is for Greyfriars. Yah!"

"Come on!" said Harry shortly.

Bob Cherry paused, and signed to Bunter. Bob Cherry was angry.

"By the way, Bunter," he said, "are you hungry?"

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"Collar them!" shouted Bunny. The Lambs made a rush, and in a moment the two parties were mingled in a wild and whirling fight.

Bunter's truculence vanished in a moment.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "Don't mind what I said just now, Cherry, you know; I was only joking. I'm awfully hungry, and—"

"I suppose you couldn't get a pass out?" said Bob thoughtfully.

"Oh, yes, I could. Loder would give me one if I went to the tobacconist's for him," said Bunter eagerly.

"Well, there's a chap staying at the Anchor Inn at Pegg—"

"Yes?"

"Chap named Bunny—"

"Yes?" said Bunter eagerly.

"Well, if you like to go to the Anchor and ask for Bunny, and say you're a Greyfriars chap, you'll be entertained," said Bob Cherry. "I don't promise you anything, but I say that you'll get a regular eye-opener."

"I say, Cherry, that's awfully decent of you!" said Bunter. "The chap's a friend of yours, I suppose?"

"Not exactly a friend," said Bob, "a sort of acquaintance. He's a jolly chap, and fond of a joke. Mind you mention you're a Greyfriars chap, and you might add that you hope you won't come across any of those rotten cads, Lorrell's Lambs."

"All right!"

Bob Cherry walked after his friends. Bunter cut off into the house to get the pass out of gates, delighted with the prospect of a gorgeous feed at the expense of the as yet unknown Mr. Bunny. Five minutes later Bob Cherry saw him scuttle out of gates, and Bob Cherry gave a soft chuckle.

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THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bulstrode Takes the Lead.

HARRY WHARTON & CO. changed their clothes, and made themselves as presentable as they could before they appeared in the common-room. But they could not hide the signs of conflict, and general grins greeted them wherever they appeared.

There was no doubt that they had been knocked about by Lorrell's Lambs, and the fact that they had been taken to Cliff House in their dilapidated state, added to the hilarity of the Remove.

It would have been wiser of the Famous Four to conceal the latter fact, but they had let it out without thinking, and the juniors made the most of it.

The fellows asked them how they had enjoyed the tea-party, and whether Marjorie admired black eyes and swollen noses, till they were sick of the subject.

But the Removites were not sick of the subject, by any means; indeed, it seemed likely to last them as a topic for some time to come.

Bulstrode, of course, made the most of it.

He had never quite got over Harry Wharton's being elected captain of the Remove, and he never lost an opportunity of impressing upon the Form the fact that he—Bulstrode—would have made a far better leader.

And so he was in his element now. Greyfriars had sustained a licking and a disgrace, not from a rival school, nor even from the Boy Scouts of Pegg, but from a set of weedy seaside bounders, and Bulstrode professed to regard the stain as indelible.

Harry Wharton & Co. writhed under the laughter of the

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Lower School, and the sneers of Bulstrode and his friends; but they could do nothing else.

There was no getting out of the fact that they had been licked and made to look ridiculous.

"We shall have to get our own back on the Lambs, that's all," said Bob Cherry desperately. "The fellows will never let it rest till then."

Wharton nodded gloomily.

"I'm getting tired of the subject," he said. "I suppose it will last for days, or until something else happens. Bulstrode is very cocky about what he would have done. I wish he would try."

"Listen to him now!" said Nugent.

Bulstrode was talking to a group of Removites at a short distance. He affected not to see the chums, but, as a matter of fact, he was purposely raising his voice to make it audible to them.

"The fact is, something ought to be done," said Bulstrode. "Those seaside bounders have licked Wharton and his lot—there's no getting out of that. They're crowing over Greyfriars. Wharton's licked, but I think some of us ought to take the matter up, and give the Lambs a dusting, for the honour of Greyfriars."

"That's all meant for us," said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton nodded, but did not speak.

The group of juniors round Bulstrode received his remarks with applause.

"Hear, hear!" said Snoop, Bulstrode's toady, and about the last fellow likely to enter into any combat with Lorrell's Lambs. "Bravo, Bulstrode!"

"What do you fellows say?" demanded Bulstrode, encouraged.

"Hear, hear!"

"Very well, then; who's willing to back me up in going for the Lambs?"

"All of us," said Skinner.

"Hurrah!"

"Then to-morrow afternoon—it's a half-holiday—I propose—"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Ogilvy. "Here's Wharton; let him speak. Wharton, have you got any dodge for putting those seaside bounders in their place?"

"Rats!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "Wharton's been licked already, and it's for somebody else to take the lead now, I should think."

"Hear, hear!" exclaimed Snoop.

Wharton flushed angrily.

"We were licked because they were two to one, and they took us by surprise," he exclaimed.

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders.

"They won't take me by surprise," he replied.

"We had no idea they were even at Pegg—"

"It's a leader's business to have ideas."

And the juniors laughed.

"If you fellows like to back me up, I'll jolly soon find a way of putting them in their place," said Harry.

"Rot!" said Bulstrode emphatically. "You've had your shot. It's for somebody better to take the lead now."

"Hear, hear!" said the faithful Snoop.

"I put it to the Remove," exclaimed Bulstrode victoriously. "Wharton's had his chance. If the Form likes to back me up, I've got a plan for putting the Lambs in their place."

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh, all right!" exclaimed Harry. "Have your way. I hope you will fare better."

"I'm pretty sure I shall," said Bulstrode coolly. "Look here, you chaps, I know something about the Lambs. They're a weedy lot, and we could lick them hollow, man for man, though they're mostly older than us. Let's get a fair chance at them, that's all."

"And you've got a plan?" asked Morgan.

"Yes, rather!"

"Go ahead, Bulstrode!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, this is the idea. The Lambs play cricket—what they call cricket—in the field behind the Anchor Inn. They're pretty certain to be at it to-morrow afternoon—the weather's so fine now. My idea is to raid them while they're at it, take away their bats and stumps, lick them, and make them run, and generally muck them up. We shall take them by surprise, too—which will be only tit for tat!" concluded Bulstrode, with a sarcastic glance at Wharton.

"Hear, hear!" said Snoop.

"It's a good idea," said Ogilvy. "What do you think, Wharton?"

"Oh, never mind Wharton! What do you fellows think—that's the point."

"Let Wharton speak."

"Oh, blow Wharton!"

"I don't want to speak," said Harry quietly. "If Bulstrode thinks he can lick the Lambs, he's welcome to try."

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and I wish him success. He can run the show how he likes, and I won't interfere. Come on, you chaps!"

And the Famous Four walked away.

Bulstrode burst into a laugh.

"Let them go," he said. "We don't want them. I think it's up to us to stand up for the honour of Greyfriars."

"Hear, hear!"

"We can take about twenty chaps, and give the Lambs the biggest licking they've ever had in their lives," said Bulstrode.

"Hurrah!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Jolly good dodge," said Tom Brown. "Wharton doesn't seem inclined to take the lead, so I propose backing up Bulstrode."

"Hear, hear!"

"Good!" said Skinner. "Bulstrode's all right."

"Hear, hear!" from Snoop.

Tom Brown's eyes twinkled. Snoop's continual toadying "Hear, hear!" had been jarring on his nerves for some time.

"Right-ho!" he exclaimed. "Where shall we find a better leader than Bulstrode?"

"Hear, hear!"

"And where," continued Tom—"where shall we find a rottener, meaner skunk than any of the Lambs?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Thanks for the information, Snoop," said Tom Brown, with a nod to the cad of the Remove, and the juniors burst into a roar of laughter.

Snoop turned red.

"You chump!" he exclaimed. "I didn't mean here, I meant hear, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling asses—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Snoop's right," grinned Elliott. "He's a meaner skunk than any of the Lambs. Hear, hear! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors roared.

"Well, it's settled, then," said Bulstrode. "We're going for the Lambs to-morrow afternoon, and we'll show Wharton that the Remove can manage a few things without his riding the high horse all the time."

This time Snoop did not say "Hear, hear!"

Bulstrode walked off with a few special friends to stand gingerbeer at the tuckshop; and when the rest heard what was going, most of them developed a special friendship for Bulstrode on the spot, and shared in the gingerbeer. Bulstrode had plenty of money, and he was always ready to throw it about to those who paid court to him.

For the time, at least, Harry Wharton's star was low, and Bulstrode's was in the ascendant. But it remained to be seen how Bulstrode would fare when he led his followers to the attack upon the truculent Lambs.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Treat!

BILLY BUNTER kept at a trot all the way to Pegg. He arrived at the Anchor Inn, feeling somewhat breathless, but very cheerful and expectant.

Bob Cherry's friend, Mr. Bunny, was going to stand a good tea, and it was worth the walk from Greyfriars. So Bunter thought. He entered the inn, and almost ran into the bald-headed, ruddy-faced host, who was serving his customers, mostly seafaring men.

"Ah, Mr. Bunce!" exclaimed the fat junior. "Good-evening! You have a gentleman staying here named Mr. Bunny."

The landlord of the Anchor grinned at the fat junior. He had heard the leader of the Lambs called "Bunny" by his comrades, and so he guessed who Bunter meant.

"Ay, ay!" he said.

"I want to see him," said Bunter. "Where is he?"

"Ay, ay! You'll find them in the parlour," said Mr. Bunce.

"Them?" said Bunter.

"They're all together, Master Bunter."

"Oh! Mr. Bunny has friends with him, then?"

"Yes."

"Going to have dinner, perhaps?" said Bunter.

"They've had it," said Mr. Bunce; and he turned away.

ANSWERS

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Bunter went into the passage which led to a large parlour overlooking the inn garden and the cricket field at the back. He reached the door of the room, and heard the sound of voices and clinking glasses on the other side of it. Voices—not very tuneful—were shouting out a chorus.

"I'll lose myself with Lucy at Lucerne."

That was all Bunter could distinguish of it, as he tapped at the door.

The song went on, and not till it was ended did Bunter's tapping become audible.

Then a voice shouted out:

"Come in, cocky!"

Bunter opened the door.

The smell of beer and tobacco was very thick, and he caught his breath as he entered. The room was full of young fellows, all under twenty. Most of them were smoking cigarettes, and drinking either beer or ginger-beer. They were sitting at a long table, and at the top of it, on a chair higher than the others, was the great Bunny.

Ikey was at the lower end of the table, and Ikey was provoking yells of laughter at the present moment by smoking two cigarettes at once, one in either corner of his mouth.

Billy Bunter blinked at the scene, through his big spectacles, in amazement.

He had expected to see signs of a feed, but as far as he could see all the refreshments were in liquid form, unless the cheap cigarettes, with their raucous fumes, could be called refreshment.

Bunny stared at the newcomer.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "Who's that?"

"Please, I'm Bunter—"

"Oh, Please you're Bunter!" said Bunny facetiously.

"Look at him, you fellows. Please he's Bunter!"

The Lambs looked at the fat Removita.

"Please, he's Bunter!" said 'Erbert. "Only fancy!"

And the Lambs yelled, in their peculiar chant:

"Please he's Bunter! Only fancy!"

Bunter turned red.

He did not quite understand his reception, and he had no suspicion as yet that these uproarious young blades were the famous Lambs.

Bunny beckoned to him to approach.

"Now, then, Please you're Bunter, where do you come from?" he asked.

"Greyfriars."

"What?"

"Greyfriars School!"

"Oh!"

The Lambs all looked interested.

After their little game with the Greyfriars juniors that afternoon, they had hardly expected a visit from the school. They had not imagined that a Greyfriars fellow would have the nerve to present himself there alone.

They stared at Billy Bunter.

"And what have you come for?" asked Bunny.

"I—I thought there was a feed going," stammered Bunter. "Bob Cherry said—"

"Bob Cherry! Who's Bob Cherry?"

"A Greyfriars chap. He said that I should find Mr. Bunny here—"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared the Lambs.

Bunter looked surprised. He did not see any reason for the Lambs to yell with laughter in that manner.

"The landlord told me I should find Mr. Bunny here," faltered the fat junior.

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Well, here he is," said Bunny. "I'm Mr. Bunny."

"You!"

"Certainly!"

"Oh!"

"Glad to see you. Please you're Bunter!" said Bunny, keeping up that playful variation of the fat junior's name.

"You look a nice, well-fed chap."

"He looks a nice, well-fed chap!" chanted the Lambs.

"We're glad to make your acquaintance!"

"We're glad to make his acquaintance!"

"Thank you very much," said Bunter, a little reassured. "I'm glad I've found you, you know. I was afraid I might run into some of those rotten Lambs."

"Those what?"

"The Lambs, you know. Perhaps you haven't heard of them," said Bunter. "A lot of weedy, rotten, slouching bounders who have come down to Pegg for a holiday. They call themselves Lorrell's Lambs, you know."

"I think I've heard of them," said Bunny, with perfect gravity. "Describe them to us."

"Well, they're a lot of worms," said Bunter confidentially. "Blackguards, you know, every one of them. Dirty, shabby bounders, you know—fellows who save up about a pound in three months, and blow it all on a holiday at the seaside, and make themselves a general nuisance to everybody."

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ONE
PENNY.

"My 'at!" murmured Ikey, rubbing his prominent nose. "My only 'at!"

Bunny remained grave as a judge. Most of the Lambs were nearly exploding, but they kept quiet at a sign from their leader. Bunny evidently had his followers in good control; though in other respects "Lambs" was a misnomer for them.

"They must be awful rotters," said Bunny.

"They are," said Bunter. "They handled some of our fellows this afternoon awfully roughly—not that it didn't serve them right. Wharton is a stuck-up rotter, anyway. But they are fearful outsiders, you know. I don't think they'd be admitted at any decent place."

"How good!" said Bunny. "Know anything else about them?"

"Yes," said Bunter, drawing on his imagination, as he generally did when he could find anybody to put up with his conversation. "I've heard that they're all thieves."

"Thieves!"

"Yes; pickpockets, you know. They always steal the spoons at any place they stay at, and lots of them have been in prison."

"Any murderers among them?" asked Bunny, unmoved.

"I don't know," said Bunter. "I shouldn't wonder."

"My only 'at!" murmured Ikey again.

"Only fancy!" gasped 'Erbert.

"Lemme smash him!" muttered Boxer.

"Shut up!" said Bunny. "Mr. Please your name's Bunter, you are awfully interesting. You came here for a treat—eh?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Then you shall have one."

"Thanks awfully!"

"Quite a new experience, I promise you."

"You're awfully good."

"Not at all," said Bunny, with a gracious wave of the hand. "We're only too delighted and honoured to make your acquaintance."

"Delighted and honoured!" chanted the Lambs.

"It isn't often we meet a charming young gentleman with such interesting and really attractive gifts in the conversational line," said Bunny. "And then your gift of description—it's simply marvellous."

"Marvellous!" said the Lambs in chorus.

"I really think we ought to show our appreciation of it, and bestow some mark of recognition upon our friend Please he's Bunter," said Bunny, looking down the long table.

The Lambs cheered, and rattled their tumblers with approval.

"In the first place," went on Bunny, "I must introduce you to my friends." He made a sign to Ikey, who left the bottom of the table, crossed to the door and locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Bunter was too short-sighted to see Ikey's action, and his attention was elsewhere.

"Gentlemen," said Bunny, "rise to the occasion."

The gentlemen rose.

"This is Mr. Please he's Bunter, gentlemen."

"Good old Bunter!" chanted the Lambs.

"Mr. Bunter, these gentlemen are the Lambs—Lorrell's Lambs—of whom you have heard, and whom you have so feelingly and accurately described," said Bunny sweetly.

Billy Bunter staggered back.

The fat junior had never been so surprised in his life.

He realised, from the looks of the Lambs, what was in store for him now, and what sort of a "treat" he was to enjoy, and he made a wild rush for the door.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Sings a Song.

"STOP him!"
"Collar him!"
"It's all right," said Ikey. "It's all right, my thons." Ikey spoke with a slight lisp. "The door's locked."

Bunter grabbed at the door handle.

He turned it and dragged at it, but it was of no use; he could not get out. The door remained fast.

The Lambs set up a yell of laughter, more worthy of wolves than of lambs, as they watched his vain attempt to escape.

"He's all right," said Bunny.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

Bunter turned round, gasping.

"Lemme out!" he shouted. "Yah! Lemme gerrou!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"I won't stay here! I—"

"Didn't you come for a treat?" exclaimed Bunny, in affected astonishment. "You're not going to leave before you've had the treat, are you?"

"I—I forgot an important appointment," stammered Bunter. "I—I'd rather go, if you don't mind, and return another time."

"Do we mind?" asked Bunny.

"Do we mind?" chanted the Lambs.

"I rather think we do!"

"Yes, we rather think we do."

"Can't spare you yet, my dear Please your name's Bunter," said Bunny blandly. "Come here."

"But—"

"Yes, come here, my thon," said Ikey. "You must thing at least one thong before you go."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"I'd rather go—"

"He'd rather go! Ho, ho, ho! Baa-baa!"

The Lambs roared. Bunter gave another hopeless wretch at the door, and then Ikey and 'Erbert took him by the ears—which were large enough to afford an easy hold—and led him back towards the table.

Billy Bunter went quietly.

He was very much alarmed, but he saw that it would be futile to struggle with fifteen or sixteen enemies round him.

"P-p-please don't hurt me," he mumbled. "I—I was only joking, you know. I suppose you fellows can take a joke?"

"Yes, rather; and we can take the joker, too," grinned Bunny.

And the Lambs roared again.

"Put him on the table," said Bunny.

"Hurrah!"

"P-p-please, I—I'd rather not get on the table."

"Get up!"

"But—"

"Pour some gingerbeer down his neck if he doesn't. Ah, good!" Billy Bunter stepped gingerly upon the table among the bottles and ash-trays. "Now then, Lambs, gather round—gather round!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Here stands Mr. Please I'm Bunter, who's libelled the ancient and worthy association of Lorrell's Lambs," said Bunny. "I call upon him to retract his words."

"Oh, certainly," said Bunter, in a great hurry. "I retract everything."

"Ah! You admit that all you said was a slander?" demanded Bunny, shaking a finger at him.

"Yes; and I'm sincerely sorry—"

"You were lying—eh?"

"With pleasure—I—I mean, certainly—"

"You really admire the Lambs very much?"

"Very much indeed," said Bunter. "I—I've never met such a lot of really nice, j-j-jolly chaps in my life!"

The Lambs chuckled. Bunter's retraction was complete enough, and he made it quite willingly, but they were not satisfied.

"Master Please I'm Bunter having eaten his words," said Bunny, "has now finished eating. It's all the eating he's going to do here."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really—"

"Mr. Bunter will now add to the hilarity of the evening by singing a song, to the tumbler accompaniment," said Bunny.

"Hear, hear!"

"I—I really—"

"What sort of a voice have you got?" demanded 'Erbert.

"A—a very good voice, you know, and—"

"I mean, what brand is it—tenor, I suppose?" grinned 'Erbert.

"Yes; I've got a very fine tenor voice," said Bunter.

"Good! Give us a tenor song."

"With—with pleasure. Shall I—I give you 'Let Me Like a Soldier Fall?'"

"No. Give us something comic."

"I—I don't know—"

"Sing up!"

"Accompaniment, gentlemen!" said Bunny.

The gentlemen rattled their tumblers on the mahogany. Bunny poked Billy Bunter in the ribs.

"Sing up!" he said.

"Oh, really—"

"Start!"

"Get on!"

"Go ahead!"

"Yes, let me like a soldier fall!" howled Bunter, in his fine tenor voice.

'Erbert stopped his ears.

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"Chuck it!" roared Ikey. "Do you call that thinging a thong? Shut it!"

"Oh, really—"

"If that's tenor, we'll have baritone," said Bunny humorously. "You're about as tenor as a rusty hinge!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Don't squeak, but sing," said 'Erbert; and Ikey chimed in with a command not to "thqueak, but to thing."

"What shall I sing?" said Bunter desperately.

"Give us a football song."

"Oh, really—"

"Can you sing 'On the Ball'?"

"That's hardly worthy of my powers—"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Sing up!"

"Go ahead, or we'll squash you!"

Two or three light missiles flew through the air, and caught Bunter in various parts of his body.

He gasped, and began, to a rattling accompaniment of tumblers.

"On the ball, on the ball!"

Loud and clear it rings like a trumpet call!"

"My only 'at!" said Ikey. "What a thweet voice! Sthop him!"

"Order!"

"Hear the shouts excited roll!" roared Bunter. "Buck up there! Look out in goal! On the ball—"

"On the bawl!" groaned Ikey. "Sthop him!"

"Order!"

"Thilence!"

"Oh, really—"

"Sthop him!"

Ikey reached out with a gingerbeer bottle, and gave Billy Bunter a prod in his fattest region. The prod knocked all the wind out of the fat junior, and he collapsed in a sitting posture on the table, and there was a crash of bottles and glasses as he kicked them right and left.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER. Anointed.

THE Lambs yelled with laughter at Bunter's collapse. The fat junior sat among the upset glasses and gingerbeer bottles, blinking in great confusion through his big spectacles.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Yow!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Roll him off!" growled Ikey. "For goodneth thake don't let him thing any more thongs, my thons!"

"Oh, really—"

"Thilence, you thqueaky ath!"

"I—I'll sing another song if you like—"

"We don't like," said 'Erbert.

"Shut up, Please your name's Bunter," said Bunny.

"We've had enough of your singing. It's ghastly. I apologise to the gentlemen present for starting you."

"Baa-baa!"

"But we can't let him go home without a token of our esteem," said Boxer. "I propose that we anoint him!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen, who's in favour of anointing our honourable guest? Gentlemen in favour will kindly make the same known in the usual way."

"Baa-baa!" chorused the Lambs.

"Very well. Bunter, are you willing to be anointed?"

"I don't know what you m-m-mean!" stammered Bunter.

"I—I'd rather go home, if you don't mind."

"Not without a treat?"

"Oh, really—"

"Impossible!" said Bunny. "You must be anointed, as a warning to all the other fellows at your school, of what will happen to them if they are cheeky to the Lambs."

"Hear, hear!"

"Ikey and 'Erbert, hold him!"

"What-ho!" said those two lively young gentlemen.

Bunter made a feeble movement towards the door, but Ikey and 'Erbert quickly had him by the arms.

Bunny went to the grate, and drew a tumbler round the inside of the chimney, collecting a considerable quantity of soot.

This he mixed with water by the aid of a spoon, till it formed a workable black paint.

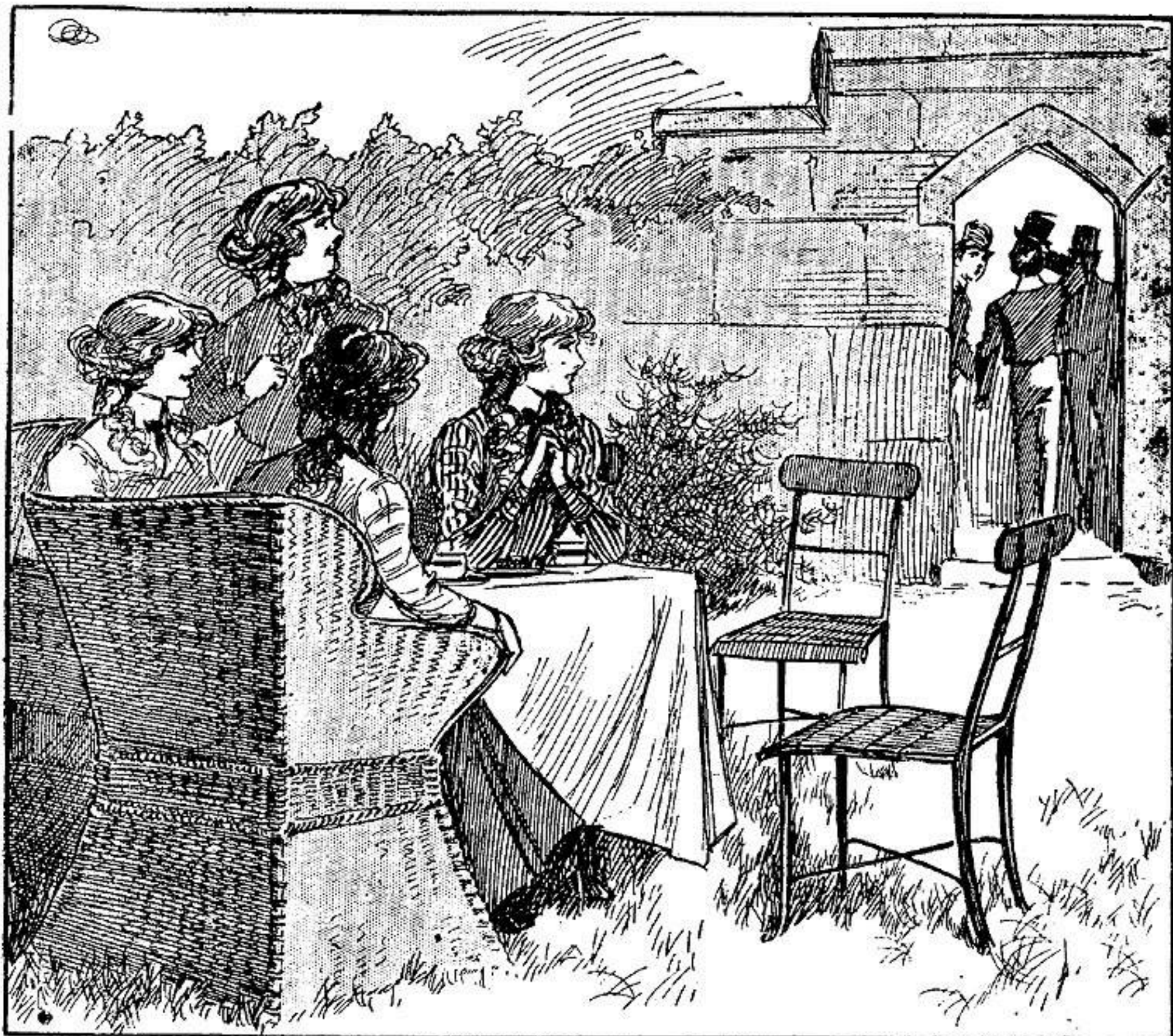
Bunter eyed these preparations in fear and trembling.

He had come there for a treat, but the treat seemed to be for the Lambs, and they were enjoying it, to judge by their roars of laughter.

"Anybody got a brush?" asked Bunny.

No one had.

"Anybody lend me his handkerchief?"



When Harry Wharton & Co. disappeared through the door-way, the long-suppressed giggles burst forth, and for some time the only sounds in the garden, were sounds of merriment.

Nobody seemed eager to lend his handkerchief. But Boxer jerked Bunter's handkerchief from his pocket.

"Here, that's mine!" gasped Bunter.

"Won't you lend it to me?" demanded Bunny truculently.

"Oh, yes—yes, w-w-with pleasure!"

"Good!"

Bunny twisted the handkerchief up, and dipped part of it in the tumbler, and then calmly proceeded to blacken Bunter's visage with the liquid soot.

The fat junior spluttered and choked.

"Ow, ow! Yow! Toop!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Keep still, Bunter!"

"Yow! Yaroo!"

"Hold him, Ikey!"

"I'm holding him, my thon!"

Bunter's face was soon blackened all over, and his hair and his neck and ears and collar came in for a fair share of the soot.

Bunny surveyed him in great admiration when it was finished.

"You haven't done his hair," said Boxer.

"No; and I thuppose his hair had better be done," remarked Ikey.

"What-ho!"

Bunny produced a candle, and by melting the wax, he stuck Bunter's hair together in a horrid mass, twisting it to a point on top.

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WEEK: "ALONZO'S PLOT."

Then the fat junior's jacket was taken off, turned inside out, and put on him again, and he was released.

He looked a funny object enough, and it was no wonder that the Lambs yelled with laughter.

"Ha, ha, la!"

"I thuppose that will do, my thons!" said Ikey.

And even Boxer was satisfied.

"You may return to the school now, sweet youth!" said Bunny, with a wave of the hand. "Tell the chaps there that we'll lick them as often as they like, and if they come down the front any day while we're here, we'll give 'em a warm time!"

"What-ho!" chuckled the Lambs.

Bunter staggered to the door.

"Let him out," said Bunny.

The door was unlocked.

Amid roars of laughter from the Lambs, Bunter staggered away, and blindly made his way down the passage.

He met Mr. Bunce near the side door. The landlord of the Anchor uttered a startled exclamation, and dropped a large jug he was carrying, and there was a crash.

"Shiver my timbers!" gasped Mr. Bunce. "Wot's that?"

Bunter brushed past him without a word, leaving the stout innkeeper standing petrified. The fat junior dashed out into the street.

His only thought was to get away from the Lambs, in case they should think of further mischief, and to return to Grayfriars as quickly as possible.

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By FRANK RICHARDS

The moment he appeared in the street, however, he discovered that he would not have a pleasant walk back to the school.

There was a yell from a crowd of fisher lads at once.

Such an object as Billy Bunter in his present state had certainly never been seen in the streets of Pegg before.

"Look!"

"What is it?"

"Who is it?"

Bunter ran.

The sight of the strange and startling object running was quite enough to start all the urchins of Pegg running in pursuit.

Bunter tore out of the village with a crowd of young rascals whooping and yelling at his heels.

The fat junior gasped and panted as he ran.

Fear lent him speed, and he went down the lane to Greyfriars in really fine style, and close on his track dashed the yelling youths of the village.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Poor Bunter.

BOB CHERRY looked into No. 1 Study in the Remove passage. There was a little cloud on the features of Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had just finished their prep., and were chatting in the study. They looked at Bob as he glanced in. Bob's glance went first to the armchair. It was unoccupied.

"Bunter not here?" asked Bob.

"No," said Harry Wharton. "Do you want him?"

"N-no, not exactly; but where is he?"

"Gone out, I believe."

"Oh!"

"He may have come in, though," said Harry. "He'll be jolly late with his prep. I don't know where he went to."

Nugent looked curiously at Bob.

"Didn't you send him somewhere?" he asked.

Bob Cherry coloured.

"Well, the fact is, I did play a little game on him," he admitted. "I sent him to Bunny at the Anchor, you know, to get a treat."

The chums of the Remove yelled.

"Bunny! The leader of Lorrell's Lambs!"

"That's it."

"You giddy ass!" gasped Nugent. "Why, they'll rag him baldheaded!"

"Well, I thought he needed it, after the way he slanged us," said Bob. "But I should have thought he'd be in before this."

"Ha, ha! I wonder what's happened to him!"

"The happenfulness will be terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, I wish he'd come in," said Bob Cherry. "I thought he ought to have a lesson, but it's occurred to me that they might be rather rough on him, you know."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Very likely. Let's go and see if he's come in."

The Famous Four went downstairs together. They asked for Bunter up and down the House, and looked for him in the junior common-room and the school shop. But he was not to be found.

"He hasn't come in yet," Harry Wharton remarked.

"Let's ask Gosling," said Bob.

They strolled down to the gates. Gosling, the porter, said that he had not opened the gates for Bunter, so it was pretty clear that the Owl of the Remove had not come back.

The juniors stood at the gates looking out between the bars.

As they looked out a strange sound came to their ears down the road—a sound of fast footsteps and whooping voices.

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

"Sounds like a row of some sort."

"The rowfulness is terrific."

"Gosling," shouted Harry Wharton, "come and unlock the gate, old man. Here's Bunter!"

Gosling looked out of his door and grunted.

"Which he ain't rung the bell," he remarked.

"Come and open the gate!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—" began Gosling.

Wharton pulled himself up to the top of the gates, climbing on Bob's shoulder, and looked out into the road. The sun was almost gone, but he could make out a fat figure in the distance tearing along with a mob behind.

"It's Bunter!" he exclaimed.

"Gosling!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Allo!"

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NEXT WEEK: **"ALONZO'S PLOT."**

"Bring your keys here."

"Wot I says—"

Wharton dropped to the ground again. He ran quickly towards the surly porter.

"It's Bunter!" he exclaimed. "And he's got a crowd after him. Open the gates, quick!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

Wharton did not argue with Gosling. He knew what he wanted; and he slipped sixpence into his hand. Gosling raised no further objection, but fetched out his big bunch of keys.

By this time the fugitive was at the gates.

Bunter halted breathlessly outside, clinging to the bars to save himself from falling. He was breathless and exhausted. He caught sight of the juniors within, and yelled to them frantically.

"Open the gates, you fellows—quick!"

"Gosling—Gosling! Buck up!"

"I'm a-coming!"

"Let me in!" shrieked Bunter, shaking the bars.

"They're nearly here!"

There was a shout from the distance.

"Here he is!"

"Duck him!"

"Hurrah! Duck him!"

Bunter rattled the gate desperately.

"Let me in! Let me in!"

"Buck up, Gossy!"

Gosling inserted the key, and unlocked the gate with irritating deliberation. The gate swung open, and Bunter rolled in.

"Here he is!"

The foremost of the pursuers reached the gate the next moment, and excitedly rushed in after Bunter. Bob Cherry grasped him.

"Not wanted here!" he remarked.

And the rash youth was hurled forth again.

He crashed into the others as they came panting up. Two or three of them rolled on the ground, and there was a chorus of gasps and ejaculations.

Gosling closed the gate and turned the key again.

"What have you been up to, you young ass?" growled Wharton. "What have you got half the village after you for?"

"Ow, ow! Groo!"

"What's the matter with him? Bring your lantern here Gossy."

Gosling turned his lantern upon the fat junior's face.

Harry Wharton and his comrades started back.

"Great Scott!"

"My hat!"

"The great-Scott-fulness is terrific."

"Where on earth have you been putting your face?"

"Yah! Yow! I've been ragged!"

"You look it!" gasped Nugent. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was all Bob Cherry's fault. That chap Bunny was one of the Lambs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They made me s-s-sing a song."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, of all the chivvies!" ejaculated Nugent. "They've done you up a treat. Have you had a really good time?"

"Yah!"

Bunter scuttled away towards the House. The chums of the Remove followed him, yelling with laughter. It was a joke up against Greyfriars, but they could not help laughing.

Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, met Bunter as he ran in. He stopped the fat junior with a grip on his shoulder.

"Who are you?" demanded Wingate. "What does this mean?"

"P-p-please, I'm Bunter."

"Bunter! How—what—"

"I've b-b-been ragged!"

"You don't mean to say you've been treated like this in the school?" demanded the senior.

"N-n-no! It was the Lambs—Lorrell's Lambs."

"Oh, I see!"

Wingate released the fat junior, laughing, and Bunter scuttled away to the nearest bath-room. For nearly an hour Bunter was busy with soap and scrubbing-brush and flowing hot water, seeking to get rid of the anointing. But his hair was still very tallowy, and there were signs of black about his eyes and ears when he at last emerged.

He came down to relate his woes, and to obtain sympathy and encouragement. But he found all the Lower School in possession of the story already, and roaring with laughter over it. He did not get a little bit of sympathy, and the only regret any of the juniors expressed was a regret that they hadn't seen him before he cleaned off the soot and the tallow.

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

BULSTRODE wore a most important look the next morning. He had succeeded in his object, of taking Harry Wharton's place as leader of the Remove in the campaign against the Lambs, and his success had got into his head just a little.

There was always a certain amount of "swank" about Bulstrode, and now there was more than ever. His rather prominent nose was higher in the air than usual as he walked about Greyfriars. Bulstrode was going to show the Remove, and Greyfriars generally, what was what.

The Famous Four looked on without comment, but they smiled to themselves. For the honour of Greyfriars they hoped that Bulstrode & Co. would succeed in putting the Lambs in their place. But they had their "doots."

Bulstrode was willing to let anybody and everybody have a hand in the affair; in fact, he tried to get recruits from the Upper Fourth and the Fifth. The Sixth, of course, were far too lordly to be mixed up in a row with seaside bounders. But Bulstrode argued that all Greyfriars ought to "back up" against the strangers. The Fifth and the Upper Fourth, however, did not seem to see it in the same light.

Bulstrode broached the subject to Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, when he met him in the Close after school that Wednesday morning.

"We're going for the Lambs this afternoon, Blundell," he remarked.

Blundell looked at him.

"Lambs!" he repeated vaguely.

"Yes; Lorrell's Lambs, you know."

"Lorrell's Lambs!"

"Yes; the bounders at Pegg."

"Oh!"

"You've heard of them?" said Bulstrode testily.

Blundell looked at his chum Bland.

"Have you ever heard of these Lamba, Blandy?" he asked.

"Lambs!" repeated Bland reflectively.

Bulstrode turned red.

"Look here, you know that the Lambs licked Wharton yesterday, and sent Billy Bunter home sooted and greased," he exclaimed.

"My dear chap," said Blundell loftily, "you surely don't think we know or care what goes on in the Lower Fourth, do you?"

"Oh, rats!" said Bulstrode. "You know all about it. I saw you in the hall cackling when Bunter came in."

"You saw us what?" demanded the Fifth-Former.

"Cackling," said Bulstrode defiantly. "Cackling like a pair of old hens."

Blundell made a movement towards the Remove, who promptly backed away.

"Hands off!" he said. "Look here, we're going for the Lambs this afternoon, and if you like to help, you can take a hand."

"Thanks, awfully!" said Blundell. "When we go for any lambs—did you say lambs, or sheep?"

"Lambs!" snapped Bulstrode.

"Good! When we go for them, we'll go with somebody a little older, thank you," said Blundell. "We really don't want to go about with a gang of fags."

"Rather not!" assented Bland.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bulstrode.

And he walked away, leaving the Fifth-Formers grinning. He looked for Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, and found them in the Close. To them he broached the subject of the proposed raid upon the Lambs.

"So you're going for them?" said Temple thoughtfully.

"Yes; we're going to lick them, you know."

"What's Wharton doing?"

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, Wharton's staying at home," he said. "He's dead in this act. I'm taking the lead, and if you fellows like to join in, the more the merrier, you know. I hear that there's a good big crowd of the bounders at Pegg."

Temple grinned at his companions.

"We wouldn't mind standing up for Greyfriars against the bounders," he remarked. "How many of the Lower Fourth are going?"

"Nearly twenty."

"Good! You're willing to follow my lead, of course?"

Bulstrode stared.

"Follow your lead?" he repeated unpleasantly.

"Certainly!" said Temple, in his most affable way. "Of course, that's what you were thinking of, wasn't it?"

"I wasn't thinking of anything of the sort. I was thinking that the Upper Fourth might like to back me up."

"Something wrong with your thinking apparatus, then, I should say. We're not likely to go around backing up fags."

"Why, you're fags yourselves."

"None of your cheek!" said Temple loftily.

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Bulstrode grunted, and left them. There was evidently no aid to be had from any Form but his own.

"Those rotters haven't a grain of loyalty to the school," he remarked to Skinner, when they went into the dining-room. "They won't back me up."

Skinner chuckled.

"Well, if loyalty to the school consists in backing you up, Bulstrode—"

"Oh, shut up!"

After dinner, Bulstrode marshalled his forces in the Close. There were a score of juniors in the array, and they all looked determined. The Famous Four stood on the steps of the School House and watched them.

"You fellows coming?" asked Ogilvy.

Wharton hesitated.

"We'll come if you like," he said. "What do you say, Bulstrode?"

"You can come," said Bulstrode. "I dare say we shall have use for every pair of fists. But it's understood that I'm leader, and you're not to interfere."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, all right! I don't suppose you'll make anything but a muck of it, but I'll back you up as far as hitting goes."

"Good! And don't let's have too much of your talk."

And so the Famous Four joined the ranks of the raiders.

And Bulstrode's followers were glad enough to have them. In the coming tussle the four hardest hitters at Greyfriars would be valuable, whoever was leader of the expedition.

Mark Linley looked out of his study window as the juniors gathered below, and Bulstrode beckoned to him.

"You're coming?" he called up.

The Lancashire lad hesitated.

"Where are you going?" he called back.

"To Pegg, to lick the Lambs."

"I've got some work to do this afternoon," said Mark.

"I'd rather not come, if you don't mind."

"Oh, you're always swotting!" said Bob Cherry. "Do come!"

"Let him skulk indoors if he likes," said Bulstrode rudely. "It's handy to have some work to do when one wants to keep clear of a row."

Mark Linley flushed crimson.

"I will come!" he said.

And in a minute more he was downstairs and in the Close. The juniors walked down to the gates, and a good many glances were cast after them. Billy Bunter was at the gates, and he blinked at the bold warriors through his spectacles as they came by.

"You coming, Bunter?" asked Nugent, with a grin.

Bunter shook his head.

"I'd like to come," he said, "but I've got a pain—due to insufficient nourishment, I think. I never get enough to eat. Otherwise, I should be very glad to come."

"Yes, we know how anxious you always are to get in the forefront of the battle, as they say in the novels," remarked Tom Brown. "It's as much as you can do to restrain your warlike ardour, isn't it?"

"Yes, rather. I'm rather a terrible chap when I'm roused," said Bunter. "Perhaps it's just as well I'm not going. I might hurt some of them too much."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really—"

The juniors marched on. Blundell and Bland, of the Fifth, watched them go, and so did Temple and his chums of the Fourth Form.

"May as well stroll down to the bay and see the fun," Temple remarked.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

And Blundell thought the same. Some more fellows strolled in a leisurely way on the track of Bulstrode's raiding party. They thought there would probably be some fun in watching the encounter with the Lambs.

The Greyfriars juniors strode down the lane towards the fishing village. Just as they entered Pegg they came in sight of two girlish forms. They were those of Marjorie and Miss Clara.

Wharton coloured as he saw them.

"The girls!" he muttered. "They've seen us, too! What giddy asses they will think us, going out in a crowd like this for a row!"

"The giddy assfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton & Co. had to stop as they met Marjorie. The other fellows marched on. The two girls looked at the chums of the Remove in surprise.

"What is it?" asked Miss Clara. "A treat?"

"Not exactly," said Harry awkwardly.

"You are going on the bay?"

"Oh, no!"

"It's a row," explained Bob Cherry.

"A what?"

"A row! We're going to lick the Lambs."

"Oh!"

"You see, Bulstrode's got the affair up, and we couldn't stand out," said Harry. "It's going to be a scrimmage."

Marjorie smiled.

"I hope you will not be hurt," she said.

Wharton coloured.

"Really, you know, we hope to do most of the hurting," he remarked.

"Yes, yes; but they are older than you are," said Marjorie. "Some of them are men, or almost men, you know."

"We'll manage them, though," said Nugent. "We'll do our best, anyway. The bother is that Bulstrode's leader, and he's bound to lead us into some trouble. I suppose you girls won't be anywhere near the Anchor this afternoon?"

Marjorie shook her head.

"No," she said; "as a matter of fact, some of those persons—the Lambs, as they call themselves—have spoken rudely to some of our girls, and Miss Primrose has warned us to keep away from them."

"We'll make them sit up for it, then."

"Excuse us now, we shall have to run," said Harry.

And the Greyfriars juniors raised their caps, and ran on after Bulstrode & Co., who were now almost out of sight. They overtook the main body in a few minutes, and the party marched on towards the Anchor Inn together.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Attack.

BUNNY, the great chief of the Lambs, came out of the inn in white flannels, with a bat under his arm. Bunny was looking, and feeling, very pleased with himself. The Lambs mostly played cricket—and they played it in a way to make the angels weep. But they were quite satisfied with their form at the grand old summer game, and they frequently, during their stay at the seaside, astonished the natives with a display of their prowess in that line. They had certainly never met a good side, or they would not have been so pleased with themselves. Easy victories over rural teams had made them swagger on their form; but if Bunny ever led an eleven to a real tussle, there were likely to be painful surprises in store for him.

The field behind the Anchor Inn was used for cricket in the summer, and football in the winter, by the youth of Pegg, but the Lambs had it to themselves during the afternoons while they honoured the Anchor with their presence. Most afternoons they played there, to the greater or less admiration of the natives.

"Ready, you fellows?" drawled Bunny.

"Yes, we're ready," said Boxer. "What have you been doing?"

"Having a ginger," said Bunny.

Bunny had really been having a gingerbeer, but he said it in a way to imply that he had been drinking brandy-and-water at least.

"Well, come on," said 'Erbert.

"Yeth, play up," said Ikey. "I'm thertain we shall beat you chaps, you know."

Bunny laughed confidently.

"You're welcome, if you can," he said. "Who's batting first?"

"Toth up."

They tossed up. There were twenty-two of the Lambs in the field, in flannels. The two elevens were captained by Bunny and Ikey. There were more of the Lambs, a dozen or so more, sitting on the fence or on benches, to watch the game, and smoke cheap cigarettes the while. For the Lambs would not have felt themselves really and truly Lambs if they had not smoked cigarettes.

"Seen any of those school chaps about to-day?" Bunny asked, as he strolled on to the pitch, having won the toss, and decided to bat.

"Not to-day," said Boxer.

"I passed the school before dinner," said another Lamb, who rejoiced in the name of Soapy—one peculiarity of the Lambs being that they never called one another by the names that properly belonged to them. "Some kids in the Close gave me a yell."

Bunny chuckled.

"We'll give 'em something to yell for, when we see them again," he remarked. "We're going to put those fellows in their places while we're down here."

"Hear, hear!"

"I've been thinking," went on Bunny, "that we might challenge them to a game of cricket. What do you think?"

"Good idea," said Boxer. "I believe they pride themselves on their cricket, and it would be about the best way of taking them down a peg."

"Yeth, rather!" said Ikey.

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"We'll do it," said Bunny.

Bunny was just opening his innings, when the juniors of Greyfriars appeared upon the scene. They were not immediately observed by the Lambs.

Bulstrode was exercising a certain amount of caution.

He led his men to the rear of the inn, and to the gate that gave admittance to the cricket-field, furthest from the building.

There, in the cover of a belt of willows, the juniors halted, and surveyed the enemy they were about to attack.

Twenty-two cricketers, and a dozen more fellows close at hand, made about three dozen foes, and Bulstrode's party was not so numerous.

Ogilvy suggested pausing and holding a council of war before they attacked.

Bulstrode sniffed.

"What's the good of a giddy council of war?" he demanded. "We know what we've come here for, and we're going to do it, I suppose. All the counselling of war in the world won't make any difference."

"But they're more than we are."

"I know that. Who's afraid?"

"Nobody's afraid, I think," said Harry Wharton mildly, "but it's just as well to consider a little before going for a more numerous party."

"Rats!"

"So say I," remarked Nugent.

Bulstrode turned upon the Famous Four with his most disagreeable expression.

"Look here, it was agreed that you fellows were to take a back seat, this time," he exclaimed. "If you want to run the show, you can get out."

"But—"

"And if you're afraid of the Lambs, you can get out. That's plain English."

Wharton clenched his fists. Ogilvy quickly pushed in between them.

"Stop that," said the Scottish junior. "It looks to me as if we shall have enough to do fighting the Lambs, without fighting one another."

"Well, let them shut up, then," growled Bulstrode.

"I'm done," said Harry. "I didn't come here to lead; and if you attack the Lambs, I'm ready. I've said my say."

"And quite enough, too. Come on!"

"You're going for them?" asked Ogilvy.

"Yes. We shall take them by surprise, anyway."

"They may use their bats and stumps, and we're unarmed."

"We shall have to risk that."

"But—"

"Look here," exclaimed Bulstrode. "Do you recommend chucking up the whole thing, after coming all this way to go for them? What will the other fellows say if we go back to Greyfriars and tell them we came here, and were afraid to show ourselves?"

"Faith, and ye're right."

"Let Wharton answer that question," said Bulstrode, with a sneer.

"They will say we were fools to come on such an expedition," said Harry quietly. "We ought first to have found out by scouting how many there were of the Lambs, and found a better opportunity than this of going for them."

"Oh, rats! Come on!"

Bulstrode opened the gate, and marched into the field. The juniors had no choice but to follow.

Bulstrode had plenty of bulldog courage, but he had few other gifts necessary to a leader. Harry Wharton felt that the whole affair was rash and reckless, but they were committed to it now.

There was a shout from some of the cricketers as the juniors were seen.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Bunny. "Here are the school kids!"

Bulstrode waved his hand.

"Go for them!" he shouted.

And the juniors gave a yell and rushed to the attack.

But Bunny showed more qualities as a leader than Bulstrode possessed. In a few seconds he had called the cricketers together, and the other Lambs had come running up to reinforce them. By the time the juniors reached them, the Lambs were standing all together in a compact body to receive them. And some of them had caught up bats and stumps to use in the tussle.

The Greyfriars party hurled themselves upon the enemy, hitting out furiously, and in a moment a wild combat was raging.

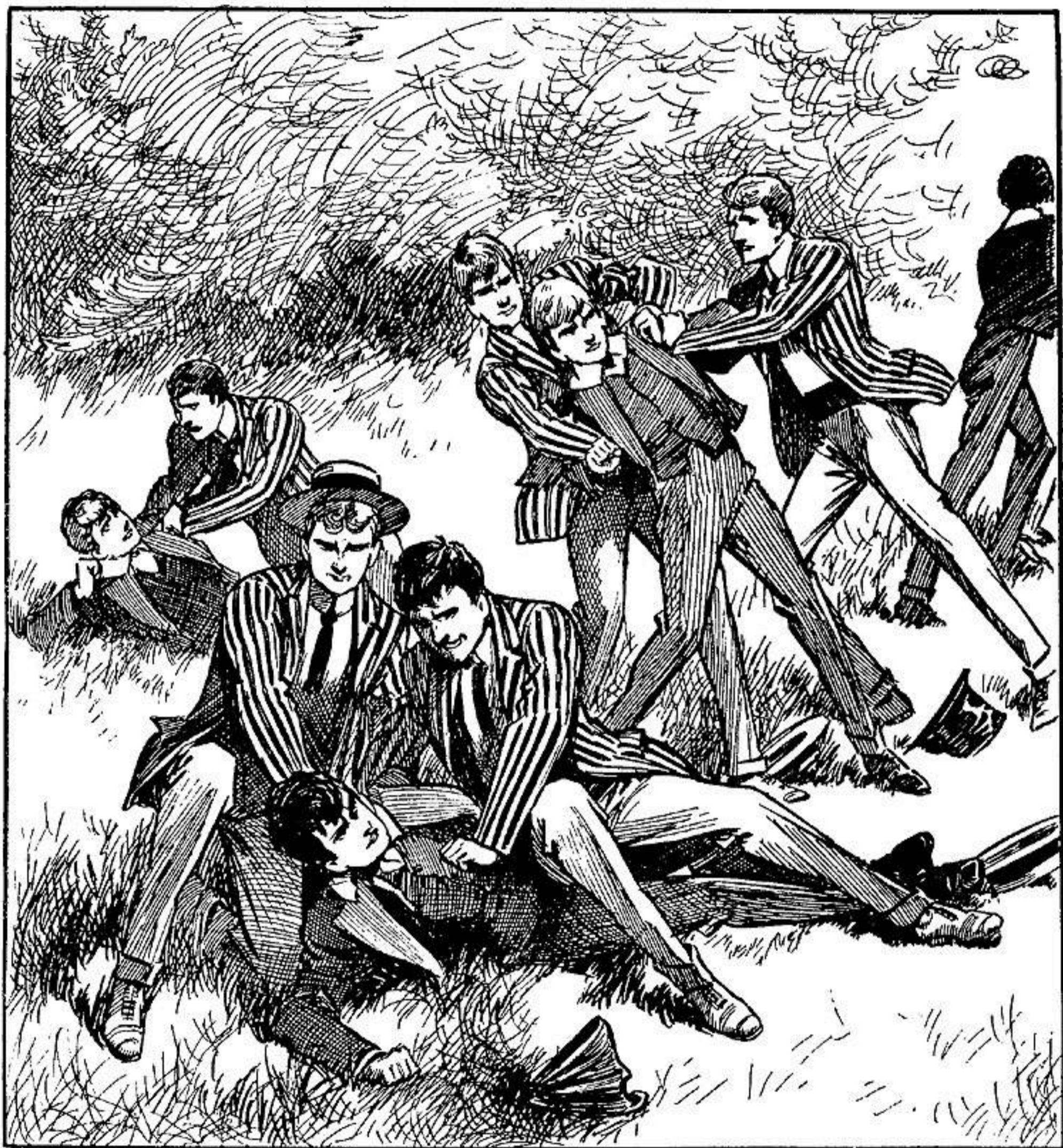
The Greyfriars charge drove the Lambs back, and broke their ranks, for the moment, but they rallied at once, and attacked in their turn.

"Give 'em beans!" roared Bunny.

And the Lambs yelled their war cry:

"Baa-baa!"

The initial success of the Greyfriars party lasted less than



Harry Wharton went down at last with two "Lambs" scrambling on top of him, keeping him down by sheer weight. "Keep him down, Ikey!" gasped Bunny, who was struggling with Bob Cherry. "Sit on his head, 'Erbert!"

a minute. Then numbers, and superior size and weight began to tell.

The juniors were driven back on all sides. Some of them, in close tussle with their foes, rolled struggling on the ground; some were knocked there sprawling, and the main body of them went surging and straggling back to the gate, hotly pressed by the victorious Lambs.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Bulstrode Does Not Cover Himself with Glory.

"SOCK it to 'em!"

"Baa-baa!"

"Buck up for Greyfriars!"

"Go it, Lambs!"

The conflict was wild and whirling.

Twice the juniors rallied desperately, and seemed to hold

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their own, but numbers would tell, and they were broken again and driven back.

The din of the conflict attracted a crowd of idlers at once to the field, and fisherfolk, and seaside visitors, and all sorts of people lined the fence, and looked on in astonishment and keen interest, some of them cheering the combatants.

More Lambs, attracted by the uproar, came upon the scene, and seeing what was going on, plunged into the scrimmage at once.

The odds were hopelessly against the juniors.

Half of them were sprawling on the ground now, a few running, and the stauncher part of the band gathered round the Famous Four, retreated towards the gate with their faces to the foe, resisting and contesting every inch of ground.

The Lambs were paying for their success. Some of them

were very much hurt; and darkened eyes and swollen noses were thick in their ranks.

Bunny yelled to his followers as they reached the gate, and the Lambs made a charge, and the Greyfriars juniors were finally broken up and scattered.

The Famous Four remained together, and with them stayed Mark Linley and Tom Brown, shoulder to shoulder, and still resisting; but retreating at the same time, for it was clear that all was up.

The rest of the juniors were running.

Bulstrode was on the ground, in the grasp of Ikey and Boxer. He struggled hard for his freedom, and succeeded in getting loose at last.

He gave a quick glance round as he jumped up.

His followers were fleeing on all sides, and Harry Wharton & Co. were retreating with their faces to the enemy.

Bulstrode gritted his teeth and ran. There was nothing else for him to do. Bunny yelled to the Lambs.

"Collar that chap! He's the leader! We'll anoint him!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared the Lambs.

Bulstrode heard the words, and shivered for a moment. The idea of going back to Greyfriars as Billy Bunter had gone was appalling. After all his swank, he would never get over the disgrace of such an ending to the adventure.

He ran his hardest, and never had he shown such a turn of speed on the cinder-path at Greyfriars.

But the Lambs were in pursuit.

Careless of the staring spectators on the street of Pegg, the victorious Lambs pursued the juniors on all sides.

Some of the fugitives, caught between the Lambs and the sea, were overtaken, and ducked in the bay; some were run to earth in the field, and bumped, or ducked in the ditches, or smothered with mud.

The Lambs were yelling with laughter now, and they fairly let themselves go in inflicting punishment upon their defeated and fleeing assailants.

Bulstrode dashed through the street of Pegg, and into the lane which led past Cliff House School towards Greyfriars.

Patter, patter, patter, came the footsteps behind him.

Bulstrode strained every nerve. But patter, patter, patter, came behind. The sound seemed to cling to him like an echo. Further back he could hear the yells of the Lambs; but one pursuer was close behind, and at every step Bulstrode feared to feel a hand on his shoulder, which would drag him back and hold him till the rest came up.

The burly Removite set his teeth. He swung round and stopped, determined to deal with the nearest enemy while the others were yet behind.

The runner came quickly on, and Bulstrode was about to hit out blindly, when a gasping voice called to him:

"All right, Bulstrode, it's me!"

It was not grammatical, but that did not matter. Bulstrode recognised Hazeldene's voice, and Hazeldene himself, at the same moment.

"You!" he gasped. "I thought it was——"

Hazeldene panted.

"They're close behind."

"Come on!"

"Hold on, Bulstrode. They're gaining."

"Then come on, as fast as you can, you fool!"

"Hold on!" panted Hazeldene. "I—I can't run any further. Stop! We can get into Cliff House. They can't touch us there."

Bulstrode halted again. It was not particularly gratifying to have to take refuge in a girls' school, after all he had said and done; but it would be still less pleasant to be sooted and greased by the Lambs. And they were coming, yelling, down the road, seven or eight of them, with Bunny in the lead, running hard.

"All right," said Bulstrode shortly.

They dashed for the gates of Cliff House. Bulstrode gave the gate a violent shove, but it did not move.

"Locked!" he exclaimed.

"Get over! Bunk me up!"

"Rats! Bunk yourself up!"

Bulstrode clambered quickly up the iron gates. He was strong and active, much more so than Hazeldene, and not nearly so exhausted with running. He was on top of the gates in a few seconds, and, without thinking of his companion, he dropped on the inner side of the iron bars.

Hazeldene tried to drag himself up, but his strength and his breath were equally exhausted, and he hung helplessly on the gate.

"Lend me a hand—quick!" he panted.

"Got him!" roared Bunny, dashing up.

Hazeldene made a despairing effort. At the same moment Bunny grasped him by the ankle Boxer collared him, and dragged him down.

The junior fell among the Lambs.

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"Help, Bulstrode!" he shouted.

Bulstrode was on the safe side of the gate. He stayed there. Even the reckless Lambs had no desire to trespass over a locked gate to pursue him.

"You coward!" yelled Hazeldene.

"Got one of them!" grinned Boxer.

"Hold him!"

"Thertainly, my thon," lisped Ikey. "We're holding the thilly ass!"

"Hold on, though," muttered Bunny. "Look here!"

"What are you doing to my brother?" exclaimed a girlish voice, and Marjorie Hazeldene ran up with Clara.

The Lambs retreated abashed.

Hazeldene shook himself free, and hung on to the gate, gasping painfully for breath. Marjorie stood between him and the Lambs, her eyes flashing.

"Pon my Tham, what a thweet gal!" said Ikey.

Bunny frowned.

"Shut up, Ikey!"

"But she is a thweet gal, Bunny."

"Dry up, I tell you! Don't you know how to be polite to a lady?" demanded Bunny severely, taking off his straw hat to Marjorie. "We didn't know the kid was your brother, miss," he went on gallantly. "We wouldn't have hurt a hair of his head if we'd known."

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Boxer.

"Great Thecott!" muttered Ikey.

"Shut up, Ikey! You see, miss, these chaps went for us on our own cricket-field, and we were bound to paste them a little," said Bunny.

"Oh!" said Marjorie.

"But if the chap's your brother, we'll let him off," said Bunny, with a bow. "Lorrell's Lambs are always polite to ladies. Don't mind Ikey—he learned those manners in a second-hand clothes shop his father keeps in Lambeth."

"It's a lie," said Ikey furiously. "You're a thilly ass!"

"Look here——"

"Rats!"

"Thank you very much," said Marjorie quickly. "You are very kind indeed. If my brother attacked you, I suppose you have a right to, but——"

"Not at all," said Bunny. "A lady's wish is a command to us. That's the motto of the Lambs, miss. We wouldn't touch him for worlds. It was only fun, anyway, you know; we wouldn't have hurt him."

And the Lambs, all taking off their caps very politely to Marjorie and Clara, departed. Hazeldene gasped.

"Jolly lucky for me you came up, Marjorie!" he exclaimed.

"They were very polite," said Miss Clara, with a glance after the Lambs.

"Very," said Marjorie. "It was foolish of you to attack them, Hazel; especially as you don't seem to have had a chance."

"We hadn't an earthly," said Hazeldene ruefully. "It was that ass Bulstrode led us into it, you know. They've simply wiped up the ground with us. And Bulstrode just whipped over the gate here, too, and left me to face them alone."

Marjorie's lip curled. She had seen the desertion from a distance. Bulstrode could not have helped Hazeldene much against the Lambs certainly; but Marjorie knew that Harry Wharton would never have left him alone to the enemy.

Bulstrode was looking through the bars of the gate still. His face went crimson as he caught the expression upon Marjorie's face. It was gone in a moment, but not before Bulstrode had seen it.

"I'm sorry," he said. "We were both trying to scoot over the gate, Miss Marjorie, and—and I got over first, that was all."

Marjorie nodded without replying.

"It will be safe for you to go now," said Miss Clara demurely.

The word "safe" made Bulstrode flush again. Marjorie rang the bell, and the old porter came and unlocked the gate, looking curiously at Bulstrode the while. The girls went in, and Bulstrode tramped away to Greyfriars with Hazeldene, with a black cloud on his face, and he did not speak a word the whole of the way.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

After the Battle.

HARRY WHARTON & Co. reached Greyfriars.

They came in limping and gasping, and they found that many of the juniors had already arrived.

All of them looked very much the worse for wear.

Every few moments another fellow would come in, breathless and dusty, to be greeted with ironical remarks by the crowd at the gate.

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS

"Had a good time, Wharton?" asked Temple, of the Upper Fourth, as Harry came in with his dusty chums.
 "Oh, ripping!" said Harry, rubbing his swollen nose.
 "Very exciting!"
 "The excitement was terrific."
 "Licked the Lambs?"
 "Oh, rats!"

Harry and his comrades went up to the dormitory to wash and change. They were in a state of dust and disorder which they did not wish the masters' eyes to observe. They found many more juniors in the dormitory similarly occupied. Bulstrode came in last with Hazeldene.

A general growl greeted Bulstrode.

"Here he is."

"Here's the giddy leader!"

"Here's Bulstrode!"

"Ass!"

"Fathead!"

"Call yourself a leader?"

"Yah!"

Bulstrode scowled round at the angry Removites.

He had certainly led his Form-fellows to a terrible disaster, and covered them with ridicule in the eyes of their schoolfellows and of the enemy.

Bulstrode's leadership was at an end.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Bulstrode. "It wasn't my fault. If some more of the fellows had backed us up—"

"But they didn't, look you," said Morgan. "There weren't enough of us to go for the Lambs, and you ought to have known better."

"I proposed a council of war," said Ogilvy.

"Faith, and ye did!"

"Of course, Bulstrode knew best," remarked Elliott. "That's a way of his. The ass has made us look fools all round. I think he ought to be bumped."

The suggestion caught on at once. The Removites were angry, and they wanted to wreak it upon somebody.

There was a general movement towards Bulstrode. The Remove bully backed away in alarm.

"Hands off!" he said savagely.

"Bump him!"

"Collar him!"

And a rush was made for Bulstrode.

Harry Wharton stepped in the way, and waved back the too eager juniors.

"Hold on," he said quietly. "Bulstrode has been handled as roughly as the rest of us, and he's had quite enough."

"He's made blessed fools of us!" exclaimed Trevor angrily.

"You made fools of yourselves," said Harry quietly.

"You took him for your leader with your eyes open."

"We're going to bump him!"

"He deserves it!"

"Clear out, Wharton!"

"Mind your own business, confound you!"

Wharton did not stir; and Bob Cherry and Nugent and Mark Linley came quietly to his side. The intended raggers paused.

"Look here," said Stott, "why shouldn't we bump him? Why can't you keep your oar out, Wharton?"

"Well, you can bump me, too," said Harry.

"And me," said Frank Nugent. "You're a set of giddy asses for following Bulstrode's lead at all; and now it's turned out badly, you've only got yourselves to thank. You're not going to bump him."

"Not much," said Mark Linley.

"The notmuchfulness is terrific."

The raggers receded. They did not want a general scrimmage in the dormitory, and it was certain that they could not rag Bulstrode without one.

"Oh, chuck it!" said Elliott. "We don't want a row."

"Wharton's right," said Ogilvy, after a pause. "It's not cricket to go for Bulstrode; we knew he was a duffer, to start with."

And the idea of inflicting punishment upon the unsuccessful leader was given up.

"Thank you, Wharton," said Bulstrode, in a low voice.

Harry nodded.

"It's all right," he said.

"You needn't be afraid of my taking the lead again," said Bulstrode bitterly. "They'd turn on you, in the same way."

"Well, as a matter of fact, you have made a ghastly mess of it," said Wharton bluntly. "The fellows are wild about it. I'm not pleased myself. We've all got bruises or cuts or black eyes, and the whole school will be laughing at us."

"The laughfulness will be terrific."

"Well, I'm done," grunted Bulstrode. "The Lambs can ride the high horse as much as they like, for all I care."

"And they will," said Bob Cherry. "They'll crow like anything over this."

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NEXT WEEK: "ALONZO'S PLOT."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

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ONE
PENNY.

"And we shall be chipped by all Greyfriars," Tom Brown remarked.

The New Zealand junior was right.

All Greyfriars was soon in possession of the story, and all Greyfriars chuckled over the unsuccessful expedition and its absurd conclusion.

The matter came to the doctor's ears, with the result that Harry Wharton, as captain of the Lower Fourth, was called into his study. Wharton went with the full expectation of being called over the coals for the expedition; which was rather hard lines, as he had not been the leader, and had been against the idea all the time.

Dr. Locke gave him a severe look when he presented himself.

"I hear that there has been a great deal of fighting between some of the juniors and some holiday visitors staying at Pegg, Wharton!" he exclaimed. "Mr. Tozer has reported it to me, and I have heard it from other quarters, too."

"Yes, sir."

"The offenders are chiefly boys in the Remove, I believe?"

"All, I think, sir."

"And you had a hand in the business?"

"I was there, sir."

"This will not do, Wharton. I hear that the seaside visitors at Pegg are not very orderly, and they are best avoided. I will not inquire which side was in the wrong, as I have no doubt the blame could be equally divided with justice. But I must warn you not to enter into any affair of the sort again. I suppose the bruises on your face and nose were received in this fight?"

"Yes, sir."

"Please remember what I say, Wharton. You must avoid these seaside visitors, and if there is any more fighting, I shall inquire into it very strictly."

"Very well, sir."

"For the present I shall say no more. You may go."

Harry Wharton left the Head's study. The Removites knew where he had been, and they gathered round him when he re-entered the common-room.

"Any trouble?" asked Hazeldene.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Only I've been called over the coals for the row," he replied. "I take the blame, as captain of the Form. The Head says there's to be no more rowing with the Lambs, or he'll inquire into it, and make it warm for us."

The juniors looked blank.

"Then we're to give them best!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"I suppose so."

"Blessed if I will!" exclaimed Tom Brown. "Hang it, we're not going to take this licking lying down, Wharton."

"Well, that's what the Head says."

"We shall have to get round it somehow."

Harry shook his head.

"If the Lambs go for us, we can defend ourselves," he said. "But we can't look for them, you know. We've got to do as the Head says."

"It's rotten!"

"We ought to lick them!"

"The oughtfulness is terrific."

"Do you mean to say we're not to get our own back at all, Wharton?" exclaimed half a dozen angry voices.

"I don't see what's to be done."

"Well, think of something," said Elliott. "You're Form captain, ain't you?"

"Well, that's cool! You deposed me once, and now—"

"Now you're reinstated," grinned Ogilvy, "and you're called upon to think of a wheeze for putting the Lambs in their place. We can't knuckle under to a licking like this, that's certain."

"Well, I'll do my best," said Harry shortly.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton Has an Idea.

"BLESSED if I know what to do," said Frank Nugent. "I can't see light," Bob Cherry remarked. "You see, if the Head hadn't forbidden us to go for them, we might have done something. But now—"

"We're done!"

"The donefulness is terrific."

"What do you think, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton did not reply.

It was the day after the unsuccessful expedition against the Lambs, and the Removites were still feeling very sore about it—literally. The sorefulness, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh would have put it, was terrific.

The Remove generally looked to Harry Wharton to think of some plan for avenging the defeat, and restoring the prestige of the Remove.

The way the other fellows chipped them was exasperating to the Removes; and but for the Head's strict orders, there would have been another expedition, probably with results just as disastrous as in the first case.

Harry Wharton did not believe that another expedition would be any good, unless it were backed up by the other Forms, which was not likely to be the case. Anyway, it was out of the question now; the Head had to be obeyed.

But how else the Lambs were to be brought to their senses, and the prestige of the Remove restored, was a puzzle.

It was rather hard upon Harry Wharton that he should be called upon to solve the problem. It would have been more just to hand it over to Bulstrode. But Bulstrode had declared that he had washed his hands of the matter; and in any case none of the Removes would have been likely to follow his lead again just yet.

The Famous Four were holding a council of war in No. 1 Study; but Bob Cherry and Nugent and Hurree Singh had been quite unable to think of a plan.

Wharton was sitting silent now, with corrugated brows, evidently thinking deeply.

"What do you think, Wharton?" repeated Nugent.

"Eh?"

"Have you hit on a wheeze?"

"I've been thinking—"

"Go ahead!" said Bob Cherry, with much satisfaction.

"I can see there's something coming. What is it?"

Wharton smiled.

"Well, as we can't go for the Lambs again, we shall have to give up the idea of licking them, unless they come here, and that's not likely to happen," he said. "The Head's orders will have to be obeyed."

"I suppose so. But—"

"But you remember what the Lambs were doing when we went for them yesterday," said Harry. "They were playing cricket."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"I've heard about their cricket," he remarked. "It's a sight for gods and men and little fishes, from all accounts."

"All the better."

"I don't catch on. What has their cricket to do with us?"

"I was thinking of playing them."

Bob Cherry started.

"Playing the Lambs—at cricket?"

"Exactly."

"By Jove," said Nugent, "that's a good wheeze! I rather think we should crawl all over them, you know."

"The crawlfulness would be terrific."

"I think we could beat them easily enough," said Harry.

"I've heard that they brag of their cricket, and they've beaten two or three country teams in this neighbourhood. At the same time, I believe they can't really play for toffee."

"That's so."

"We're not allowed to go for them, but if we could lick them hollow at cricket, that would be a licking."

"Yes, rather!"

"Then what price sending them a challenge?"

"Good egg!"

"The goodfulness is terrific!"

"We could play them on Saturday afternoon," said Harry. "We have a match on with the Upper Fourth, but we can get Temple to postpone that."

"That's all right."

"Then I'll propose it to the fellows, and then go over to Pegg on my bike and take the challenge to the Lambs."

Bob Cherry looked serious.

"Would that be safe?" he asked. "If you go over to Pegg alone, you'll be at their mercy, and they may treat you as they treated Bunter."

Wharton shook his head.

"I think not, if I go with a friendly message," he said. "It will be like a flag of truce."

"Safer to write."

"Well, to-day's Thursday, you see, and we must give them notice, and get their answer," said Harry. "They wouldn't get a letter till to-morrow morning. Saturday's the only day to meet them. Besides, if they agreed by letter, we should have to arrange details by word of mouth."

"H'm! I don't like the idea. But if you go, we'll all go."

"No, I'll go alone. Four of us couldn't do any more than one against a crowd, and if they cut up rusty, one's quite enough to come home sooted and greased," said Harry, laughing. "You fellows can wait for me in the lane, if you like."

"All right, then."

"I'll go down and tell the fellows now, and see how they like it."

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NEXT
WEEK:

"ALONZO'S PLOT."

The Greyfriars Remove received the suggestion with enthusiasm.

It was the neatest possible way of getting out of the dilemma the Head's orders had placed them in.

They could not fight the Lambs again, and they did not want to lie down under their licking. To defeat the enemy on the cricket-field would, at least, be a victory over them, to balance the account.

And that they would defeat the enemy at cricket there was not a Remove who allowed himself to have a doubt.

The Lower Fourth cricket team was in wonderful form for a junior side, and quite equal to the Upper Fourth Eleven; in fact, many ambitious Removes wanted to challenge the Fifth Form team to a match.

That they would lick the Lambs they were certain.

Bunny and his men were all older and bigger; but they did not play the game as it was played at Greyfriars.

Wharton's idea was endorsed by the whole Form at once.

The young captain of the Remove went down to the bicycle-shed for his machine, and his chums also brought out their jiggers. They were to go with him as far as the border of the village.

The four cyclists wheeled their machines out at the gates, and mounted in the road, and pedalled away towards the bay.

On the outskirts of Pegg, Nugent, and Hurree Singh, and Bob Cherry, dismounted, to wait for the return of their leader.

Harry Wharton rode on alone into the village.

The straggling street of Pegg faced the bay, the view of the sea interrupted by only a few buildings. It was a fine afternoon, and the sands were covered with seaside loungers and children. Outside the Anchor Inn a group of the Lambs smoked cigarettes and chatted. Bunny, and Ikey, and Boxer, and 'Erbert among them. They caught sight of the Greyfriars junior as he pedalled up.

"My only 'at!" said Ikey. "I can thee a Greyfriars chap!"

"It's Wharton!" said Boxer.

Bunny chuckled.

"We'll have him off his bike!" he remarked. "Get into the road and stop him, Boxer! Never mind if he runs over you!"

Boxer grinned and ran into the road. But there was no danger of Wharton riding into him, for the Greyfriars junior jumped off his machine as soon as he was opposite the inn.

"I've come to see you, Bunny, if that's your name," said Harry Wharton quietly. "I'm the bearer of a message from the Greyfriars Remove."

"Oh!" said Bunny.

"So paws off, please!"

Bunny grinned.

"Come in," he said, making signs to the Lambs to let Wharton alone. "If you've got a message, we'll all hear it."

Wharton leaned his machine against the inn wall, and followed Bunny indoors.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Challenge Accepted.

"HALLO!"

"Who's this?"

"What have you got there, Bunny?"

There was a crowd of the Lambs in the inn-parlour and in the garden outside. They all stared at Wharton in surprise. They had not expected to see a Greyfriars junior come in with the redoubtable Bunny after the happenings of the previous day.

"It's a messenger," said Bunny.

"Looking for trouble?" suggested Soapy.

"No," said Harry Wharton. "I've come from Greyfriars to bring you fellows a challenge."

"A challenge?"

"Oh, go ahead!" said Bunny, with a grin. "Are you looking for another licking?"

"Yes, if you can give us one. The Head has forbidden us to tackle you any more—"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared the Lambs.

"The good little boys all do as they are told!" said Boxer.

"Ho, he, he!"

"Baa-baa!"

"And it's safer for them in this case," remarked 'Erbert.

"Much safer," said Ikey.

Wharton flushed.

"Let's come to business," he said. "We're willing to tackle you in another way. I believe you fellows think you can play cricket?"

"We live on it!" said Bunny.

"Good! We play cricket, too."

The Lambs roared.

"Schoolboy cricket!" said 'Erbert. "You don't mean to

say that you've come here to bring us a challenge to a cricket-match?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Cheek!" said Boxer.

"Only fancy!" said Erbert.

"Awful thauce!" said Ikey.

"We'll meet you on Saturday afternoon, if you've got the date open," said Wharton. "Either on your ground here, or ours at Greyfriars, just as you like."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Do you accept?"

Bunny shook his head.

"I'm afraid we couldn't agree to play a schoolboy team," he remarked. "You see, it would make us look ridiculous."

"I don't see how you could very well look more ridiculous than you are," remarked Wharton. "Still, I suppose your cricket would be very funny."

"Why, you cheeky cub—"

"Thaucky young rascal!"

"Anoint him, Bunny!"

Wharton stepped back and clenched his fists.

"I trusted to your honour in coming here," he said.

"That's all right," said Bunny. "You can go safely enough. But I don't know about playing you at cricket."

"We'll undertake to lick you."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"And to do it easily, too!" said Wharton. "If you're not afraid of a licking you'll accept the challenge."

"Look here—"

"None of your thauce!"

"Well, are you going to meet us?"

Bunny looked at his followers. Most of them were laughing. The Lambs, evidently, did not consider that the juniors of Greyfriars would have the remotest chance against them in the cricket-field.

"What do you fellows say?" asked Bunny. "It will be fun."

"Thplendid fun," said Ikey.

"Oh, I don't mind for one," said Soapy. "It will be something to tell the fellows when we get back to town."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Then you accept?" asked Harry.

Bunny nodded.

"Yes, we accept," he said. "We're doing nothing special on Saturday afternoon, and we may as well lick you at cricket."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"What time will suit you?" said Harry. "We can begin any time after one."

"As soon as you like."

"Which ground?"

"Oh, here!" said Boxer quickly. "If we get inside the walls of the school the fellows may pay us out for yesterday."

Wharton coloured.

"There would be nothing of that sort," he said. "Of course, nobody would raise a finger to touch you if you came over to play cricket."

"We'd rather not risk it."

"I don't believe in running rithks," said Ikey.

"Just as you like. We'll come over here if you prefer it," said Wharton. "It's for you to say."

"Our ground, then," said Bunny. "Besides, it will be convenient for the crowd to see—and I want all Pegg to see the fun."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"It will be a treat for them," Soapy remarked. "The pity is that we can't get it taken down on the cinematograph."

And the Lambs roared again.

"Very well," said Wharton. "If we get here at two o'clock Saturday, will that suit you?"

"Down to the ground," said Bunny.

"I think that's about all. Good-bye!"

Bunny walked out of the inn with Wharton, to see him safe through the lines, as it were. The chief of the Lambs was grinning hugely.

He evidently regarded the whole affair as a joke, which would not redound to the credit of Greyfriars School.

"Well, good-bye!" he said. "There's your bike. We'll see you on Saturday afternoon at two o'clock."

"Right-ho!"

Wharton mounted his machine and rode slowly down the street. He was satisfied with the result of his mission; though he was aware that, but for the influence of Bunny, the Lambs would have failed to respect his person as a messenger, and he might have been ragged as Billy Bunter had been. However, all was well that ended well.

There were a good many of the Lambs out, and they hooted and chi-iked Wharton as they caught sight of him in the street.

One festive Lamb ran towards him with the intention of upsetting him; but Wharton released his right foot from the pedal, and held it out, and gently pushed the Lamb over with the boot on his chest.

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ONE
PENNY.

He left the Lamb sitting in the mud in a state of great astonishment, and rode on laughing.

He had almost reached the end of the town, when a sound of loud shouting fell upon his ears. He glanced round towards the sea.

"Marjorie!" he exclaimed.

Marjorie and Clara were walking towards Cliff House from the path that ran round the base of the great cliffs. Half a dozen Lambs had gathered to stare at them, and they greeted the girls with the peculiar chant in unison which was the Lamb-like way of passing remarks upon things and people.

"These are jolly nice girls!" roared six voices together, in a sort of tune. The tune could be written in tonic-solfa as Doh, me, soh, soh, me, doh, or, in the old notation, in the key of C, as C, E, G, G, E, C.

Marjorie and Clara walked on with crimson faces, without looking at the Lambs.

The Lambs burst into the chant again.

"Why won't they speak to us?"

The girls did not look round.

"Won't you say just one word?" chanted the Lambs again, in the same doh, me, soh, soh, me, doh, as before.

Wharton knitted his brows.

The six Lambs, as the girls would not look at them, formed a circle round, and prevented Marjorie and Clara from going on their way.

Wharton gave a loud whistle, as a signal to his chums in the distance, and then turned his bicycle upon the sands, and rode towards the spot.

Marjorie and Clara had halted in dismay and some fear.

"Please let us pass," said Marjorie, with a quaver in her voice.

"Won't you give us a kiss?" chanted the Lambs to the same tune.

"Please—"

"Give us just one kiss each!" chanted the seaside bounders.

Biff!

Harry Wharton came tearing up on his bicycle, and without ringing his bell. The Lambs did not see him until he was upon them. The bicycle dashed into the midst of them, and two or three went sprawling on the sands.

The cycle rolled over with the shock, and Harry sprang clear and alighted on his feet.

Marjorie gave a cry.

"Harry!"

"I'm here," said Harry, as he ran to the side of the girls.

He put his hands up as he spoke—and not a moment too soon, for the Lambs were rushing furiously at him.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Hard Run!

HARRY WHARTON met the half dozen Lambs coolly as they rushed at him.

He knew he would not be able to keep up such a combat long, but he meant to do his best, and already he could see Bob Cherry and Nugent and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh scorching at top speed towards the spot.

Harry met the Lambs with straight hits from the shoulder, and two of them went down heavily upon the sands.

Then he was in the grasp of the others.

As it happened, it was a rather lonely spot at the foot of the cliffs, and there was little likelihood of any interference.

The Lambs were vengeful.

They had not meant any harm exactly—their chipping of the girls being a form of rough horseplay they frequently indulged in. But they had been hurt, and they were angry, and they meant to make Wharton sorry that he had come upon the scene.

In the grasp of four fellows, each bigger than himself, Wharton struggled desperately, but in vain.

He was rolled down on the sands, and the Lambs rolled over him.

"Help!" cried Marjorie.

The three cyclists raced up.

"Here we are!" gasped Bob Cherry.

They jumped off their machines, and threw themselves into the fight in the twinkling of an eye.

The sudden attack disconcerted the Lambs.

The odds were still on their side, but they did not seem to have a chance against the Greyfriars juniors.

Bob Cherry accounted for two of them with heavy uppercuts which left the recipients no desire to come on again, and Hurree Singh and Nugent each proceeded to make one of the enemy properly sorry for himself.

Wharton was left with two weedy youths grasping him.

He wrenched himself free and sprang up. The Lambs sprang up too, but they did not remain perpendicular for long.

Wharton let out with his left like a flash, and sent one of

them rolling, and the other would have followed, had he not taken to his heels in time.

He ran off, and one of Bob Cherry's assailant's followed fast; and then the rest of the Lambs ran.

The juniors, a little dishevelled and breathless, but victorious remained on the spot.

"By George!" gasped Nugent. "It was lucky we came up!"

"Yes, rather!" said Harry.

"Thank you so much!" exclaimed Marjorie. "I do not know whether they meant to be rough or not, but I was getting very frightened."

"So was I," confessed Miss Clara. "You fellows had better slide—"

"Oh, Clara!"

"Better slide," said Miss Clara firmly, "and so had we. They may come back with some more, you know. The whole village has been in an uproar ever since the Lambs came here. It's rotten!"

"Jolly rotten," agreed Harry. "They spoil the place."

The juniors and the girls walked quickly away. There was no need to wait for a crowd of the Lambs to arrive, as they were sure to do ere long. The juniors wheeled their machines as far as the gates of Cliff House.

"We're playing the Lambs at cricket on Saturday afternoon, in the field behind the Anchor," said Wharton. "Would you care to see the match?"

"Yes, very much, if—"

"Oh, you'll be safe enough there, or we wouldn't let you come," said Harry. "We shall get a crowd of the chaps to come and see fair play, you know."

"Then we'll be glad to come," said Miss Clara; "and I hope we shall see you lick them, too."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Not much doubt about that. They can't play cricket for toffee, I hear."

The juniors bade the girls good-bye at the gate of Cliff House, and mounted their machines. As they did so a cry came from Marjorie, who was looking after them.

"What is it?" asked Wharton, looking round.

Marjorie pointed down the road.

From the direction of Pegg came a bunch of cyclists, all scorching at top speed. Even in the distance Harry could recognise the Lambs.

He laughed lightly.

"It's all right," he said; "we'll be off."

He raised his cap again and jumped on his machine. The four juniors swept down the road as the Lambs came tearing along after them.

Miss Clara laughed.

"They will easily get to Greyfriars," she said.

So thought the juniors. They were good cyclists, and the Lambs did not look as if they were. Harry Wharton looked back as they swept into Rylcombe Lane.

The Lambs were coming on at top-speed. From their hard-riden machines came a sound of clinking and rattling. The juniors grinned as they heard it. The machines were mostly hired in Pegg, and were not exactly in condition for a hard race.

Harry saw at a glance that they could have ridden away from the pursuers quite easily, but he did not choose to do so.

"Let's give them a run," he remarked. "We may as well take them round the other road, and through Courtfield, and then to Greyfriars."

The juniors chuckled at the idea.

The straight run to Greyfriars was very short, but round the Courtfield road was some miles, and it would be an excellent joke to take the pursuers for that long and weary run, and elude them at last.

"Slacken a bit, then," said Nugent; "we're simply walking away from them now."

"The walkfulness is terrific."

The Lambs, in fact, were dropping behind, though they were putting on their greatest efforts. They were already thinking of abandoning the chase when the juniors slackened pace.

Boxer, who was among the pursuers, uttered an exclamation.

"They're slowing!" he said.

"They're fagged!" said Soapy.

"Put it on, and we'll have them!"

The Lambs rode harder than ever. There were eight or nine of them, and the clinking of the hired machines made a sort of accompaniment as they rode.

The Famous Four were free-wheeling now, and they kept it up till the leading Lamb was only a couple of yards behind.

Then Wharton gave the signal, and they increased their speed, pedalling away industriously, but not as hard as they could, for they wished to lead the Lambs further on. Bob Cherry looked back and waved his hand, and the Lambs gave a yell of wrath.

The cyclists swept through Courtfield, and out into the

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broad high road beyond. The Lambs panted on. There was a sudden "pop," and one of them dropped behind with a burst tyre. A few minutes later another stopped with his chain off and his machine curling up.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We shall shake them off on the instalment system at this rate," he remarked. "We'll leave them distributed all along the road."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop, you rotters!" bawled Boxer.

"Not this evening," sang Bob Cherry—"some other evening!"

"We'll skin you!"

"Well, here we are, waiting to be skinned."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Lambs made another effort. Again they swept up close to the juniors. But just as the prize was within their reach, so to speak, the Famous Four darted away again at top-speed.

Two or three of the Lambs, quite breathless, tailed off now, and only Boxer and a couple more kept up the pursuit.

Wharton glanced back, and grinned.

"There's only three left!" he exclaimed.

"May as well stop, then."

"Keep on to Greyfriars—it's not far now."

The juniors rode on to the school. Boxer & Co., too excited to remember that the odds were now against them, even if they did overtake the fugitives, dashed on.

Harry Wharton & Co. rode up to the gates of Greyfriars, and dismounted.

Boxer & Co. came dashing up

The Famous Four stood ready to receive them. The three breathless Lambs rode up, but at a slackening speed.

It had dawned upon them suddenly that it would not be to their profit to overtake the Greyfriars juniors now.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood waiting. The Lambs free-wheeled, and then jammed their brakes on—and then, before they reached the waiting juniors, they turned their machines in the road, and pedalled back the way they had come.

The juniors gave a yell.

"Come on!"

"Here we are!"

"Rats!"

"The ratfulness is terrific."

But the Lambs prudently declined to be drawn. They pedalled back down the road to Pegg, and disappeared; and the juniors, laughing heartily, went in at the school gates.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER

The Eleven.

"WELL?"

A dozen voices echoed that monosyllable as the chums of the Remove came into the schoolhouse.

"Well?"

"Well?" repeated Bob Cherry. "Quite well, thanks!"

"The wellfulness is terrific."

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Tom Brown. "Is it all right? Are the Lambs going to play us on Saturday?"

"They are."

"Good egg!"

"Hurrah!"

"And I think we shall get our own back, and some over," said Harry Wharton, with a laugh. "We'll give them cricket!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The news put the Remove in a good humour at once.

Even Bulstrode grinned over it, sore as he was feeling generally. He asked Wharton to put him into the eleven. Wharton thought it over.

As a rule he did not play Bulstrode, who could have been an excellent cricketer if he had chosen, but who did not take the trouble to keep himself up to the mark.

But Harry did not think that a first-class team would be required to meet Bunny and his merry men, and he thought he might as well give Bulstrode a chance.

"Right you are," he said. "I'll play you!"

"Thanks!" said Bulstrode. "I'll do my best. I've been down at the nets already, in case you should take me on. I'm in better form than any of the Lambs, anyway."

Wharton nodded.

"That's all right. Mind, we've got to pull together, and pull hard. I want to lick the Lambs—but that's not all. I want to lick them without giving them a look-in—if possible, without letting them break their duck. It might be done."

"Ha, ha! I'll do my level best, you may be sure."

And the next day the Remove eleven spent every possible moment on the cricket-ground, getting to the top of their form.

Besides Bulstrode and Wharton, the team included Hurree Singh, Nugent, and Bob Cherry, of course. Then there were

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

Tom Brown, Mark Linley, Ogilvy, Morgan, Desmond, and Hazeldene. It was a strong eleven.

Wharton had offers from all sides from fellows who wanted to play. He had to refuse them; thereby convincing the offerers that he was a rotten cricket captain, who didn't know anything about his business.

But Wharton was used to that—a cricket captain has to get used to it. He went on his way serenely, unmoved by it.

One of the fellows who offered his services was Alonzo Todd. Todd was such a good-natured fellow that Wharton hated refusing him anything; but he would as soon have played Billy Bunter as Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars.

"I should very much like to play," said Todd, tapping Wharton on the shoulder. "I have nothing to do on Saturday afternoon, you know, so it would be quite convenient."

"To you, perhaps," assented Wharton.

"Exactly. And I want to make myself useful; my Uncle Benjamin always told me to make myself useful whenever possible."

"Can you play cricket?"

"I don't know," said Todd.

"Eh?"

"I don't know. You see, I have never tried, so I really don't know whether I can play or not," said the Duffer, beaming.

Wharton gasped.

"You haven't played—and you ask me to put you in the eleven for an out match!" he exclaimed blankly.

"Yes. I should like to be useful, you know."

"My hat!"

"I believe the game is very simple," said Todd. "I have watched the fellows playing, you know. So far as I can see, you simply have to bowl a ball at a wicket, and knock the bails off the stumps."

Wharton grinned.

"That's all," he assented.

"Or if you are batting, you have only to knock the ball a certain distance with the bat, and run to and fro on the pitch before it is thrown in."

"Exactly."

"It seems to me very simple."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wharton. "It's not the only thing that's simple here. I think you are about the simplest, Toddy!"

"Really, Wharton—"

But Wharton was walking away, to tell the other fellows of Todd's desire to distinguish himself in a simple game he had never played before.

The Removites roared over it, much to the surprise of Alonzo Todd. Todd's name was not included in the list for the match.

On Friday the cricketers were hard at practice, and Wharton was quite satisfied with the shape of his team.

The other fellows at Greyfriars took a considerable interest in the coming match. Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, deigned to recognise the existence of the Remove on this occasion. On Friday evening they came into No. 1 Study when Harry Wharton and his chums were doing their prep.

"I hear you're playing Lorrell's Lambs to-morrow, Wharton," Temple remarked.

"We are."

"Big team for you kids to tackle," said Temple, with a shake of the head. "That chap Bunny, for instance, is eighteen or nineteen, if he's a day."

"We shall manage them."

"I was thinking that we might strengthen your team for you," said Temple. "On an occasion like this, I believe in putting Form rivalry and anything of that sort aside."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney, and Fry nodded assent.

"Good!" said Wharton. "That's very decent of you!"

"I shouldn't mind captaining the team," said Temple generously. "I'd put five or six Fourth-Form chaps into it, too. You and Nugent and Cherry could play."

"You're too good," said Nugent.

"The goodfulness is terrific; but what would become of my honourable and esteemed self?" asked the Nabob of Bhaniapur.

"Well, we'd put you in, too," said Temple. "You can bowl well for a kid. What do you say, Wharton?"

"Rats!"

"Eh?"

"That's what I say, old son—rats!"

"Look here—"

"If you've got any scheme for strengthening the team, we're open to adopt it," said Harry Wharton affably. "But what you suggest would have quite the opposite effect, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent.

"Don't be an ass, Wharton. I'm really proposing this for the sake of the school. You Remove chaps have been out gathering up lickings enough lately."

"We don't want to gather any more. When we do, we'll be glad of your help, Temple," said Wharton imperturbably.

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ONE
PENNY.

Temple seemed to swallow something with an effort.

"Then you won't adopt the suggestion?"

"No fear!"

"Sorry; you'll be licked."

"Oh, rather!"

And the Fourth-Formers swung away.

"Hold on," said Harry Wharton. "I'll tell you what you might do. The match will be worth watching—I think it will be funny. Suppose you fellows turn up in force and see fair play?"

Temple hesitated.

"You see, when we've licked the Lambs, they may go for us, and there's thirty or forty of them," said Harry. "If the Upper Fourth turns up on the ground, as well as the Remove, we shall be able to hold our own."

"Oh, all right!" said Temple, after a pause. "We'll stand by you and see fair play, anyway."

"Thanks!"

"That's good," said Nugent, as Temple and his friends went out. "We shall need a crowd there to see fair play. I wish we could get some of the seniors."

"I'm going to speak to Wingate about it," said Wharton quietly.

And later that evening, when Wingate saw lights out in the Remove dormitory, Harry tackled him on the subject. Wingate had evidently heard of the forthcoming match with the Lambs, for he grinned as Harry mentioned the matter.

"So you're going to play the seaside bounders?" he said.

"Yes, Wingate. It's the only way we can get our own back, as the Head won't let us go for them," explained Wharton.

"Well, it's a better way than punching their heads," agreed Wingate. "Which ground are you playing on?"

"Their ground."

"Are you sure of getting fair play?" asked the captain of Greyfriars. "I don't want to say anything against them—I don't know them—but are they the sort to be licked on their own ground without making a row?"

"No," said Harry. "I don't think they are; and that's what I was going to speak to you about. If a crowd of Greyfriars' chaps come and watch the match, they'll have to give us a fair show. If you could come—"

"I?"

"Yes, if you would—"

"You cheeky young ass, to ask the head of the Sixth to come out and watch a junior match!" exclaimed Wingate.

"Well, you see—"

"But I'll come!" said Wingate, laughing. "I'll come, and bring some of the Sixth. I'll give the fellows a hint that they may as well turn up, too. We'll have a crowd there, and if the bounders try any tricks, we'll drop on them—heavy."

"Thanks!" said Wharton, in delight. "You're awfully good! Now—"

"Stuff! Get to bed!"

And the Removites went to bed in a perfectly satisfied frame of mind. They anticipated a great triumph over the Lambs on the morrow, and that was enough to satisfy them. And if Bunny & Co. made a row afterwards, there would be enough Greyfriars fellows on the ground to wipe up the field with them—and that would be better even than winning the match, in the opinion of the Remove.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Life Is Saved.

EARLY the next morning, in the rising sunlight, the Remove eleven were at practice again, and they kept it up till breakfast-time. During morning school many whispered remarks were exchanged on the subject of the coming match. Glad enough were the Remove when the hour of dismissal came.

They poured out of the class-room in high spirits.

It was a splendid summer's day, calm and sunny and not very hot—an ideal day for the great summer game. The juniors made all their preparations for the journey, for they were to leave immediately after dinner.

Alonzo Todd tapped Wharton on the arm as they came out of the dining-room.

"You are sure you will not play me?" he asked.

Wharton laughed.

"Quite sure, thanks!" he said.

"I should be very glad to make myself useful—"

"Some other time, old chap."

And Wharton walked away to save argument. Todd stood looking after him, and shaking his head. Billy Bunter rolled up to him, and slipped his hand quite affectionately through Todd's arm.

"I say, Todd," he began.

The Duffer of Greyfriars looked down at him.

"Yes, Bunter? I suppose you are going to see the match? I will walk with you, if you like."

"Certainly. I heard you tell Wharton just now that you'd like to be useful," said the fat junior, blinking at the Duffer of Greyfriars through his big spectacles.

"Exactly," said Todd. "I should be very glad to make myself useful in this cricket match, and it would be a new experience for me; but Wharton has refused my services for some reason."

"Rotten!" said Bunter. "But you can be useful in other ways, you know, if you really mean it, Toddy."

"Certainly I mean it!" said Todd. "My uncle Benjamin always impressed this upon me. I do my best to carry out the precepts of my uncle Benjamin."

"Yes, he must be an awfully decent old sport," assented Bunter. "But if you'd like to be really useful, I can show you a way."

"I should be very much obliged to you, Bunter."

"Would you like to save a chap's life?"

Todd started.

"Save his life!"

"Yes, that's what I said."

"Dear me! Is anybody in danger?" asked Todd, looking round him, as if expecting to see someone in deadly peril at his elbow.

"Yes, rather!"

"I would willingly do my utmost to preserve his life," said Todd; "but I fear that I do not quite understand. Who is it, and where is he? What is the danger he is in?"

"He's in danger of expiring from want of sufficient nourishment," said Bunter; "he's a chap who never gets enough to eat, you know."

"Oh, dear! How horrid! A poor boy, I suppose, one of the dear little fellows who have no father and no mother, and perhaps only a cruel uncle," said Todd sympathetically.

Billy Bunter coughed.

"Well, not exactly that," he said. "You see, he has fathers and mothers—I mean a father and mother—but they don't understand that his constitution is a weak one, and can only be kept up by constant nourishment. He is fading away before their very eyes, and they don't see it, you know."

"How terrible!"

"Yes, it's dreadful, isn't it? Now, if you cared to take the trouble, you could save that chap's life, you know. A good square feed now would do him worlds of good."

"But where is he?"

"If you felt inclined to stand the feed, I could get it to him," said Bunter evasively. "Come to the tuckshop."

"Certainly," said Todd, following the fat junior. "It is very fortunate that I have had a remittance from my Uncle Benjamin this morning, isn't it?"

Bunter chuckled.

"Very fortunate," he agreed.

They entered the school shop. Todd was looking very serious and sympathetic. An anticipatory grin was spreading itself over the fat features of Billy Bunter.

"Now, how much can you stand?" he asked. "Suppose we say a porkpie, a ham patty, a beefsteak-pudding, and some tarts and buns, and a bottle of gingerpop."

"Certainly," said Todd.

"We might have some milk chocolate, too, and some almonds and raisins."

"Very well."

"And some dough-nuts and cream-puffs."

"I'm so sorry, but I am afraid I should not have sufficient money to pay for them," said Todd regretfully.

"Well, never mind the dough-nuts," said Bunter.

Mrs. Mimble served the eatables, with a peculiar look at Bunter, who gathered them up into a bundle.

"Now, where is the poor boy?" asked Todd.

"Oh, I'll take them to him," said Bunter.

"But—"

"You needn't trouble any more," explained Billy. "You've made yourself useful in buying the things, and it's my turn now."

"Very true; but—"

"The fellows are starting for Pegg," suggested Bunter. "If you're going to see the match, you've got no time to lose."

"But aren't you coming?"

"I may come along later. At present, I must see about this grub."

Todd hesitated.

"You'd better cut off, you know," said Bunter anxiously.

"I'm so sorry," said Todd, showing an unexpected firmness, "but you have deceived me several times, Bunter; and my Uncle Benjamin always told me never to trust a

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person who has deceived me once. He says that a person will not deceive you unless he is deceitful, and if he is deceitful, he will deceive you again."

"Oh, really, Todd—"

"So I should prefer to see these things handed over to the unfortunate person you spoke about," said Todd firmly. "I fear that you may devour them yourself otherwise."

"Oh, really—"

"I must insist, Bunter."

Bunter blinked at him dubiously.

"Oh, very well!" he said sulkily. "I should think you could trust me, Todd, in a matter of this sort. But come on."

"Where are you going?"

"Oh, you just come!"

Bunter led the way to the School House. It was deserted now, for all the fellows were out to go over to Pegg with the eleven. Bunter led the way in, and upstairs. Todd followed him in great astonishment.

"The poor boy cannot be in here, surely, Bunter!" he exclaimed, as they reached the Remove passage.

"Why not?" grunted Bunter.

"Do you mean that you have taken him in and given him shelter?" asked Todd. "That is really very noble of you, Bunter."

Bunter grunted. He reached No. 1 Study, and blinked in. There was no one there. Billy Bunter went in, and laid the provisions on the table. Alonzo Todd looked round the study.

"He is not here," he remarked.

"See if he's in No. 2," said Bunter.

"Certainly."

Todd went along the passage. Bunter coolly closed the door, and locked it. Then he started on the provisions. It was not a quarter of an hour since he had eaten a good dinner; but Bunter's appetite was boundless.

In a minute or less, the study door was tried from outside. It did not open, and the voice of the Duffer of Greyfriars came through the keyhole.

"Bunter! Are you there, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter did not reply. His mouth was too full.

"Bunter! The door is locked!"

Munch, munch, munch! That was all the sound that came from William George Bunter. Todd knocked at the door.

"Bunter! Open the door. What does this mean? I believe you are eating the things. You have deceived me, Bunter."

"It's all right," grunted Bunter, at last. "The chap you're looking for is here."

"There!"

"Yes, I'm the chap!"

"You!" ejaculated Todd, in astonishment.

"Yes," said Bunter through the keyhole. "I never have enough to eat, and this feed will very likely save my life."

"Oh, dear! Do you mean to say that it was yourself you were talking about all the time, Bunter?"

"Of course it was."

"Bunter—"

"You see, I've got a weak constitution, and I can only keep going at all by taking constant nourishment, and plenty of it," explained Bunter. "You've very likely saved my life. You'd better cut off now, if you don't want to miss the cricket match."

"Bunter—"

Munch, much, munch!

"Bunter! You have deceived me."

Munch, munch!

"I consider you an untruthful and deceitful person, Bunter."

Munch munch, munch!

That was all the reply that Todd received; and as it was evident that Billy Bunter would not unlock the door until the last crumb of the feed had vanished, Alonzo Todd sighed, and departed, a sadder if not a wiser junior.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Well Bowled!

"THERE they are!" exclaimed Boxer.

"Thunthing like fifty of them, too," said Ikey.

Bunny grinned.

"They've come to see the licking we're going to give the school eleven," he remarked. "The whole thing will be a walk-over for us. How do you chaps feel? Fit?"

"Fit as a fiddle," said Soapy.

"Right as rain," said 'Erbert. "It will be nuts to us. Only fancy!"

"Yeth, rather!" said Ikey. "I fancy there are thun thurprises in thtore for the theoolboys, my thons."

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

Certainly there was a goodly crowd of Greyfriars fellows in sight. The Remove had turned out almost to a man, and nearly all the Upper Fourth came with them. Wingate, and a number of the Sixth had come to see fair play, and as the Sixth came, the Fifth condescended to turn up, too, in considerable force.

There were fifty or more fellows with the eleven, and more were walking down in twos and threes every few minutes.

If the Lambs should cut up rough after the match, as was only too probable, they would have a bigger task on their hands than the row with Bulstrode & Co.

Bunny greeted Harry Wharton with a shake of the hand and a grin.

"You've come, then?" he said.

"Didn't we arrange it?" said Harry.

"Yes, but I thought you might think better of it, you know," said Bunny. "Of course, you know you haven't the ghost of an earthly."

"Not the thpectre of a chance," said Ikey.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We'll see," he remarked. "Are you fellows ready?"

"Thertainly."

"Then let's lose no time."

There was already a crowd round the field. The Lambs were there in full force, and crowds of the fishing folk and the villagers had turned up. Crowds of the Greyfriars fellows were added to them, so that there was a double row of spectators round the whole field, and in some favourable spots they were in groups and bunches, and all the available roofs and fences near at hand were in use as seats.

The chums of the Remove looked round for the Cliff House girls, and they soon saw Marjorie and Clara and Wilhelmina, and some more in the crowd. They were provided with camp-stools, and they sat on the edge of the field of play to get a good view of the match. They waved their hands to Harry as their bright parasols caught his eye and attracted his glance in their direction.

Harry tossed for choice of innings with Bunny, and Bunny had the luck, and elected to take the first innings.

"We'll pile up a good score, and make them follow their innings, my sons," said Bunny to his men. "Then we shall have to bat only once."

To which the Lambs responded:

"Baa-baa!"

Bunny and Boxer went in to bat. Harry Wharton smiled as he led his merry men into the field.

The ball was given to Ogilvy for the first over. The Scottish junior was a keen bowler, and knew many a trick that would have been troublesome to a county batsman. Against such bats as the Lambs, Ogilvy was likely to prove a terror.

And so it turned out.

Boxer received the first over—or, rather, the first ball—standing in a swaggering attitude at the wicket.

The ball came down—and so did Boxer's bails. Boxer jumped as he heard the clatter of them.

"By George!" he ejaculated.

A ripple of laughter swept round the field. Boxer's astonishment was comic. The bails were on the ground, and so was the leg stump.

"How's that?" yelled Ogilvy.

And Mr. Bunce, the landlord of the Anchor, who was umpiring at that end, said:

"Hout!"

Mr. Bunce often figured as an umpire in local matches. He might have been inclined to stretch a point in favour of his guests, for the Lambs crowded his inn inside and out; but there was no point to be stretched there. Boxer was evidently out!

"Hout!" repeated Mr. Bunce.

And Boxer walked away with his bat under his arm, looking dazed.

"Next man in!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Soapy took Boxer's place at the wicket.

Ogilvy winked to his comrades, and delivered his second ball. It took Soapy's middle stump neatly out of the ground. Soapy was batting at the empty air with an energy worthy of a better cause.

The bat swept in a circle, and Soapy very nearly fell over, what time his stumps and his bails were being wrecked by the ball.

"Oh!" gasped Soapy.

"How's that?" shrieked Greyfriars.

"Hout!" said Mr. Bunce solemnly.

"What price duck's eggs?" shrieked the Removites, as the unhappy Soapy carried out his bat with his duck unbroken.

Bunny was not grinning now. He realised that there was something wrong. He had not looked for bowling like this from a junior school team. As a matter of fact, Bunny and his men knew very little about cricket. They had never taken the game seriously, and they were at a hopeless disadvantage in encountering fellows who had.

Bunny looked serious.

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ONE
PENNY.

"My only 'at!" marmured Ikey. "This is thumthing rotten, my thons."

And the Lambs had to agree that it was.

'Erbert came in next, and he was much more careful than his predecessors at the wicket.

But his carefulness did not serve. It booted not, as they say in the novels, for the first ball from Ogilvy knocked his leg-stump flying.

There was a delighted yell from Greyfriars.

"The hat trick! Hurrah!"

Ogilvy grinned serenely. He could not have done it so easily against a Second Form team at Greyfriars, and he knew it. But it was easy enough against the Lambs.

Another man came in, and he just lived through the rest of the over. No runs were scored, but the Lambs had already learned to be glad when a ball was barely stopped.

The field crossed over, and the ball was tossed to Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. The dusky Nabob of Bhanipur grinned as he received it.

"Mind, a wicket every time!" said Harry, grinning.

"If you don't give us the double hat trick, we'll scalp you."

"The hatfulness of the honourable trick will be terrific."

purred the nabob.

The juniors looked on eagerly as Hurree Singh started to bowl against Bunny. Bunny was feeling, and looking, a little nervous.

He had reason to be. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was in fine form, and the first ball he sent down would have perplexed a better batsman than Bunny. As for the chief of the Lambs, he was simply helpless to play it.

He swiped at the ball, or where it ought to have been, and his bat circled in the air with such force that Bunny lost his balance, and sat down on the grass.

The bump on the grass was accompanied by the click of the ball on the wicket.

There was a yell of laughter from the crowd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well bowled!"

Bunny staggered up, with a kind, helping hand from the wicket-keeper. He stared at his wrecked wicket, and lost no time in getting off the field, and out of sight of the yelling spectators.

The crowd were all laughing now. The ridiculous exhibition of the Lambs' batsmen was enough to make anybody laugh—or weep—as Bob Cherry remarked.

'Erbert took Bunny's place at the wicket, and was bowled first ball by Hurree Singh.

Then another fellow went in, and was clean bowled. It was the hat trick again, but this time the crowd laughed instead of cheering.

There were tears of merriment in Harry Wharton's eyes. He was laughing too much to field the ball.

Bob Cherry missed an easy catch the next minute, being doubled up with laughter at the time. The batsman hit the ball into the slips, and started to run. But the ball went up from the hand of Tom Brown. And the crowd roared.

"Caught!"

The hapless batsman retired. The Lambs were now seven down for 0. The crowd were getting almost into hysterics.

Still the unhappy Lambs struggled on. The third over commenced, and Ogilvy took the ball again. He whipped a stump out of the ground at once. Then another man was caught out.

The tenth man came in, and stopped in for exactly as long as it took Ogilvy to bowl.

His bails went down, and he went out.

The crowd roared.

"All down! Hurrah!"

The Lambs were all down for 0!

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

The Century.

"ALL down!" roared the Greyfriars crowd.

"For nought!" shrieked the juniors.

"What price duck's eggs?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunny and his men were dismayed and furious.

The match, which they had intended to be a walk-over, was a walk-over indeed—but for their opponents, not for them.

The Greyfriars juniors were walking over them with vengeance.

Bunny was generally good-tempered, but his good-temper was all gone now. He felt that he had lost prestige in the eyes of his own men, as well as reaping ridicule generally. The Lambs would not forgive the leader who had led them into such a scrape

"The beasts!" growled Bunny. "How was a chap to know they were in such form?"

"It's thickening!" agreed Ikey. He meant to say sickening. "It's simply thickening to look at the rotterth."

"Still, they're going to bat, and we may serve them the same," said Boxer eagerly. "I'm a pretty good bowler, you know."

"So am I," said Soapy.

Bunny nodded.

"Well, we'll try," he said. "And if we can't touch them—"

"If we can't touch them one way, we will another," said Boxer. "We'll rush them off the field after the match."

"Hear, hear!"

"Baa-baa!"

Bunny snapped his teeth.

"That's the ticket!" he said. "If they lick us at cricket, and make us look asses, we'll make them sing small another way before they get back to the school."

"Good biz!"

The Greyfriars eleven were ready to bat. After a short rest, Bunny led his men out to field.

The way the fieldsmen took up their positions made some of the spectators grin. There was nothing businesslike about them.

Soapy was to bowl the first over. He sent down a few trials to the wicket-keeper, and the juniors grinned again. If that was a sample of Soapy's bowling, they had little to fear from him.

Harry Wharton and Mark Linley went in to open the innings. They were two of the strongest bats the Greyfriars side possessed. Harry Wharton received the first over from Soapy.

Soapy might have been accounted a good bowler by the rural teams he had played on village greens, but he was clearly not up to Greyfriars form.

His bowling was simply pitching the ball to be hit. The batsman would have had to be very bad indeed to let it touch his wicket.

Harry Wharton did not let it. He swiped the ball away for two, and the second ball for a boundary. Third ball gave him three, and then Mark Linley batted. Mark was in good form. He swept the leather to right and left. Two boundaries were followed by a two.

The Lambs looked quite green.

The fieldsmen were already panting over the leather-hunting they had been given in the first over; they were not in good condition.

"My only 'at!" murmured Ikey. "This is therious."

And all the Lambs thought it was serious too.

Boxer bowled the second over, when the field crossed, and he delivered the ball to Harry Wharton.

Wharton stood cool and unconcerned at his wicket.

He hardly exerted himself: there was little danger. It was only in running that he showed exertion.

That was an eye-opener to the Lambs.

Wharton swiped away every ball with the greatest of ease, and the runs piled up at almost a magic rate.

To and fro, to and fro went the batsmen.

The ball came haltingly in, but before it appeared every time the bats were safe on the crease.

Wingate, who was standing amid a crowd of seniors from Greyfriars, grinned expansively.

The Greyfriars captain was very much amused.

"Blessed if I've ever seen a match like this before!" he remarked. "Wharton is only playing with them."

Courtney grinned and nodded.

"I shouldn't wonder if they finish the match without losing a wicket," he remarked.

"Ha, ha! That would be funny!"

"Well, it looks like it."

It looked like it to others, as well as Courtney. The Greyfriars batsmen who were awaiting their turns watched Harry Wharton and Mark Linley with mixed feelings.

They cheered whenever the ball was swept away for three or four or five. At the same time, they watched the score creeping up with anxious eyes.

"We sha'n't have a blessed chance to bat," growled Bulstrode, who was sixth on the batting list. "Look! There's fifty already, and thirty-five of them belong to Wharton. He's going to win this match on his own."

"The winfulness will be terrific."

"Blessed if we need have brought our bats!" Tom Brown remarked. "It's all over now bar shouting."

"The shoutfulness will be great when the honourable silly Lambs are lickfully beaten," murmured Hurree Singh. "It will be a great and glorious day for Greyfriars."

"Well, I want to bat," growled Bulstrode.

"You couldn't do better than Wharton's doing for us, I suppose," said Nugent, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Still, I didn't come here just to look on."

But it certainly seemed as if Bulstrode would have nothing to do.

Harry Wharton was piling up the runs, and he could not be expected to lose his wicket on purpose to oblige Bulstrode.

It seemed impossible for the Lambs to touch the wickets. They fagged after the flying leather, they ran and they panted and perspired, but the two batsmen stood up against all their efforts, serene and smiling.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "Look! That will be a close thing."

The batsmen were running. Mark Linley had knocked the ball deep into the long-field, and three Lambs were panting and perspiring after it.

The ball was fielded, but the batsmen had risked a run more than was safe—or would have been safe against ordinary foes. But the Lambs had muffed everything so much, so far, that they were tempted to run risks.

The ball came in for Linley's wicket, as the Lancashire lad was completing his third run. He saw it coming, or, rather, felt it coming, and strained every nerve to be in time. He hurled himself forward on his knees, and the end of his bat clumped on the crease as the ball came in. There was a crash at the wicket.

"How's that?" gasped Bunny.

"Hout!" said Mr. Bunce.

Mark Linley staggered up.

"What!" he exclaimed. "My bat was on the crease."

"Hout!"

"I tell you—"

"Hout!"

Mr. Bunce was evidently straining a point in favour of his friends. Mark Linley bit his lip hard. But he had learned to play the game; and part of the "game" is not to resist the decision of umpire or referee. He carried out his bat.

"Hard cheese!" said Bob Cherry, clapping him on the back as he came out. "You weren't out, old fellow."

Mark shook his head.

"It was no good making a fuss," he said. "But I'm certain I was not out. Not that it makes much difference. They can't touch us."

"Rather not; it's only a question of time before Wharton declares."

"Next man in!"

Nugent was next man in. He grinned at Harry Wharton as he passed him going to the wickets. Bulstrode grunted.

"Wharton will declare now," he said. "There's no chance for any of us to bat."

"What's the odds, so long as we beat 'em?" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. But Bulstrode only grunted again in reply.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent certainly made the fur fly between them. Wharton's score rose to eighty. The total was well over the hundred. Then, by a stroke of luck, Bunny caught Nugent out.

Bunny could hardly believe it when he felt the round red ball in his grasp.

But there it was—and Nugent was out.

"How's that?" gasped Bunny.

"Out!"

And the Lambs gave a feeble cheer.

Nugent laughed as he went out. He did not care. Bob Cherry took his place, and the batting went on merrily.

Bob Cherry knocked up fifteen before he was stumped, the umpire again slightly stretching a point in favour of the fielding side. Bob Cherry shrugged his shoulders over it. He cared little.

"I suppose you'll declare?" he said, as he passed Harry, going out.

Wharton laughed.

"Yes, rather! We might bat here till dark," he said. "As soon as I've got my century, or my wicket goes, I'll declare."

"Good! Their second innings won't last long, and we can get in in time for tea."

"Good! But we mustn't leave anything to chance; we don't want to risk having to bat a second time."

Tom Brown joined Wharton at the wickets. Bulstrode was next man in, if either wicket fell, and he took his bat in readiness. But it was not needed.

The New Zealand junior was well able to keep his end up. He backed up Wharton well, and they piled up the runs.

The spectators looked on eagerly now. It was pretty certain that Harry Wharton would get a century, and that that would be enough for the match, without finishing the innings. To be first in, not out, and to score a century, would be rather a striking performance, and to declare the innings closed would give the finishing touch to the humiliation of the Lambs. The crowd chuckled over it. But the Lambs did not chuckle. They were grimly preparing to rush the

Greyfriars eleven when the match was over, and to follow a defeat by a victory of another sort.

Nugent joined the Cliff House girls. Marjorie looked at him with a smile.

"Harry will get a century," she remarked.

Nugent nodded.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "What do you think of the Lambs' cricket?"

"Absurd!" said Marjorie, laughing. "They cannot play at all."

"They can't play for toffee!" agreed Miss Clara. "I would undertake to bat against them with a golf club."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There goes Wharton again! Hurrah!"

"Hurrah!" cried Miss Clara.

And Marjorie clapped her hands.

It was another three, and Wharton's individual score was at ninety-six. Boxer prepared to deliver another ball. He was red and perspiring, and quite tired. As a matter of fact, it would have come as a great relief to the Lambs if Harry Wharton had declared the Greyfriars innings closed.

Boxer sent down that ball with the determination that something should happen. Something did! Harry Wharton swiped it away to the boundary, and he waved his hand to Tom Brown with a laugh.

"No need to run," he said. "It's a boundary."

And it was.

Loud cheers from the Greyfriars crowd greeted the completion of the Remove captain's century. The total score for Greyfriars was 180.

Then Wharton declared.

The Greyfriars innings closed with three down for 180 runs, and the Lambs were called upon to bat a second time.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Well Licked.

HARRY WHARTON joined Marjorie and Clara. The handsome junior was looking a little flushed with exertion, but by no means fatigued. He was in excellent form, and quite ready for another innings if necessary. Only it was not likely to be necessary.

Marjorie smiled at him.

"You are beating them, Harry," she said.

"Yes, I think so," agreed Harry. "Inky and Ogilvy will take care that they get no runs in their second innings."

Marjorie laughed.

"Well, they deserve it, as they have been so boastful," she said. "But do you think they will play out the second innings?"

"I suppose so. Why?"

"I have been looking at them. They all look very angry," said Marjorie. "I am afraid there is going to be trouble."

"A row," said Miss Clara. "It's pretty certain."

"I think it's very likely," said Harry. "But we're ready for it. We've got more fellows on the ground than they have, and if they start any foul play, they'll find that we're more than ready for them."

"The readiness is terrific."

The juniors chatted with the girls till it was time for the Lambs to open their second innings. Boxer and Soapy came on to bat, both looking very sulky and clouded. Bunny and the rest were gathered in a group, and Wharton noticed that the rest of the Lambs, to the number of at least forty, were gathering round them.

There was evidently trouble in the air.

"Look out, you chaps!" said Harry, as he led his men on to the field. "There's mischief on foot. Look at those bounders."

"I believe they're going to rush us in the middle of the innings!" exclaimed Tom Brown, aghast.

"Looks like it."

"The rotters!" said Nugent. "I was expecting a row afterwards, but to interrupt a match, that's a little too thick."

"Keep your weather eye open, that's all," said Harry. "If they don't score any runs, I believe they mean to rush us, and we want to be ready."

"What-ho!"

And the Greyfriars fieldsmen kept their eyes open.

It was rather a difficult matter to play cricket, with one eye on the batsmen and the other on the threatening group on the edge of the field of play.

But the juniors managed it. In fact, they gave Bunny and his men more attention than they gave the bats.

Boxer was batting first, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh bowled to him. The nabob was in better form than ever. He knocked Boxer's wicket flying with the second ball. Soapy came in, and shared Boxer's fate. Then the same misfortune fell upon the hapless Bunny himself.

It was the hat trick once more, but the spectators only laughed. The cricket match, on the side of the Lambs, was only a farce, and laughter was all that was needed.

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ONE
PENNY.

Bunny rejoined his men with a grim brow.

His looks showed that the crisis was coming, and the Greyfriars cricketers knew it. Another batsman came in, and his wicket dropped to a ball from the Nabob of Bhanipur. As the bails went down, there was a shout from Bunny.

"Go for 'em!"

With a wild rush the crowd of Lambs invaded the cricket field.

But the juniors were ready.

"Look out!" shouted Wharton.

In the twinkling of an eye, the fieldsmen were together, and retreating in a body towards their friends.

The Lambs reached them before they could get off the field, and there was a wild and furious scrimmage at once. But the Greyfriars crowd were already rushing to the rescue.

Wingate shouted to the Greyfriars fellows.

"Back up, there!"

And he dashed into the fray.

The Greyfriars fellows followed him hotly, seniors and juniors mingled together. From all sides they rushed in to tackle the Lambs.

The Remove cricketers would certainly have been very roughly handled, had not the rescue been prompt. But it was prompt enough.

The Lambs had hardly tackled Harry Wharton & Co., when Wingate and the rest were on the scene, hitting out furiously.

The Greyfriars rush drove the Lambs back, and gave the cricketers a breathing space. But they did not want to retreat. They threw themselves into the combat with great glee. It was the scene of the previous Wednesday repeated, but with the difference that the odds were now on the side of the school, instead of against them; and that made all the difference.

"Sock it into them!" yelled Wharton; and again Wingate's deep voice rang out:

"Back up!"

The Lambs fought hard, not at first realising that the chances of the conflict were against them, and that in trying to avenge their cricket defeat by rushing the victors, they had only got from the frying-pan into the fire.

Bunny and his followers had plenty of pluck, as far as that went, and they put up a fierce fight. But they had no men good enough to stand up to powerful fellows like Wingate, and the numbers of the Greyfriars fellows were overwhelming.

For four or five minutes the combat raged in the cricket-field, amid yells, and cheers, and hoots from the crowd round the fence, who looked on without joining in.

By that time half the Lambs were sprawling and gasping on the ground, and the rest were flying for the shelter of the inn.

"After them!" roared Bulstrode.

"Hurrah!"

"Hurrah! After them! Give 'em socks!"

"The sockfulness is terrific!"

"Hurrah for Greyfriars!"

Into the inn-yard the Lambs were pursued, and up to the very doors and windows, into which they scrambled in hot haste to escape.

Bunny was captured in the yard, and surrounded by a yelling mob of juniors.

He struggled in vain to escape.

"Leggo!" he roared. "Help! 'Elp!"

"Got him!" roared Bulstrode. "This is the chap that sooted Bunter, and was going to soot me! This is the rotter!"

"Duck him!"

"Hurrah! Duck him!"

"Yow! Help!"

But Bunny, in spite of his howls, was dragged to the horse-trough in the yard, and there he was ducked with so much vigour that the juniors were mostly splashed, too. Wild yells of laughter greeted his efforts to extricate himself from the trough.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hurrah!"

Wingate looked into the yard, laughing.

"You'd better be off, you young rascals!" he exclaimed. "I hear that the landlord is going to turn the hose on you."

That was enough for the juniors. They scuttled out of the inn-yard in a twinkling, leaving the unhappy Bunny to drag himself from the trough and crawl away. Nor did Bunny get much comfort or consolation from his comrades. They all agreed to attribute their double defeat to the mismanagement of their leader, and the things they said to Bunny were numerous, and couched in exceedingly plain English.

The Greyfriars fellows crowded into the street of Pegg in uproarious humour. The seniors walked off quietly; but the juniors did not. They paraded the street, yelling, and halting

at times before the Anchor Inn to yell invitations to the Lambs to "come out!" But the Lambs did not accept the kind invitations. They were better satisfied to remain where they were.

The juniors gave it up at last, and departed, hooting and laughing. Harry Wharton & Co. had already joined Marjorie, and they were walking to Cliff House with the girls. The juniors were in high good-humour.

"I don't think we shall see so much of the Lambs' swanking in the future," Harry Wharton remarked, laughing. "They've had a jolly big come-down to-day, and no mistake. And I don't think they'll ever challenge us to play a game of cricket again."

Marjorie laughed.

"I should say not!" she said. "But—it is tea-time. The match has ended early, and you are in time for tea at Cliff House—if you will come."

"If we will come!" said Wharton. "Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Will a duck swim?" said Bob Cherry, emphatically.

And the juniors went to tea at Cliff House, and a most enjoyable tea it was, made all the more agreeable by the consciousness of complete victory over the adversaries who had brought Harry Wharton & Co. to Cliff House under such ridiculous circumstances only a few days before.

The Greyfriars chums had certainly "got their own back," and with a vengeance! After their double licking, the Lambs

were not likely to hold up their heads again in the streets of Pegg.

And so, indeed, it proved. Bunny & Co. had come to Pegg for a fortnight's holiday; but Bunny departed next morning. He did not care to meet any more of the Greyfriars fellows, and his own followers were not at all lamb-like in their treatment of him. Bunny departed, and finished his holiday elsewhere. He had had enough of Pegg and of rivalry with the Greyfriars Remove.

The Lambs who remained in Pegg did not seek to try conclusions with the Remove again. Nor did they swank so much among the quiet fishing-folk of the village. A great deal of the swank had been taken out of them.

So quiet did most of the Lambs become, in fact, that Bunny would hardly have known them if he had returned. But he did not return. And at the end of their holiday the Lambs departed, without having broken the peace in any way again, as far as Greyfriars was concerned.

And when Harry Wharton & Co. saw the train, crowded with the "seaside bounders," steaming out of Friardale, they chuckled.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled: "ALONZO'S PLOT," by Frank Richards. Please order your copy of THE MAGNET LIBRARY in advance. Price One Penny.)



STANLEY DARE

The Boy Detective

INTRODUCTION.

Stanley Dare, the Boy Detective, is investigating a murder case near the West India Docks, on behalf of a man named Gilbert. The murdered man, a seaman named Fleming, had been the bearer of a pocket-book containing valuable papers belonging to Gilbert; hence the latter's interest in the case. Stanley Dare, disguised as a merchant seaman, visits the lodging-house where Fleming was murdered. Among the sailors there Dare notices a Chinese half-caste, with a bandage round the middle finger of his right hand. By a trick the detective manages to remove the bandage, which discloses a deep cut. The half-caste leaves the room in a rage, closing the door after him with a savage bang.

(Now go on with the Story).

The Clue of the Pearl Button—The Yellow Mask.

Stanley Dare retired to his bed-room soon after eleven o'clock that night, but he had no intention of lying down, or even of snatching a brief spell of sleep in a chair.

But he wished to lead the other inmates of the lodging-house into the belief that he was sleeping, so after a reasonable interval he extinguished the light, and sat perfectly still in the darkness.

At half-past twelve the various noises in the house ceased. Dare heard the proprietor enter his room and close the door, and he knew that he would be the last to retire. But he waited for another half-hour before starting on his task, which was the exploration of the room in which the man Fleming was murdered.

He had provided himself with everything which would be necessary for his purpose—skeleton keys, electric lantern, magnifying lens, felt-soled slippers, etc. The clock of Linchouse Church was striking one as he emerged from his bed-room, made his way along the dirty passage, and came to a pause opposite to the door of the room next to his.

It was locked, as the proprietor had stated, but he soon had it open—a locked door was no obstacle to the young detective. Entering the room, he closed and bolted the door on the inside, thus securing himself from being interrupted by anyone in the house. Then he crossed over to the window, and softly raised the sash.

A brief examination of the outside was sufficient to assure him that the assassin could not have entered by way of the window. It would have required a ladder at least forty feet long to reach the window-sill, and it would have had to be raised from the backyard of an adjoining house. And there was no rainpipe available by which even the most active of men could have climbed up to the room.

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"ALONZO'S PLOT."

Dare closed the window again.

"Point number one," he murmured. "The murder was committed by a man who was either staying in the house that night, or else had managed to conceal himself on the premises. I am inclined to the former theory. And in my opinion it rests between two men who—Hullo! What have we here?"

He had switched on the electric light, and a small object in the corner of the room gleamed white under its rays.

The object proved to be a pearl waistcoat-button, which, though of the smallest possible value in itself, might prove of the greatest value as a clue to the perpetrator of the crime.

At all events, Stanley Dare pounced upon it as though it had been a diamond of the rarest water. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the finding of any diamond in that spot would have given him half the satisfaction which the discovery of that button did.

"It is a wonder that this has been overlooked," he muttered, "though if the police searched the room in the daytime that corner would be almost in darkness, even then. It was the electric light which showed it up."

He wrapped the button in paper and put it in his ticket-pocket, then he continued his search of the room, using his powerful magnifying lens the greater part of the time, moving about the floor on his hands and knees, with his keen eyes gleaming with suppressed excitement.

Already he was hot on a trail which would lead, he hoped, to the arrest of the murderer. Suddenly he uttered a sharp exclamation of delight.

"I am in luck!" he said to himself.

There was a strip of carpet by the bed, but the rest of the floor was bare. He had turned back one end of the carpet—the end which was against the wall at the head of the bedstead—and through his magnifying-glass he noticed that it

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

edge of one of the floor-planks bore marks as though the blade of a knife had been used to prise the board up.

"Something has been hidden under the floor," he muttered, "and, whatever it is, it may be there still. I must have this plank up."

He whipped a leather case from his pocket, and took from it an instrument which looked like a very thin chisel. It was about an inch and a half in breadth. Inserting this between the two floor-boards, he pressed down on the handle. The edge of the plank which he wanted to move rose up until he was able to get his fingers underneath it. Then he pulled, with a strong, steady, lifting pressure.

The plank, which was a short one, came up from its place comparatively easily. It had not been nailed down. Stanley Dare noticed an oblong, dark object in the cavity between the joists. He reached down and picked it up.

It was a leather pocket-book, with the initials "R. S." stamped upon the outside—the pocket-book which Martin Gilbert declared must have been stolen from the murdered man, and which he had hinted once may have been the motive of the crime.

"This is very strange," said Dare. "The pocket-book must have been hidden in this place by Fleming. It is not to be supposed for an instant that the assassin would have taken the trouble to hide it there. And why should Fleming have hidden it. There can be only one plausible reason—he feared that an attempt would be made to steal it. It is evident, then, that there are others quite as anxious to get possession of it, or its contents, as Martin Gilbert. Why?"

As he was reasoning the matter out he still remained kneeling on the floor, with the pocket-book in his hand. He was undecided whether he ought to open it and examine the contents, or hand it over to Martin Gilbert unopened.

"I'll decide upon that point to-morrow," he said.

He was about to rise to his feet when he heard a slight shuffling noise at the other side of the room. Keenly alert, and on his guard in an instant, he flashed the light over in the direction of the sound. A startling sight met his gaze.

A rusty baize curtain which hung across a recess had been drawn aside a few inches, and from the opening there peered out a face that was like no human features that Stanley Dare had ever gazed on in his life. There was something unnatural and inhuman about it, it was so set and rigid. The colour was an unhealthy-looking yellow, and it was as expressionless as a mask.

But the eyes which looked from it were by no means lifeless—they gleamed with a malignity which was fearful in its intensity. And if the soul looks out of the eyes, as is commonly asserted, it was surely the soul of a demon which looked out of those orbs.

The face vanished as soon as Dare focussed the light directly on it, and the young detective sprang to his feet. He meant to see what was in hiding behind that curtain.

But as he took a step forward a heavy book, flung with unerring aim, struck the electric lantern from his grasp. It fell with a clatter to the floor, and instantly the room was plunged into darkness.

Dare heard the curtain torn aside, and, realising that he had a desperate foe to contend with, he made a snatch at his revolver, which was in his side-pocket.

Before he could draw it, his antagonist was upon him, leaping from his hiding-place with the silence and stealthiness of a panther.

It was with something like a feeling of relief that he felt the grip upon his arms. It was human at all events—that is, it was of ordinary flesh-and-blood, but a human being with the soul of a fiend.

Owing to the powerful grip upon his arms, Dare was quite unable to use his weapon. He struggled at a disadvantage—fiercely, desperately.

Neither spoke. The young detective had no desire that the inmates of the house should be roused, and find him in that room, and presumably his antagonist kept silent for precisely the same reason. Only their heavy breathing and the shuffling of their feet could be heard.

Stanley Dare was very strong and active, and in perfect condition, but his assailant was almost his match. He had long and sinewy arms of unusual muscular power, and his grip was a grip of iron.

Then suddenly he released his hold with his right hand, and Dare seized the opportunity to hit out with all his strength. The blow caught his adversary on the side of his face, and wrung a snarl from his lips such as might have been uttered by a wounded animal.

Dare swung his arm back again to repeat it, but his adversary was too quick for him this time. He had armed himself with a short, loaded cane, and with this he struck the young detective savagely on the head.

Dare reeled back and fell heavily to the floor in a state of semi-consciousness. His senses did not entirely leave him, but he was so dazed that he could not tell what was happening in the room. A confusion of sounds buzzed in his ears, most of which, no doubt, emanated from his brain as a result of the blow. For a few minutes he was as utterly helpless as though he had actually lost his senses. Then he began to rouse up,

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and presently he staggered to his feet. He picked up the electric lantern, which had been struck from his hand, and managed to switch on the light again.

The room was empty. His antagonist, the man with the mask-like face, had disappeared, and the pocket-book had disappeared also.

"He must have come here to search for it, whoever he is," mused Dare, "and I interrupted him in his search. He is in the house still, for he could have only quitted the room by way of the door. I ought to be able to trace his footsteps with the aid of my lens, for there is plenty of dust about on which the imprint of a foot would be left with tolerable distinctness."

He crossed to the door, and was about to turn the handle, when he heard the gruff sounds of men's voices and the tramp of heavy footsteps on the stairs. They had heard the noise of the struggle, and were coming to investigate the cause of it.

He was caught!

"This is awkward!" he muttered.

He cast a swift glance round the room, and his eyes fell upon the blankets and a rug on the bed. The sight of them gave him an idea, and with lightning quickness he proceeded to put it into execution. Dragging the bedclothes off the mattress, he tossed them on to the floor, so arranging them that it looked as though a man was underneath them. Then he darted back to the door.

The men were already in the passage; but even at that critical moment the young detective had eyes for anything fresh which would give him a clue to the identity of his late antagonist.

And he found something fresh. Merely a single spot of blood close to the door. But it was enough. He switched off the light of his electric lantern; then he took his stand by the side of the door, remembering that it opened inwards.

The handle was turned, and the door flung open.

A Clever Ruse—Stanley Dare Surprises the German.

The opening of the door completely shut Dare from the view of the men who entered the room, for the simple reason that in the position he had taken up he was now behind it.

First of all came the German, Eckermann, the landlord of the boarding-house. He had a lighted lamp in one hand, and a heavy walking-stick in the other. He was followed by two of the seamen boarders, while behind them came the Chinese half-caste.

"Thunder in himmel! What is here?" exclaimed the German, as he hurried across the room to the heap of bedclothes. "If it was another murder, I was ruined!"

All eyes were directed to the bedclothes on the floor, which each one present believed covered the body of a man, and they all crowded up behind Eckermann as he gingerly lifted up a corner of the top blanket.

This was Stanley Dare's opportunity. He slipped from behind the door, and came silently up behind the others, unseen.

Eckermann lifted up the second blanket, and then the rug. Then he dragged them all on one side.

"Nodings!" he exclaimed, in the greatest astonishment.

"I made certain there was a body under them there blankets!" cried one of the seamen.

"Somebody's been in the room. There can't be any mistake about that."

"Mistakes!" said the German. "There was no mistakes. These clothes were on the bed when the room was locked oop. And we all heard the noise. It was what roused us all oop."

"Yes, we all heard the noise. Sounded to me like a struggle, and then somebody a-falling."

"It is a curious thing," put in the half-caste slowly, "that the young fellow who came here last evening, and who sleeps in the next room to this, did not hear anything."

"What makes you suppose that I did not hear anything?"

At the sound of Dare's voice behind him, the half-caste started as though he had received a blow. He swung round sharply, and he met the keen gaze of the young detective fixed full upon him. A look of fear flashed into his eyes, but was gone in an instant.

"I did not know you were here," he said. "You walk as silently as a thief!"

"Or a hunter of thieves!" suggested Dare coolly.

"Well, you slept in the next room," exclaimed the proprietor. "What did you hear?"

"Much the same as you heard," replied Dare, which was the literal truth.

"There must have been someone in here!" continued Eckermann, striking the floor with his stick to emphasise his words. "Yet we find the door locked, and the window it is fastened. Where shall this man have gone, then?"

"Maybe," suggested one of the seamen, in a half whisper, "it was Fleming's spirit come back to haunt the place!"

"Pah!" The German uttered an exclamation of angry disgust. He did not want the notion to get about that the place was haunted by the ghost of the murdered man. "You must talk sense!"

"Why not search the room?" asked Dare. "Now, I have noticed something which you all seem to have overlooked."

"What?"

"What have you noticed?"

They all put the question in various forms.

"This spot of fresh blood by the door," replied Dare. "And, by the way"—once again he called attention to the half-caste's bound-up finger—"your finger seems to have started bleeding again; the rag is saturated with blood."

At these words, suspicious glances were directed at the half-caste, who, however, was equal to the occasion.

"You seem to take a lot of interest in my cut finger," he snarled, glaring at the young detective. "If you must know, I knocked it as I was coming upstairs, and that spot of blood, I suppose, dropped as I entered the room. There's nothing remarkable about that, is there?"

Stanley Dare did not reply, so the German muttered:

"Nodings!"

The half-caste was a good customer who spent his money freely, and he did not wish to say anything to offend him. On the other hand, Dare could not say that he had seen the blood spot before the door was opened without revealing the fact that he had been in the room all the time; and he could not make that revelation yet. The evidence was not complete. But already he had marked down the assassin. It was the Chinese half-caste. On that point Dare no longer had any doubt. He had in his pocket a little piece of evidence which, when the right time came, would be produced. The pearl waistcoat button which he had picked up.

He could see now that the buttons on the half-caste's waistcoat were exactly similar to the one he had found—and there was one missing!

"We will not call in the police, hein!" Eckermann said. "I like not the police, and there is nodings to show them. Is it not so?"

The others agreed that there did not seem to be any case for the police, so the room was once more locked up, and they all adjourned to the dining-room on the German's invitation, to have hot coffee "mit a leetle goot rum in it," the night being cold.

Stanley Dare thought it would be polite to accept this invitation, but he drank the coffee without the addition of a "leetle drop of goot rum."

There was a lot of aimless talk, of course, and a lot of wild suggestions in explanation of the mystery. Yet there were two persons present who could have given a correct solution of it had they so chosen—Dare and the half-caste. For the young detective knew now that his assailant with the unnatural yellow face must have been the half-caste. He had worn a yellow mask as a disguise, and there could be no doubt that he had gone into the room which Fleming had occupied in order to search for the pocket-book.

"There is a considerable amount of mystery surrounding that pocket-book," mused Dare, when at length he retired to his room and made himself as comfortable as possible in a chair for the remainder of the night. "What are its contents, that one man should commit murder in order to gain possession of it; that another should especially engage me to try and find it; and that Fleming should have taken the trouble to hide it beneath the flooring during the time that he occupied this room? It must be in the half-caste's possession now. He took it while I was half-unconscious—"

His head sank on to the back of the chair, and he dropped off

suddenly into a heavy sleep. This was a most unusual thing for Stanley Dare to do.

In the meantime, in another bed-room of that seamen's boarding-house, Samuel Peters, the Chinese half-caste, was busily packing up a box and a portmanteau.

"I must get out of this at once," he was saying to himself. "That young chap has found out too much. I guess he is a detective. Well, I've dished him up for a few hours. That lozenge I dropped into his coffee will keep him asleep until nearly midday. By that time I hope to be well clear of London."

It was, as a point of fact, exactly half-past eleven in the morning when Dare woke to find the German standing by his side.

"You was sleep sound," observed Eckermann. "For five minutes I have shake you oop. And you have not been in bed. Himmel! How you can sleep so mooch on this hard chair!"

Stanley Dare rubbed his eyes and stared about him stupidly. The effects of the drug were not quite shaken off.

"What is the time?" he asked.

"Half-past eleven."

"What?"

"Half-past eleven," repeated the German.

"Give me a drink of water," answered Dare sharply.

Eckermann brought him some in a tumbler, and he drank it greedily. His lips were parched, and his throat was dry.

"That's better!" he continued. "Now I will tell you what was the matter with me. I have been drugged."

"Drugged! Who shall drug you here? You talk mitout sense."

"That coffee which I had must have been drugged," said Dare. "It is not the first time that I have had an opiate administered to me, and I know the after-taste that is left in the throat and mouth, and the heavy feeling on awaking."

"You was accuse me?" demanded the German angrily.

"No," answered Dare. "I don't think you knew anything about it. Where is the half-caste?"

"He left directly he had his breakfast," was the reply.

"Going to Hull, he tell me, to stay mit friends."

"Then it was he who drugged my coffee!" cried Dare.

"And he has given me the slip!"

"What do you mean?"

Before answering this question, Stanley Dare went to the door and glanced up and down the passage. Then he shut the door and returned to his seat.

"You may be able to help me, Herr Eckermann," he said; "but I must first take you, to some extent, into my confidence. I am not a sailor. I am a private detective. Here is my card."

The face of the fat German was a study on hearing this announcement. His flabby cheeks turned as pale as veal, and the card shook as he held it between his fingers. He had the greatest dread of detectives, for no particular reason. He was not the sort of man who would ever be likely to commit a great crime, though, as he made the greater part of his living by robbing sailors, in a more or less barefaced manner, he could not be described as an honest citizen.

"Mr. Stanley Dare!" he gasped. "I have heard of you; but for why—"

"Why am I here? Well, to tell you plainly, I am on the trail of the murderer of John Fleming."


"But you cannot suspect me! Himmel! I would have given mooch that it should not happen—"

"I don't suspect you of having any hand in the crime," interrupted Dare, "so you can set your mind at rest on that score. But I want to know all that you can tell me about that Chinese half-caste who has slipped through my fingers. What is his name?"

"Samuel Peters," replied Eckermann, who, now that he was sure he was not himself under suspicion, was quite anxious to give all the information in his power about the man who was.

(Another long instalment of this thrilling detective story next Tuesday.)

For Next Week



"ALONZO'S PLOT."

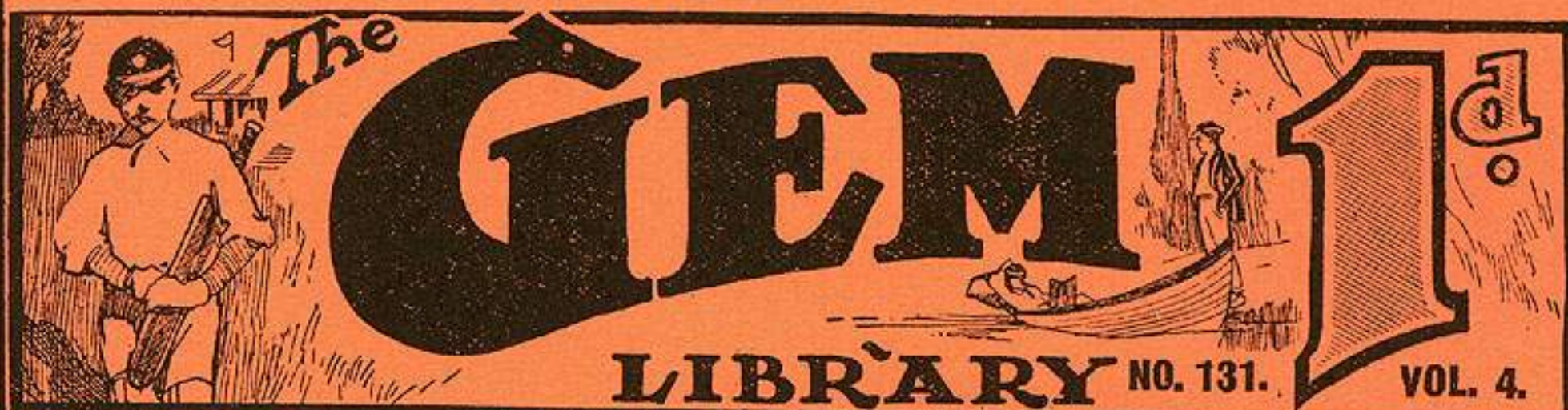
Alonzo Todd, the surprise packet of Greyfriars, has a little task set him by Bulstrode that causes a great deal of fun and laughter.

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The Editor

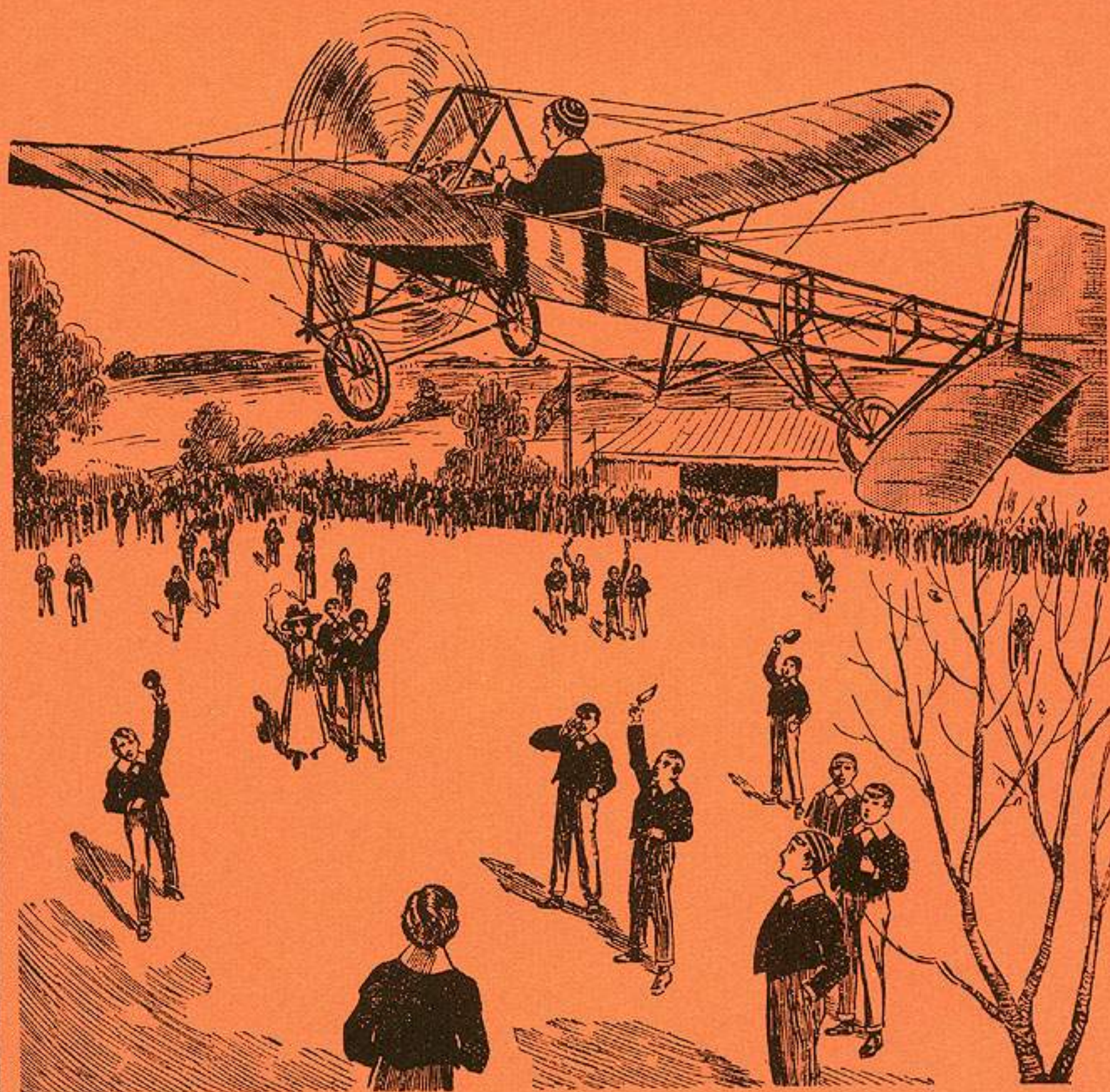
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