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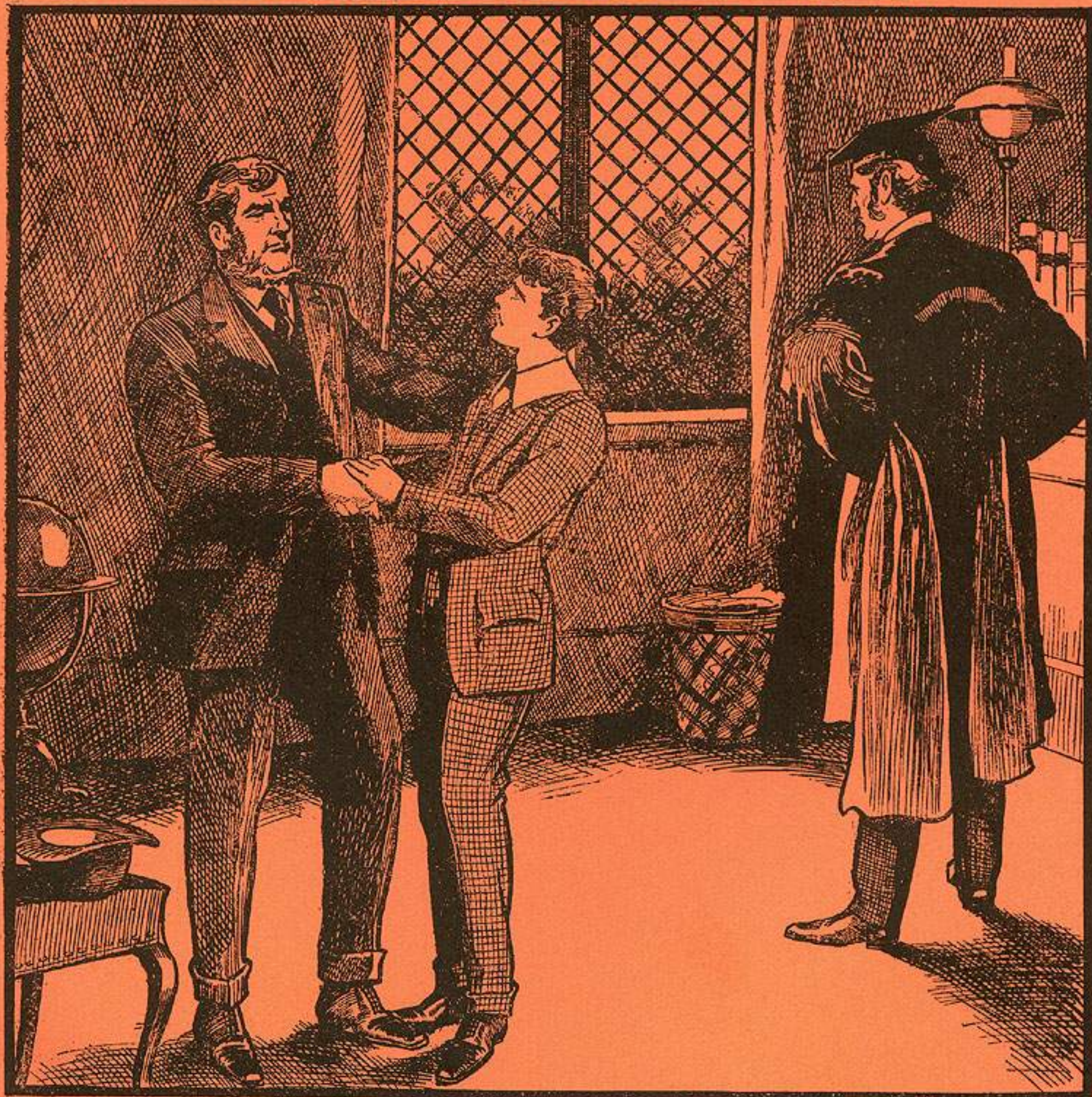
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No. 194

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Vol. 6



The Friardale cobbler turned to his son. There was emotion in his strong, thoughtful face, and his voice shook. "Dick, my boy, I'm goin'," said Mr. Penfold. "Good-bye, Dick, and remember your mother and me are thinking of you all the time." Dick's eyes were moist. "I'm not likely to forget that, father." "No, I don't think you are, Dick. And if you get on in this 'ere school, and rise above your old trade, you ain't likely to be ashamed of the old folks, I know." Dick flushed. "You know me better than that, father." "I do, Dick, I do. Good-bye, my lad, and God bless you!" "Good-bye, father!" (See the long, complete school tale inside).



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Next
Tuesday:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE."

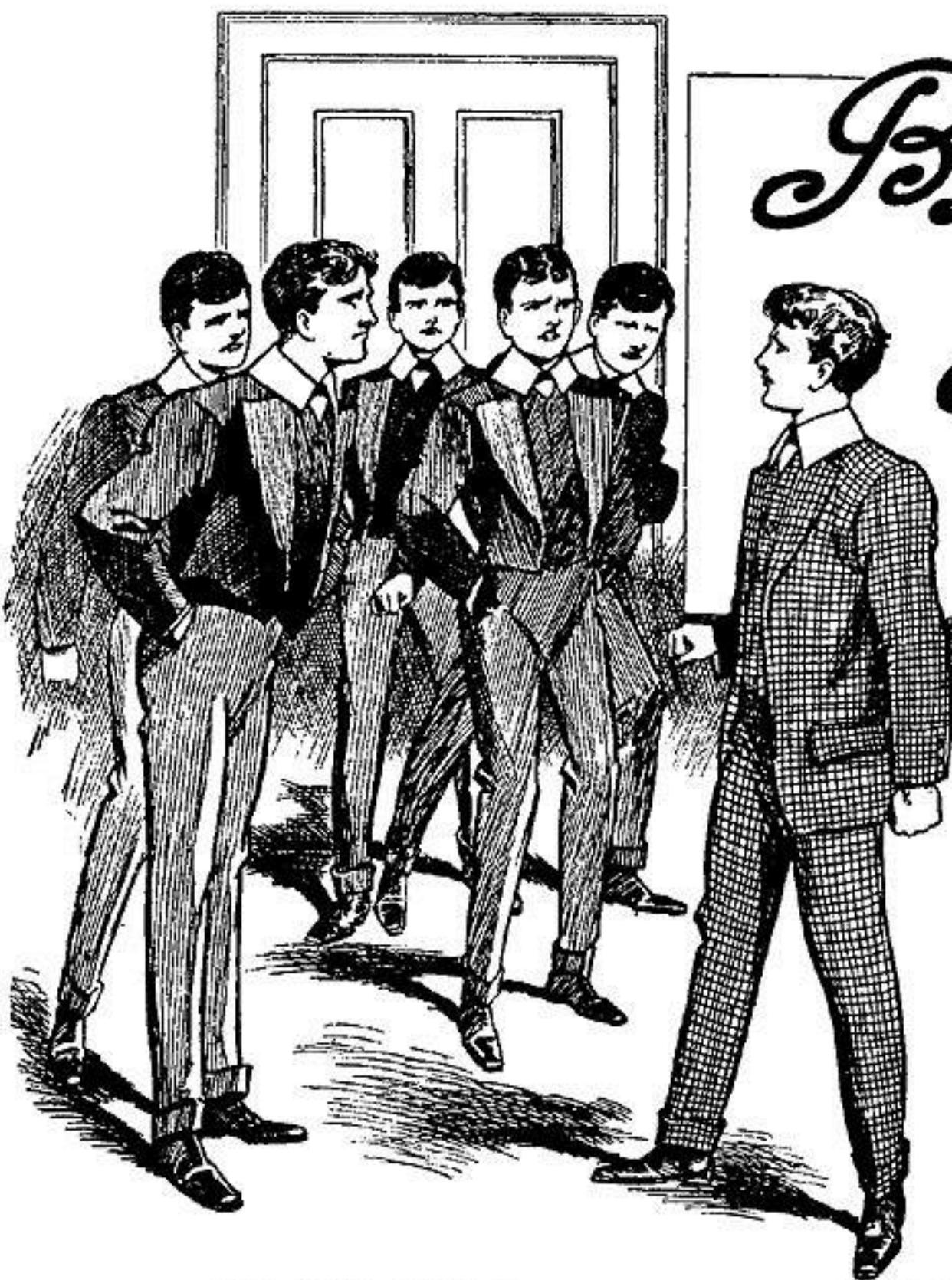
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By **FRANK RICHARDS.**

impossible. Bolsover, the Form bully, said that it was impossible. Even Snoop, who very seldom had any decided opinion about anything, said that it was impossible. Billy Bunter declared that it was impossible, and that if it were possible, he, for one, wouldn't remain in the Remove. And when Bob Cherry remarked that that would be a very good thing for the Remove, Billy Bunter only snorted.

"It's impossible!" said Bulstrode decidedly. "The Head wouldn't allow it. Don't talk to me about open scholarships! It can't be possible! Why, the chap's father keeps a boot shop in Friardale here—we buy our boots there! I tell you it's impossible!"

"But it's true!" said Harry Wharton.

"Rats, I say!"

"Look here!" said Bulstrode belligerently. "Do you mean to tell me that the son of the village cobbler is really coming to Greyfriars as a pupil?"

"Yes."

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Quite Impossible.

"IT'S impossible!"
"But it's true!"
"Oh, rats!"

And that was the general opinion in the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars School. The view taken by the Remove was summed up in that ancient and classic monosyllable, "Rats!"

Bulstrode, the captain of the Remove, said that it was

"Dick Penfold, the kid who brings our boots back when we have them soled!" said Hazeldene. "Oh, it's too thick!"

"It's all rot!" said Bolsover.

"Disgraceful!" said Snoop.

"Impossible!"

"Oh, rats!"

"If you want to set up as a funny man, Wharton, you'd better get some other yarn!" said Ogilvy. "It isn't true, and you can't pull our leg to that extent!"

"Rather not!"

And there was a buzz of excited voices in the junior common-room. Most of the Remove were there just now, as well as a good many of the Upper Fourth. Harry Wharton had brought the news in, and he did not seem to see anything remarkable about it.

Many of the Remove thought that odd, because Wharton always seemed to carry his head very high, and was generally supposed to be rather high-handed. If anybody was entitled to sniff at the idea of such an addition to the Remove Form, surely it was Wharton. But Wharton, curiously enough, did not seem in the least inclined to sniff. Most of the sniffing was done by fellows like Snoop and Skinner.

"I've seen it posted up on the notice-board," said Wharton quietly. "You ought to have expected something of the sort. The scholarship is open to all competitors who choose to enter, subject to age and residential qualifications. Dick Penfold entered, and he has won. There was a dozen fellows in Friardale and Courtfield who entered, and any of them might have got it."

"But the son of the village cobbler——"

"Well, old Penfold is a good cobbler," said Bob Cherry. "I know he mended my football boots splendidly, and charged a reasonable price, too."

Bolsover sneered.

"And you'd associate with the son of the man who mends your boots—eh?" he asked.

"Why not; if he's decent?" said Bob Cherry. "I'd associate with anybody who was decent. Of course, I wouldn't associate with you, Bolsover, as you don't come up to that standard!"

"Look here, Bob Cherry——"

"It can't be true!" said Bulstrode, the Form captain. "I've no dislike of the chap, but this isn't the proper place for a young cobbler."

"No fear!"

"It will be as rotten for him as for us," said Hazeldene. "Oil and water can't mix!"

"I don't know what my titled friends would say about it, if they knew!" Billy Bunter remarked.

"Oh, I don't suppose they'd say anything," said Frank Nugent. "They haven't been born yet, for one thing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"What are you going to do about it, Wharton?" asked Ogilvy. "Are you going to speak to the cobbler's son?"

Wharton nodded.

"Certainly, if he speaks to me!"

"You'll be friendly with him?"

"Yes."

"Well, if that's what you call pride——" said Skinner. "I don't call that pride—I call that decency!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully.

"Oh, rats!"

"It's Mark Linley over again, of course," said Snoop. "Linley came here on a scholarship, after working in a factory. But that was a bit better than this—the factory isn't just outside the school gates, at all events. But this cobbler chap lives in Friardale, and we pass his shop."

"I sha'n't dare to let my people know!" said Bunter. "If my father knew, he would take me away from Greyfriars at once."

"Then if you don't tell him, I jolly well will!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really Cherry——"

"Look here, you are talking a lot of rot, you chaps!" said Harry Wharton in his quiet tones. "You made just the same set against Mark Linley when he came, because he had worked in a factory; but there are very few chaps in the Remove now who don't believe that Linley is a splendid fellow. I don't know this chap Penfold, but he must have grit to win the scholarship at all, as he works at his father's trade as well, and I dare say he is quite decent. If he isn't, you can let him alone. But what I say is, give the chap a chance."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, you chaps are always setting yourselves against the rest of the Form!" said Skinner angrily. "I know jolly well that I'm not going to chum up with any cobblers!"

"If he's a particular chap, you mayn't have the chance!" Bob Cherry suggested.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"A blessed cobbler!" said Snoop. "I wonder what Greyfriars is coming to? We've got used to Linley now; but the cobbler's son from the village——"

"Horrible!"

"Beastly!"

"Disgraceful!"

"He'll be useful to mend our boots!" Bolsover remarked. "We can make him fag at mending boots instead of sending them to his father's shop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" said Harry Wharton, in disgust. "Look here, you fellows. I think you might give the chap a look in. It's easy enough to come down heavy on him if he does anything we don't like. But don't jump on him the moment he comes. I dare say he'll feel a bit awkward, anyway, coming to Greyfriars."

"He'll feel more awkward before I've done with him!" said Bolsover. "If we make it rotten enough for him, he may clear out, and go back to the cobbler's shop."

"Good wheeze!" said Vernon-Smith.

"I call the idea rotten!" said Bob Cherry. "It's caddish to jump on a chap who's done nothing! Give him a chance."

"Oh, rats!"

"We'll send him to Coventry, anyway!" said Skinner.

"Yes, rather!"

"I won't!" said Wharton sharply. "And I think there are some fellows who will stand by me in giving him fair play, whatever he's like."

"If you set yourself against the Form, Wharton, you'll get sent to Coventry, too!" said Smith minor.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"The Form can go and eat coke, for all I care!" he said.

And he walked out of the common-room.

He left the room in a buzz. The news was certainly surprising, and the Remove discussed little else that evening.

But on some points, after long discussion, most of the juniors were agreed. In the first place, the thing was impossible. In the second, if it was possible it was rotten. And in the third place, if the cobbler's son came they would make things so hot for him that he would be glad to get out of Greyfriars again.

Which was a decidedly unpleasant prospect for Dick Penfold when he arrived at Greyfriars School to take his place in the Remove Form.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Real Grit.

DR. LOCKE sat in his study on the following morning with a very thoughtful expression upon his kind, scholarly old face.

The doctor seemed to be thinking hard. He was evidently expecting a visitor, too. As he heard the sound of a bell ringing, he started a little nervously.

"Dear me!" murmured the Head of Greyfriars. "This is—is most unpleasant! I really wonder how this interview will end?"

There was a tap at the study door.

"Come in!" said the Head.

The door opened, and Trotter, the page, showed the visitors in. There were two of them. One was a thick-set, solidly-built man of middle age, with a trim dark beard and whiskers, and a steady, thoughtful, earnest face. The other was a lad of between fourteen and fifteen, with a rather good-looking, intelligent face, sufficiently resembling the middle-aged gentleman to show that he was his son.

Dr. Locke rose to his feet.

"Mr. Penfold! I am glad to see you!"

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Mr. Penfold.

Dr. Locke held out his hand. Mr. Penfold looked at it doubtfully for a moment, and then took it in a very gingerly manner, and shook it.

The boy's manner was quiet and subdued, but perfectly cool. He shook hands with the boy, whose manner was very respectful, but not at all hesitating. Mr. Penfold had been for twenty years a cobbler in Friardale village, and to him the Head of Greyfriars was almost an awful personage, and he was almost terrified at finding himself in Dr. Locke's study.

The boy's manner was quiet and subdued, but perfectly cool.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Penfold!" said the Head.

"Pray take a seat. I have expected you."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Mr. Penfold, rather confusedly.

"Your son has won the open scholarship, entitling him to a year's free board, lodging, and tuition at Greyfriars School," said the Head.

"Yes, sir; and very clever it was of him to do it, though I say it," said Mr. Penfold, with a proud and fond glance



"I won't stand it!" said the Bounder of Greyfriars, between his teeth. "I won't have a cobbling cad thrust into my study with me! Is that plain enough for you, or shall I try to find some plainer English? (See chapter 7.)

at his son, "'cause he has had to work as well, sir, 'elping me in my business!"

"Yes; so I understand. It is certainly extremely creditable to your son," said the Head of Greyfriars.

"And he's a good workman, sir, young as he is," said Mr. Penfold. "He can sole and 'eel a boot, sir, with anybody in the county!"

"Ahem! Indeed! Very creditable!" said the Head hastily. "You wish your son to take his place here at Greyfriars, Mr. Penfold?"

"Yes, sir. I didn't advise Dick to enter, sir. When I 'eard that he had done it, I said to him: 'Dick,' I says, 'it's above your means and your station,' I says, 'and if you do get to Greyfriars, you won't like it. But I'll 'elp you all I can,' I says. And that's how it was, sir. Wasn't it, Dick?"

"Yes, father."

"And your son determined to go on?" said the Head.

"Yes, sir; and I made it as easy for him as I could," said Mr. Penfold. "Didn't I, Dick?"

"You did, father."

"And a brave and dutiful lad he is, sir, if you know him," said Mr. Penfold confidentially. "Only I can't 'elp thinking, sir, that a cobbler's son may be rather out of place in your school, sir."

"Ahem!" said the Head. "I was about to say—"

"Suttinly, sir!"

"Suppose—ahem!—suppose your son preferred not to take up this scholarship, it is provided in the rules laid down on THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 194.

the subject that a money compensation may be given," said the Head—"I mean, that if your son preferred it, he could have the value of a year's tuition at Greyfriars paid to him, instead of coming to the school."

Dick Penfold looked steadily at the Head.

"I want to come to Greyfriars, sir," he said.

"Ahem!"

"I may be a little out of place, sir, at first, but I think I know how to behave myself; and, at all events, I shall do my best to learn, and I hope the other fellows will be patient with me at first, sir."

"Ahem!"

"But if you, sir, have any objection to my coming, I will stay away," said Dick Penfold, his colour deepening. "I don't want to force myself where I am not wanted, sir, even if I am entitled to do so."

Dr. Locke shook his head hastily.

"Pray do not think that for a moment," he said. "I was thinking entirely of you. I am afraid that you will find the new surroundings somewhat uncomfortable, though I have little doubt that you would shake down in time. But if you are prepared to take your chance, I shall certainly see that you have fair play, so far as it lies in my power to secure it. I spoke as I did because it was my duty."

"Thank you, sir," said Dick Penfold quietly. "I should prefer to come to Greyfriars, then."

"Very well, Penfold."

Mr. Penfold rubbed his big, brown hands together nervously.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

"I think my boy Dick would do any school credit, sir," he said. "I think so, really, sir. It's above his station, sir, I know, but he's fit for any station, ain't you, Dick?"

Dick Penfold smiled.

"I shall do my best to get on here, father."

"Very well," said the Head. "It is settled that Penfold comes to this school. I shall expect him to take his place in the Remove here as soon as he has his outfit."

"That is ready, sir," said Dick.

"Ah, indeed!"

"I can come as soon as permitted, sir."

"Are you prepared to stay here now?"

"Yes, sir. My box is packed, and my father will send it on."

"Very well," said the Head. "You have reflected, Penfold? You would prefer to come to Greyfriars instead of taking the money equivalent?"

"Yes, sir."

"If at any time during a week you should change your mind, Penfold, you have only to come to me and say so," said the Head.

"Very well, sir."

"Then if you are prepared, I will introduce you to your Form-master at once."

"Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Penfold rose, still holding his hat in his hand. He put his hat on, and took it off again, in a state of great nervousness.

Dr. Locke held out his hand.

"Good-bye, Mr. Penfold. You may depend upon it that your son will be given every chance to do his best at Greyfriars."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said Mr. Penfold. "I'm sure you're very good, sir, and Dick will do you credit, sir, you may take my word for that."

"I am sure I hope so."

The Friardale cobbler turned to his son. There was emotion in his strong, thoughtful face, and his voice shook a little as he spoke to the boy. The doctor turned away towards the window.

"Dick, my boy, I'm goin'," said Mr. Penfold. "Good-bye, Dick, and remember your mother and me are thinking of you all the time."

Dick's eyes were moist.

"I'm not likely to forget that, father."

"No, I don't think you are, Dick. And if you get on in this 'ere school, Dick, and rise above your old trade, you ain't likely to be ashamed of the old folks, I know."

Dick flushed.

"You know me better than that, father."

"I do, Dick—I do. Good-bye, my lad, and God bless you!"

"Good-bye, father!"

Mr. Penfold wrung his son's hand, and turned from the room. He went heavily and dully down the silent passages. From the Form-rooms came a hum of voices; the boys of Greyfriars were at morning lessons.

Mr. Penfold walked out into the Close, and strode down towards the gates. He was half way across the Close before he noticed that he still held his bowler hat in his hand. He smiled a little confusedly, and put it on his head.

Gosling, the school porter, looked at him as he came down to the gates. Gosling was rather inclined to patronise the robber of Friardale. Mr. Penfold had a quiet and kind nature that provoked that kind of thing in men like Gosling.

"Good-morning, Penfold," said Gosling loftily.

"Good-morning," said Mr. Penfold.

"I 'ear your boy 'as won a skollership to this 'ere school, Mr. Penfold."

"He has."

"Which I don't know what Greyfriars is coming to," said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—why don't he go to a Board School, I says?"

"So he has, many a year," said Mr. Penfold simply. "But Dick was always a critter for learning. He's studied French and Latin and matty-matickers, and them things in the evenings by 'imself, Mr. Gosling."

Gosling sniffed.

"Much better 'a bin mending boots," he said.

Mr. Penfold looked at him.

"There ain't anything 'ere, or anywhere else, too good for my boy Dick," he said, "and I'll thank you to remember that, Gosling. He's one of the young gentlemen of Greyfriars now, and you'll treat him with proper respect, however you talk to his father. And don't you forget that, Mr. Gosling."

And Mr. Penfold walked on, leaving Gosling staring after him. A derisive grin came over the school porter's face.

"One of the young gents of Greyfriars, is he?" he murmured. "Ho! Nice goings hon, I must say! Wot I says

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is this 'ere, that all the respect he will get from James Gosling will go hon the point of a pin, that's wot I says! Ho!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

In the Form-room.

"I WILL take you to your Form-room, Penfold, and introduce you to your Form-master," said Dr. Locke.

"Thank you, sir."

"Follow me."

Dr. Locke took one glance at the boy. He was a well-made, athletic lad. His clothes had evidently been made in the country, but they were clean and neat, and of good quality. He had a very presentable appearance, and, indeed, the Head thought he compared very favourably with some of the boys already in the Remove—with Bunter, for instance, who was fat and gross and slovenly.

Dick Penfold followed the Head down the Form-room passage.

Dr. Locke stopped at the door of the Remove-room.

In that room, Mr. Quelch, the Remove-master, had the pleasure of administering instruction to some forty youths, more or less willing to receive it.

The Form-master paused, and turned towards the door, as the Head entered. He gave Dick Penfold one sharp, searching glance.

"Ahem! Mr. Quelch!" said the Head.

"Yes, sir."

"This is the new boy—Penfold. I have spoken to you of him."

"Certainly, sir."

There was an irresistible buzz in the Remove.

Every eye was turned upon the new junior.

The cobbler's son flushed uncomfortably.

It was not pleasant to stand there, with the eyes of two score of fellows turned upon him, searching every detail of his appearance, mostly in an unfriendly way.

But Dick stood it well.

Only the flush of colour in his cheeks told that he was conscious of the close, and for the most part derisive, scrutiny of the Removites.

Dr. Locke turned to the Form.

"Boys!"

There was silence.

"Boys, this is the new boy—the lad who has won the Town Scholarship, against a large number of competitors, many of them older than himself. He has shown great courage and determination in doing what he has done, and deserves every credit for it."

The Head paused.

There was a cold and grim silence in the Remove.

It was clear that the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars were not in a mood to give the new-comer credit for anything at all.

Although not a word was spoken, there was hostility in the air, and the masters, as well as the new boy, felt it.

Dick Penfold's flush died away, and his cheek was pale. But his lips came together, and set very hard. If he was greeted with hostility in the Form he had won the right to enter, he was quite ready to stand his ground. If fellows he did not know chose to take a dislike to him upon no grounds whatever, excepting that he was a stranger to them and to their habits, they would not find it easy to crush him. He would have been glad—very, very glad—of friendship; but he could steel his heart against enmity.

Dr. Locke gave the Remove a sharp glance.

"Most of you are aware," he went on, in very distinct tones, "that Penfold is the son of a tradesman in the neighbouring village—a very honest and worthy tradesman, for whom I have the greatest respect. I hope that no one in this Form will allow that circumstance to make any difference in his treatment of Penfold. I hope, and trust, that there are no snobs in the Remove Form at Greyfriars."

Harry Wharton met the Head's gaze.

"I for one shall do my best to make the new fellow feel at home, sir," he said.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

The Head's face relaxed.

"Thank you, Wharton—and you, Cherry," he said. "I hope that the rest of the Form will follow your example. Take your place in the Form, Penfold."

"Yes, sir," said Dick quietly.

The Head quitted the Form-room.

Mr. Quelch indicated Penfold's place to him, and the new boy went to the Form. The place was next to Skinner, who was nearly at the end of the seat.

He made no movement whatever to make room for the new boy, although it was impossible for Dick to sit down unless he moved.

"Will you please let me sit down?" Dick whispered.

Skinner appeared not to hear.

"Please!" murmured Dick.

Mr. Quelch's sharp eyes, which the boys had compared to gimlets, on account of their piercing qualities, flashed in Dick's direction.

"Why do you not sit down, Penfold?" he asked.

Dick hesitated.

"Skinner, you have not given Penfold room."

"Haven't I, sir?" said Skinner. "I'm sorry, sir."

"Make room immediately."

"Yes, sir," said Skinner.

Dick Penfold sat down as Skinner made room, and the Removite gave him a most unpleasant look.

Penfold affected not to notice it. He did not want to quarrel with Skinner, whom he had never seen before; or, indeed, with anybody in the Remove. Skinner gave him as little room as possible, and Dick balanced himself uncomfortably on the end of the form. Bob Cherry leaned over towards the end of the Remove.

"Give the new chap room to sit down, Skinner," he whispered.

"Rats!" said Skinner.

"Look here—"

Mr. Quelch swung round again.

"Who is that talking?"

There was silence.

"Were you talking, Skinner?"

"No, sir," said Skinner.

Dick Penfold looked at him in blank amazement. The falsehood came so readily from Skinner's lips that it seemed like the truth. The look of amazement upon Penfold's face did not escape Mr. Quelch's keen eyes. He compressed his lips a little, and came towards the Form.

"I insist upon knowing who was speaking!" he exclaimed.

"I fancy I heard your voice, Cherry."

"Yes, sir," said Bob Cherry.

"Whom were you speaking to?"

"If you please, sir—"

"Answer my question!" thundered the Form-master.

"Skinner, sir."

"Ah! And you said—what?"

"I told him to give the new chap room, sir."

"You have told me a falsehood, Skinner. You certainly replied to Cherry. You will take a hundred lines."

"Very well, sir," said Skinner, biting his lips.

"And now give Penfold room."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch moved away. Skinner gave the new junior more room upon the form, and he gave him a look that spoke volumes. Dick turned very red.

"I'm sorry," he whispered, "I—I didn't want to get you punished. I—"

"You cad!" muttered Skinner. "I'll settle with you for this after lessons. I'll give you the hiding of your life when we get out of the Form-room."

Dick Penfold was silent.

He did not speak to Skinner again; it was evidently useless to attempt to make his peace, and he was afraid that Mr. Quelch would hear him speaking, and take it for disrespect. But a shade settled upon his face.

He had anticipated difficulties when he took his place in the Remove Form at Greyfriars. He did not think that the fellows would cordially welcome a boy whom they had known as the local cobbler's son. But he did not expect trouble to begin so early as this.

And he understood very clearly that there would be more trouble as soon as the Form was dismissed.

When morning lessons were over, and the Remove filed out of the Form-room, there was a cloud upon Dick Penfold's brow. Outside, in the passage, most of the juniors paused; and Skinner waited a few moments until Mr. Quelch was gone, and then strode up to the new junior.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

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TUESDAY.

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ONE
PENNY.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Trouble.

DICK PENFOLD stopped in the passage, and faced Skinner. The latter's look showed plainly enough that there would be trouble, and many of the juniors gathered round to see what would happen. Skinner faced the new boy with a scowl upon his face, and a decidedly bullying expression. He was half a head taller than Dick Penfold, and his manner showed that he fully expected to have things quite his own way.

"You cobbling cad!" he exclaimed. "You've got me a hundred lines—"

"I did not get them for you," said Dick quietly. "You were punished for telling a lie. You should not have told a lie."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"He's got you there, Skinny," he exclaimed.

Skinner flushed with rage.

"Has that cobbler come to Greyfriars to teach us what to do?" he exclaimed. "By George, I—I'll smash him!"

"Oh, hold on!" said Harry Wharton. "Let him alone! You began the trouble in class, and you've no right to pitch into him now."

"Are you going to stand up for the cobbler, Wharton?" asked Snoop, with a sneer.

"I'm going to see fair play, if that's what you mean."

"Mind your own business!" exclaimed Bolsover. "Leave them to fight it out. Not that I suppose the cobbler will fight."

Dick Penfold flushed.

"I don't want to fight," he said. "I don't see that there is anything to fight about."

There was a laugh of derision from the crowd of juniors.

"He doesn't want to fight!" grinned Bolsover.

"He doesn't see any reason!" chuckled Snoop.

"In fact, he'd rather run away!" sniggered Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, make room for the poor chap to run! He's frightened."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick's eyes flashed.

"I am not frightened," he exclaimed; "I said there is no reason to fight, and I do not want to fight. That is all."

Smack!

Skinner's open palm came with a ringing crack across the new junior's cheek.

Dick staggered back.

"Do you see any reason to fight now?" asked Skinner, with a sneer.

"You coward!" the new boy broke out. "Yes, I will fight you, and thrash you, too! You coward!"

He sprang forward. But Harry Wharton caught him by the shoulder and pulled him back. Penfold turned an angry glance upon him, and clenched his hand.

"Hold on," said Wharton, "you can't fight here!"

"I will fight him; I—"

"Yes, but not here—outside the masters' studies. You will be dropped on at once. If you are going to fight, come into the gym."

"Very well!"

"Yes, come on," said Skinner, "and I'll give you the licking of your life, you cobbling cad—you rotten shoe-maker!"

"Shut up, Skinner!" said Bob Cherry, in disgust. "If you're going to fight, do it with your hands, not with your tongue."

"Oh, come on!" exclaimed Bolsover. "We shall have a prefect down on us if you wrangle here. Buck up!"

The juniors crowded out into the Close.

Dick Penfold followed the others. He cast a glance in the direction of the gates of Greyfriars. He thought of the humble but cosy home down in the village—of the kind faces he had left there—and for a moment he was sorry that he had come to Greyfriars. Would he not have done better to remain there—to stay among the people he knew, who liked him? In coming to Greyfriars he seemed to have entered into a hostile camp. But the thought was only in his mind for a moment.

Then he threw his head up proudly, with a flash in his eyes.

He had a right there. By hard work and grit he had won his entrance into the old school; and he had as much right there as anybody else. More right, if it came to that; for he knew the history of Greyfriars, and he knew that, like most other public schools, it had been founded in the first place for the benefit of the poor men's sons. He would not be driven out; they might make it as hard for him as they liked, and he would hold his own against them all!

He walked on towards the gym, with his head proudly erect.

Harry Wharton & Co. followed with the crowd. Of the new boy they knew nothing; but they liked his looks, and they meant to see fair play. Skinner and his friends might very probably have turned the matter into a ragging, instead of a fight, if they had had the new junior to themselves in the gymnasium.

The crowd of fellows poured into the gym.

Skinner was strutting; he had not the slightest doubt of the result of the contest. Bob Cherry, who knew something about the manly art of self-defence, was not so sure of it. He had looked the new junior over, and he could see that, although considerably smaller than Skinner, he was better built, and well-knit, and extremely active. It was quite probable that there was a surprise in store for Skinner.

The Removites made a ring in the gym.

"I suppose you'll have the gloves on?" Harry Wharton suggested.

"Oh, rats!" exclaimed Skinner. "I can't lick the chap with the gloves on—and I tell you I am going to lick him."

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry decisively. "Wingate will let a fight go on if we have gloves, but if he found you punching with bare fists he would stop it."

"I don't care! Wingate isn't here now."

"Any prefect—"

"There isn't any prefect here."

"You ought to have the gloves on," Harry Wharton exclaimed, frowning. "It's not fair to the kid to fight without gloves. He's smaller than you are."

"He should have thought of that before," sneered Skinner.

Wharton turned to Dick Penfold, with an angry and irresolute expression.

"Will you fight without gloves?" he asked. "If you don't want to, I'll see that you don't fight at all, and that Skinner doesn't touch you again."

"Will you?" sneered Skinner.

"Yes, I will," said Wharton, with a flash in his eyes; "and if you raise a finger to touch him again, Skinner, I'll give you one on the chin that you'll remember for a long time. You won't bully the new kid while I'm here, at all events."

"Look here, Wharton—" began Bolsover.

"It's all right," said Dick Penfold hastily, "don't bother about me. I'm quite willing to fight without gloves if the other fellow wants to. I don't care either way."

"Well, the kid's got pluck, anyway," said John Bull.

"I guess so," said Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "I reckon he's got more grit than Skinner, when they come to grips. You hear me?"

"Well, if he's ready, I'm ready," said Skinner, peeling off his jacket and handing it to Snoop.

"I am ready!" said Dick Penfold quietly.

"Give me your jacket, Penfold," said Wharton.

"Thank you!"

"Now, ready!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "I'm going to keep time for you. This fight is going to be in rounds—"

"In one round, you mean!" grinned Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, Skinney! Now, then—time!"

The adversaries faced one another, and Skinner, with clenched fists, rushed upon his opponent. There was a trample of feet, a hurried scuffling, a crashing blow, and Dick Penfold went heavily to the floor.

Bump!

The new junior lay upon the floor of the gym, gasping, and Skinner stood over him, panting.

Size and strength had carried the day, at least for the moment; and the cobbler's son lay dazed at the feet of the cad of the Remove.

There was a shout of laughter from the crowd.

"It's all over!"

"You needn't call time, Bulstrode."

"The cobbler's licked!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Grit!

THE mocking laughter of the juniors rang in the ears of the fallen lad. It brought a flush to his face, and a gleam to his eyes. He had been hard hit, but his courage was not diminished. He struggled to his feet as Bulstrode was counting him out. Skinner struck at him, but this time Penfold warded off the blow, and gained his feet. Skinner pressed him hard.

"Time!" said Bulstrode.

And the contest stopped for a minute.

"Better chuck it, cobbler," said Bulstrode, "you're done."

"Of course he's done," said Smith minor. "What's the good of going on, young Soles and Heels? You're licked."

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Dick Penfold's eyes blazed.

"I'm not licked yet," he exclaimed huskily, "and I'm going on. I shall not give in so long as I can stand."

"Hear, hear!" shouted the irrepressible Bob Cherry. "That's the tune! Stick to that, my son, and you'll win!"

"I guess so."

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders, and Skinner gave a sneering laugh. Neither of them believed for a moment that the new boy had any chance. As a matter of fact, Skinner would never have tackled him at all if he had believed that he had any chance. Skinner was not a fighting-man as a rule; and he never fought unless he was assured that he had the advantage over his adversary. But it was possible to be deceived; and Skinner was very much deceived in this case.

"Time!" said Bulstrode.

"Toe the line!" grinned Hazeldone. "Go it, Boots and Shoes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick Penfold took no notice of the careless taunts. He was not ashamed of his trade, and the taunts fell upon him harmlessly. He faced Skinner again with steady eyes and steady hands.

Skinner rushed at him again. But this time the slighter lad was more on his guard, and he was ready for Skinner's bull-like tactics.

He backed away, eluding the rush, dodged, and Skinner swung clumsily past him. And as he did so, Penfold's right came out, crashing on Skinner's cheek, and his left followed it under the Removite's ear.

Biff! Biff!

Bump!

Skinner went down in a heap.

There was a gasp of amazement from the onlookers. Bob Cherry crowed.

"What did I tell you? Ha, ha, ha!"

"The kid's got something in him, after all," Frank Nugent remarked to Harry Wharton. "I think that will make Skinner pretty sick."

"Yep," said Fisher T. Fish; "I guess you're right."

Skinner certainly did look sick as he staggered up. Dick Penfold had the right to attack him as he rose, and it was a right Skinner had availed himself of in the first round. But the new boy held back, keeping his hands down until Skinner was well upon his feet, and ready to commence.

"Good man!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"Ass!" said Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greysfriars. "He could have knocked Skinner into a cocked hat if he had liked."

"He's too decent," said Bob Cherry. "Skinner's a cad—and Penfold, evidently—isn't."

"Oh, rot!"

Skinner attacked again. He was hurt, and he was enraged more than he was hurt. He was very careful now about getting too close to his enemy, and he tried to make use of his longer reach.

But at arm's length he found Penfold more than his match. The scholarship boy had certainly picked up a knowledge of boxing from somewhere. He handled his fists far more scientifically than his foe, and he put in at least two blows to Skinner's one.

But when Bulstrode called time again Skinner had had more punishment than the cobbler's son of Friardale.

The crowd of juniors were more silent now.

It was growing clear to all of them that there was quality in the cobbler's son, and growing extremely doubtful whether Skinner would succeed in licking him.

But hardly a voice was raised to cheer the stranger.

Bob Cherry, who would have cheered pluck wherever he saw it, was ready to shout, and a few others were glad to see the new junior defend himself so successfully. But the general feeling was against the stranger.

It was because he was a stranger. He was not of their school, not of their ways, not of their acquaintance. And if he licked Skinner he was licking one of them! Skinner was certainly not popular, but he was one of the Remove, and sympathy was with the Removite.

"Time!"

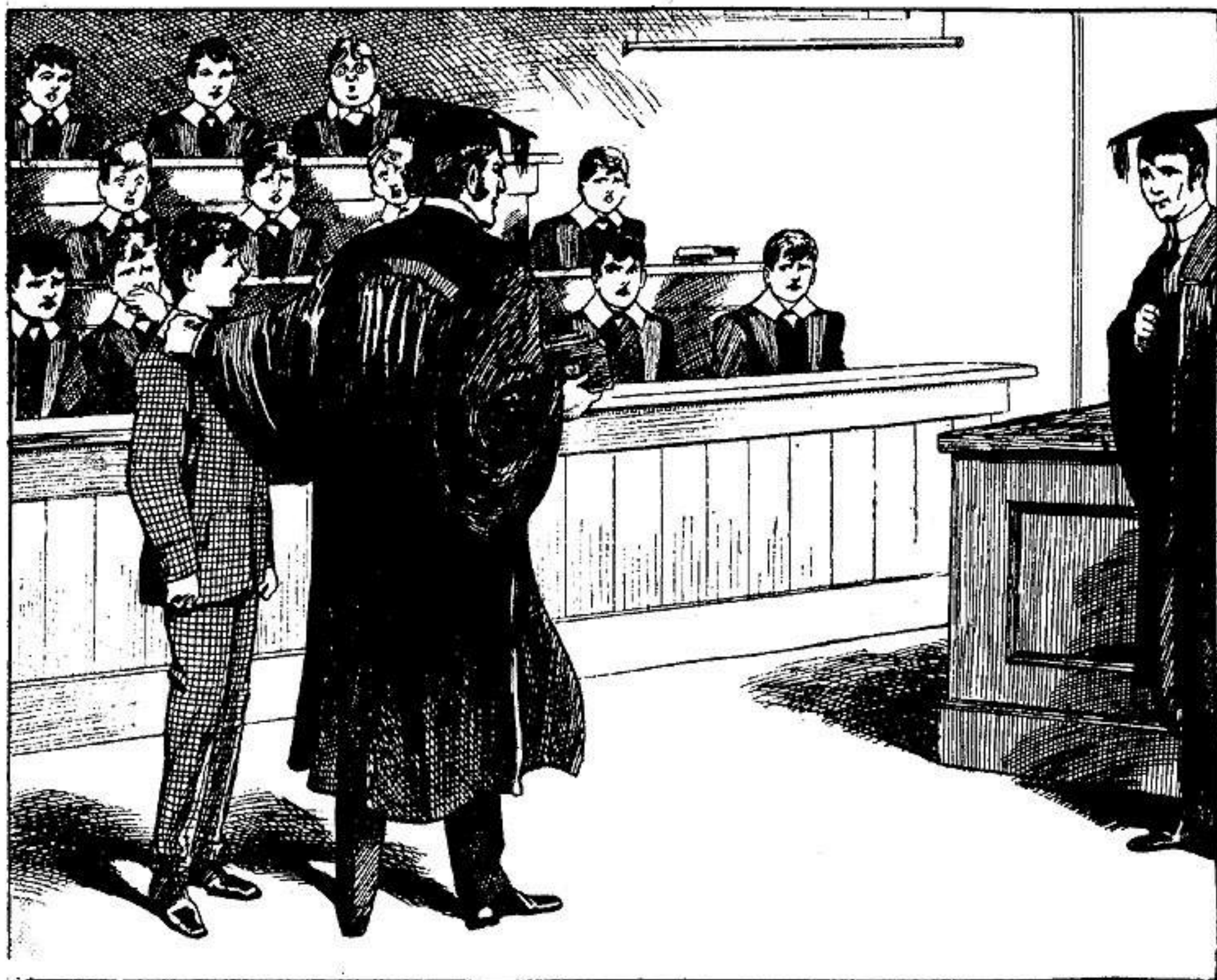
The third round commenced, and now it was seen quite clearly that the advantage lay with Dick Penfold.

For the punishment he had received seemed only to have whetted his appetite for more, and the harder he was hit, the more resolutely he came up to the scratch.

It was very different from Skinner. Every hard hit told more upon his courage than upon his skin.

He was getting afraid! He began to dodge, to content himself with defence, and to avoid close quarters.

The third round was mostly occupied by Skinner's backing round the ring, and the new boy following him up and trying to get at him.



"Boys," said Dr. Locke, turning towards the Removites, "this is a new boy—the lad who has won the Town Scholarship against a large number of competitors, many of them older than himself. He has shown great courage and determination in doing what he has done, and deserves every credit for it." The Head paused. There was a cold and grim silence in the Remove. (See Chapter 8.)

Loud jeers greeted Skinner when Bulstrode called time again. But there was not a cheer for the new boy.

"It's all over," said Bolsover, yawning. "Skinner thinks it's a walking match."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I've ever seen a horse back away so well as Skinner does it," said Bob Cherry. "Will you have the gloves on now, Skinner?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Skinner would like to fight at twenty paces," suggested John Bull.

Skinner flushed with rage and mortification. For very shame's sake he could not ask now to have the gloves on; but he would have been very glad indeed to have them.

When Bulstrode called time for the fourth round, Skinner came up very slowly and hesitatingly.

It was clear that the combat was almost over.

"Oh, pile in, Skinny!" exclaimed Trevor. "Don't give it away!"

"Go it, Skinner!"

Bump!

Dick Penfold's fist came crashing upon Skinner's chin, and the cad of the Remove went heavily backwards, and crashed to the floor.

He lay there gasping.

"Up with you, Skinner!"

"Go it!"

"Buck up!"

Bulstrode was counting.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven—"

"Jump up, Skinner. You're not knocked out!" shouted Bolsover.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

"Go it, Skinner! Get up!"

"Eight, nine—LICKED!"

Bulstrode put his watch back into his pocket, and Dick Penfold dropped his hands. The fight was over.

Snoop helped Skinner to his feet. Skinner seemed able to rise easily enough now that the fight was ended. He stood blinking at the sneering juniors.

"Rotten!" said Bolsover. "You're not half done yet! You've given the fight away to the cobbling cad!"

"I—I couldn't—"

"Rats!"

"Bosh!"

"Rubbish!"

"Yah!"

Skinner put his jacket on, and slunk out of the gymnasium followed by hisses and various expressive epithets from the Remove. There was no doubt whatever that he could have continued the fight if he had chosen, though it is doubtful if the final result would have been very different.

Harry Wharton helped Penfold on with his jacket. Dick Penfold's mouth was bleeding, and his nose was cut, and there was a dark circle round his eye. But in the excitement he did not seem to feel his injuries.

"Thank you, Wharton," he said quietly.

"Not at all, my dear chap. Come with me—you'd better bathe your face," said Harry.

"You are very kind," faltered Dick.

It was curious—a few words of kindness had more effect upon the lad than all the bullying and sneering of the rest. His voice almost broke as he replied to Wharton.

Harry drew Penfold's arm within his, and led him from the gym.

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

Most of the other fellows looked after them with angry, sneering faces.

"Isn't it like Wharton?" Vernon-Smith exclaimed. "There never was anything that cropped up in the Remove where Wharton didn't set himself against the rest of the Form. He's going to take that cobbling cad under his wing."

"Jolly good thing if he does, my dear fellow," said Mauleverer.

"Oh, rats! It's sheer obstinacy!"

"Of course it is," said Bolsover.

"But he won't make us take the cad up," said Leigh. "I draw a line at cobblers."

"Yes, rather!" exclaimed Vane.

"Hear, hear! Cobblers are barred!"

And that was the general feeling of the Remove. They were angry with Skinner for being licked by the cobbler; angry with the cobbler for licking him; and angry at the idea of Dick Penfold coming to Greyfriars at all. And it was pretty generally agreed that if he stayed he should have what Bolsover elegantly described as a "high old time!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Friends in Need.

MR. QUELCH, the master of the Remove, met Wharton and Penfold as they entered the house. Harry had hoped to get the new boy up to the dormitory without being observed; but the Form-master met them in the hall, and signed to them at once to stop. His keen gaze dwelt inquiringly upon Penfold's injured face.

"Have you been fighting, Penfold?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," said Dick reluctantly.

"Not with you, Wharton?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"With whom, then?"

"Skinner, sir."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Very well! Penfold had better bathe his face."

He turned away, and Wharton conducted Penfold up to the Remove dormitory. The new boy looked round the long, lofty room, with its rows of white beds.

Harry smiled.

"This is the Remove dorm.," he said. "You will sleep here to-night."

"It is very nice," said Dick.

"Oh, we're pretty comfy," said Wharton. "I don't know where your bed is, but you can use my washstand now. Here you are—and here's soap and towels. You'd better take your collar off and give your chivvy a good rub."

"Thank you."

Dick plunged his red-hot face gladly into the cool water. Now that the excitement of the fight was over he felt heavy and dispirited; the reaction had set in. He had licked Skinner; but what did that matter to him? Skinner was nothing to him—he did not know the fellow. He would gladly have been friends with Skinner instead. What rotten luck it was that he should make enemies the first day he came to Greyfriars!

Wharton saw that he had all he wanted, and left him in the dormitory. Harry had his own occupations, and it was not necessary for him to stay. But the great, long room seemed very lonely and desolate to Dick Penfold when he was left alone in it.

He finished his washing and towelling, and then sat down on the nearest bed. He was tired and aching. There was a dull pain in his lower jaw where Skinner had struck him hard, and his eye was aching. He was stiff all over from the struggle, and the feeling of depression was growing upon him.

He had made a bad beginning. As soon as he returned from the dormitory he knew that he would meet with sneering looks and taunts.

Was it worth while?

He sat on the bed, his collar in his hand, his eyes on the floor, thinking and thinking in a mood of the deepest despondency.

Dr. Locke had offered him the money equivalent of his scholarship, and had almost advised him to accept it; he could see that the Head had anticipated the difficulties he would have to contend with at Greyfriars, and had wished to save him from them. Was it because the Head had believed that the difficulties would be too great for him to overcome?

Most likely!

Perhaps he would have done better to accept the Head's offer—or, rather, undoubtedly he would have done better. The wretched, miserable depression crept over the lad, and he felt his eyes moisten.

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There was a step in the dormitory, and he looked up quickly.

A lad, a little older than himself, entered—a quiet-looking lad Dick had already noticed among the crowd of Removites, though he did not know his name.

The junior glanced round the dormitory, and caught sight of Dick Penfold sitting on Wharton's bed, and came over towards him.

Dick, as he looked at him, liked his face. It was not handsome, but it was pleasant-looking, and very firm and strong, as well as kind.

"I came here to speak to you, Penfold," said the junior.

"Yes?" said Dick.

"My name is Linley—Mark Linley; I come from Lancashire," said the other junior. "I've got something to say to you—some advice to give you, if you'll listen to it."

"Thank you."

"You put up a good fight to-day," said Mark Linley; "you've shown the fellows that you have grit. You've shown them that you won't be put upon, and that's a good thing. You've made some enemies; but you've made some friends, too. I suppose you are feeling a bit down-hearted now?"

"Yes," said Dick with a faint smile.

"So did I, at first," said Mark quietly.

"You?"

"Yes. I'm a scholarship boy—though my scholarship here is for three years, not for one. When I first came, I had to go through much the same thing—almost all of them were down on me, because I came on a scholarship. But I stood it—and now it's all right for me. I worked in a factory until I won the scholarship, and some of the snobs remind me of it now; but most of the fellows are content to let it slide. I'm telling you this because it may help you."

"Yes?"

"You'll have to stand up for yourself, and if you do that and don't appear to be ashamed of what you came from, you'll be all right. If they suspected you of being ashamed of having been a cobbler, they would despise you more. At the same time, you don't want to trot out the cobbling on all occasions," Linley added, with a smile.

Dick laughed.

"I understand."

"Most of the fellows are quite decent, and if you act decently they'll come round in time," said Linley. "That's how I found it. Show you've got grit and that you won't be bullied, and at the same time don't bear malice or remember grudges. You don't mind my giving you advice?"

"I'm jolly glad of it," said Dick gratefully. "It's very kind of you to take any interest in me."

Mark shook his head.

"Not at all. I've been through it, though perhaps not quite so bad. If I can do anything to help you, I shall be only too glad."

Dick rose from the bed, and fastened his collar. He felt inexpressibly cheered by the kind words of the Lancashire lad.

They left the dormitory together. In the lower passage Lord Mauleverer, of the Remove, came up to them. Lord Mauleverer, the only titled fellow at Greyfriars, was a very prominent person in the Remove, partly because he was a millionaire with an unlimited allowance of pocket-money, and partly because he was a simple and kind-hearted fellow, and everybody's friend.

"Hallo, Penfold, my dear fellow!" he exclaimed. "I hope you have not been very much damaged, begad."

Dick smiled.

"Not very much, thank you!" he replied.

"I'm glad of that, begad," said Lord Mauleverer. "I apologise to you, dear boy, on behalf of the Remove, for this rotten reception you've had here. It was a shame, my dear fellow! I'm sorry!"

And, with a graceful bow, Lord Mauleverer walked away. Dick glanced after him.

"Who's that?" he asked, looking at Mark Linley.

"That's Lord Mauleverer."

"A lord?" said Dick.

Mark laughed.

"Yes, a lord," he said; "and one of the best and kindest-hearted fellows breathing."

"I think he must be," said Dick softly.

The new boy's face was very much brighter now. After all, he had not fallen wholly among enemies. Friends, perhaps, he had none, but he had found many who were kind and disposed to help him, and his heart was much lighter.

ANSWERS

VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, came along the Remove passage soon after afternoon school, with his face pale with rage.

Several fellows looked at him. There were a good many juniors in the passage, for it was about tea-time. Juniors with kettles in their hands came to fill them at the tap at the end of the passage, and fellows came along with parcels under their arms from the tuck-shop. Most of the Removites had their tea in their own studies, when the funds ran to it. Tea in hall was a last resource for the stony.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's the matter with the Bounder? Has the order gone forth that no more smokes shall be smuggled into the school, Smithy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have they stopped his copy of the 'Sporting Snipster?'" asked Hazeldene.

There was a roar of laughter. Vernon-Smith's little weaknesses were well known. The Bounder of Greyfriars cast a furious glance round.

"What's the matter?" asked Bulstrode.

"That cad—that cobbling cad——"

"What's the matter with him? I haven't seen him since class," said the captain of the Remove.

"He's put into my study!"

"What?"

"They've put him into my study!" roared Vernon-Smith.

"My hat!"

"Hard cheese!"

"Too bad!"

Vernon-Smith ground his teeth.

There had been some anxiety in the Remove as to which study the new boy would occupy. He would have to be put into some study in the Remove passage, and, as all the studies were occupied, someone would have to share his quarters with him. Most of the studies had three or four fellows in them, and only two had a single occupant—Lord Mauleverer's and Vernon-Smith's. It was known that Lord Mauleverer's guardian had arranged for the schoolboy earl to have a separate study, and so no one expected the new junior to be put in with him. And as there was more room in Vernon-Smith's study than in any other, he had been put in there. It was natural enough, but it made the Bounder of Greyfriars furious.

"Oh, it's rotten for you, Smithy," said Snoop, "but it would have been just as bad for any of us, you know!"

"Quite," said Skinner.

"Worse for you, Skinner," said Nugent. "He might have given you another licking if you'd got your ears up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a bit rotten for him to be put with the Bounder," Bob Cherry remarked. "I suppose you will try to be a bit more decent than usual, under the circumstances, Smithy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

"I'm not going to stand it!" he exclaimed furiously.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"I don't see what you're going to do, then," he remarked.

"I'll make my study too hot to hold him," said Vernon-Smith, with bitter rage. "To think of having a cobbler stuck in the same study with a gentleman!"

Bob Cherry looked puzzled.

"But he won't be," he remarked. "There's nobody else in the study excepting yourself, Smithy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder gave Bob Cherry a savage look and strode away. He went into his study and slammed the door. Bob, with a chuckle, went along to Study No. 13 with the kettle of water he had in his hand.

"Smithy's got the new chap for a study-mate, Marky," Bob Cherry observed, as he entered.

Mark Linley was making toast at the study fire.

The Lancashire lad looked anxious.

"He will make it rotten for the new chap, Bob," he remarked.

"I think Penfold can take care of himself, though."

"Yes; I hope so."

The juniors in the passage discussed the matter with great interest. The greater part of them would have resented Penfold's intrusion into their studies, just as the Bounder did. But there was no use in objecting to the order of the Form-master. Penfold had been placed where it was most convenient for him to be placed, and that was an end of it.

"It's all rot!" Frank Nugent remarked, as he came into No. 1 Study to help Wharton get the tea. "From what I can see, Penfold appears to be quite decent."

"Quite!" said Harry.

"And he has a right to complain, not Vernon-Smith, if they're put together."

"Exactly! But I'm afraid the Bounder will make him sit up, Frank."

There was still a buzz of voices in the passage. Ten

minutes later, Dick Penfold came upstairs. He had had his tea in hall, and he had a number of books under his arm. He glanced at the crowd of juniors, who stared at him mockingly.

He went along the passage, looking at the numbers of the studies. All the studies were numbered, and the numbers were painted over the doors, but most of them had become more or less obliterated with time. Which way the numbers ran, and which side of the passage No. 9 was on, Dick could not guess. The juniors watched him mockingly, not in the least inclined to help him in his difficulty.

Dick Penfold looked round.

"Can any of you tell me which is No. 9, please?" he asked.

"Here you are!" said Snoop, pointing to Bolsover's study.

"Thank you!"

Dick opened the door of the study.

Bolsover and Hazeldene and Leigh were at tea there. They all stared at the intruder. The bully of the Remove half-rose to his feet.

"What do you want?" he roared.

"Is this No. 9, please?" asked Penfold.

"No, it isn't! Get out!"

"I'm sorry!"

Dick drew back, and closed the door of the study. There was a crash within the room, and a book struck the door and fell to the floor. It had been intended for Dick Penfold, if he had not quitted the study in time; but as he had not been hit, Dick took no notice. He was not looking for trouble. The scholarship boy was likely to find enough trouble without looking for it.

There was a chuckle in the passage. The Removites found Dick's reception in Bolsover's study amusing. Dick gave Snoop a glance of scorn.

"You told me a falsehood," he exclaimed.

Snoop sniggered.

"Go hon!" said he, evidently very much tickled at Dick's indignation.

"Oh, shut up, Snoopy!" said Vane. "Don't cackle like that. I don't see what you want to tell even a cad lies for."

"Look here, Vane——"

"Oh, rats!"

Dick Penfold went along the passage, looking for No. 9. He caught sight of Lord Mauleverer looking out of No. 15, and hastened towards him to make the inquiry. The schoolboy earl obliged him at once.

"There you are, dear boy," he exclaimed. "Is that to be your study?"

"Yes."

"It's the Bounder's room, you know."

"The Bounder?" repeated Dick, puzzled.

"Yaas; Vernon-Smith, you know."

"Well, I have been told I am to share that study with another boy," said Dick. "I suppose I shall have to."

Lord Mauleverer rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Yaas, I suppose so, my dear fellow," he said. "I'm sorry. You'd better look out for trouble, begad."

Dick nodded.

"Thank you!" he said.

Lord Mauleverer returned to his study, looking somewhat troubled. He was concerned for the new boy, abandoned to the tender mercies of Vernon-Smith. Dick Penfold tapped at the door of No. 9, and opened it.

It was the right study at last. Vernon-Smith was there, seated in his armchair before the fire, smoking. Dick started in surprise at the sight of the cigarette. He had not had the least idea that smoking was allowed in the junior studies at Greyfriars. As a matter of fact, it was not allowed, and Vernon-Smith would have got into very serious trouble if a master or a prefect had seen him at that moment.

"This is No. 9?" Dick said, by way of breaking the ice.

Vernon-Smith looked at him.

"Yes," he snapped.

"I have been told I am to share this study."

"Who told you?"

"Mr. Quelch."

"He told me the same," said Vernon-Smith, taking his cigarette from his mouth, and looking at the new junior through the smoke. "I couldn't say anything to Quelch, but I can say something to you. I won't stand it!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. I won't stand it!" said the Bounder of Greyfriars, between his teeth. "I won't have a cobbling cad thrust into my study with me! Is that plain enough for you, or shall I try to find some plainer English?"

Dick Penfold flushed.

"I don't want to stay here, any more than you want me to stay," he said, "but I don't see what's to be done. Mr. Quelch sent me here."

"I know that; he told me so."

"What am I to do?"

"Get out!"

"Don't be an ass," said Dick sharply. "How can I get out? I can't go into another study without permission from Mr. Quelch."

"I don't see that a cobbler wants a study at all," said Vernon-Smith, with a sneer. "You could prepare in the Form-room, and hang about the common-room when you've nothing to do. I don't see that you want a study."

Dick Penfold laid his books upon the table.

"This is my study," he said. "I am going to use it. If you don't like me for a study-mate, I'm sorry. But it can't be helped, and you're not sorrier than I am. I don't like you any more than you like me, and I don't like being shut up with a fellow who smokes."

"You—you lecture me, you cad!" shouted the Bounder.

"Well, you've been talking to me pretty plainly, haven't you?" asked Penfold.

"That's different."

"I don't see it. But I don't want to talk to you at all, if I can help it," said Dick Penfold. "Let's let each other alone—that's what we'd better do."

The Bounder sneered.

"I shall not let you alone, so long as you remain in my study," he said. "I'm not in the habit of associating with cobblers."

"What are you going to do, then?"

"I'm going to get you out of this study."

Dick's eyes flashed.

"Then you'd better begin," he exclaimed. "I've had one fight to-day, but I'm ready for another, if you attack me."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, I don't mean to pitch you neck and crop out of the study," he said, "but I warn you that if you stay here I'll make it too hot to hold you. I'll make you glad to get out, if you persist in sticking in my room."

"I don't see how you will do it."

"You will see soon. I offer you the chance of getting out without trouble. Look here," said the Bounder, putting his hand into his pocket, "I'll give you a sovereign to get out and say nothing more about it."

Penfold flushed crimson.

"Do you think I want your money?" he exclaimed.

"A good many fellows do!"

"I'm not one of them. Keep your sovereign. And you'd better be careful how you talk to me, too. I don't want to fight you, or anybody else, but I shall not allow anyone to insult me!"

"Insult a cobbler!" said Vernon-Smith, with a derisive laugh.

Dick clenched his hands.

"I have been a cobbler," he said, "and I may be one again, but if you insult me once more, Vernon-Smith, I shall hit you—hard."

The Bounder burst into a laugh.

"I don't fight with cobblers, or I should lick you for that," he said.

Dick strode over towards him.

"You'll lick me, cobbler or not, or I shall lick you," he said, putting up his hands. "I'm fed up with your sneers. Come on!"

"Rats!"

The study door opened, and Mr. Quelch looked in. Dick swung round, and flushed crimson at the sight of the Remove-master, and dropped his hands hastily. The master of the Remove seemed to have noticed nothing.

"Ah, Smith, Penfold has been put into your study," he said. "I hope you two boys will get on very well, and there will be peace in this study. I hope sincerely that there will be no quarrelling."

Mr. Quelch spoke significantly, and waited for a reply. The Bounder bit his lip.

"Very well, sir," he said.

"I shall do my best, sir," said Penfold.

"Very good."

The Remove-master closed the door. Vernon-Smith gave the scholarship boy a bitter look.

"So you are currying favour with the masters already?" he said.

"Nothing of the sort. I—"

"But Quelch or no Quelch, you don't stay in this study," said the Bounder. "That's all I shall say. Let the matter drop. But if you don't leave this study peaceably you will be shifted out, and you will be sorry. That's all!"

And the Bounder quitted the room and slammed the door.

Dick Penfold stood silent, with a clouded brow, for some moments. Then he began to arrange his books, with a quivering lip.

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READ the grand new story of the Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled: **"A FALSE CHUM!"**

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Dormitory Rag.

BOLSOVER, the Bully of the Remove, grinned when bedtime came round that night. Bolsover was anticipating quite a merry time in the Remove dormitory. Almost the whole Form were bitter against the new boy, and for once the Remove bully was sure of a following, unpopular as he generally was. For Dick Penfold to enter the Remove dormitory at all was a great deal like Daniel entering the lions' den, but he had no choice in the matter. When bedtime came he had to go up with the rest, and he did not anticipate what was awaiting him.

Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, saw lights out for the Remove. The Removites were all quietly in bed when Wingate left the dormitory. Bolsover & Co. were lying very low.

But as soon as the door had closed, and the footsteps of the prefect had died away down the passage, Bolsover sat up in bed.

"Anybody got a match?" he asked.

"I have," said Snoop.

"Light a candle, then."

The light flared up.

The dim glimmer of a candle lighted the dormitory. Skinner slipped out of bed and lighted a second candle. Then several fellows turned out.

Harry Wharton sat up.

"What's on?" he asked.

Bolsover gave a sneering laugh.

"You go to sleep, and mind your own bizney," he replied.

"What's going on is nothing to do with you."

"Nothing at all," said Vernon-Smith. "You can go to sleep, Wharton."

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"I shall go to sleep when I please," he said. "I think I can guess what your little game is, and I may be wanted."

"You'd better mind your own bizney," said Bolsover threateningly. "I can tell you that the whole Form are in this, and if you meddle you'll get a dormitory licking."

Harry Wharton laughed.

The Remove were turning out on all sides now, and there was no doubt of the correctness of Bolsover's statement that nearly all the Form were in "it," whatever "it" was.

And what "it" was, was soon made clear. Bolsover strode over towards Dick's bed.

"Penfold! Cobbler! Up you get!"

Dick looked up at him.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"You!"

"Tumble up!" exclaimed Snoop.

"Turn out, you cad!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith. "We'll have you out in a heap if you don't get up!"

"I'm not going to get up," said Dick squarely. "I'm in bed, and I want to go to sleep. Let me alone!"

The ragers chuckled.

"Have him out!" shouted Stott.

"Yank him over!"

"Pitch him on the floor!"

Half a dozen pairs of hands dragged the new boy from his bed. He rolled on the floor in the midst of the ragers.

He sprang to his feet, panting, and his eyes blazing.

"Let me alone!" he shouted.

A scoffing laugh was the only answer. Dick Penfold was hustled out into the middle of the dormitory.

Harry Wharton looked towards Bulstrode's bed. Bulstrode, as captain of the Remove, was the fellow to interfere with dormitory ragging, if anybody did. But it was pretty clear that Bulstrode did not mean to interfere now.

"Bulstrode!" called out Harry Wharton sharply.

The Remove captain yawned.

"Hallo!" he said.

"Are you going to let this rotten ragging go on?"

"I'm not taking a hand in it, am I?" said Bulstrode aggressively.

"You ought to stop it."

"Oh, rats! I don't see it. What did the cobbler want to come to this school for, anyway?" grunted Bulstrode. "We shall have the butcher's boy next, I suppose!"

"And I don't see why not, if he could come," said Wharton.

"But that's not the question. You're captain of the Remove—you remind us of it often enough. It's your bizney to stop the ragging."

"Oh, rats!"

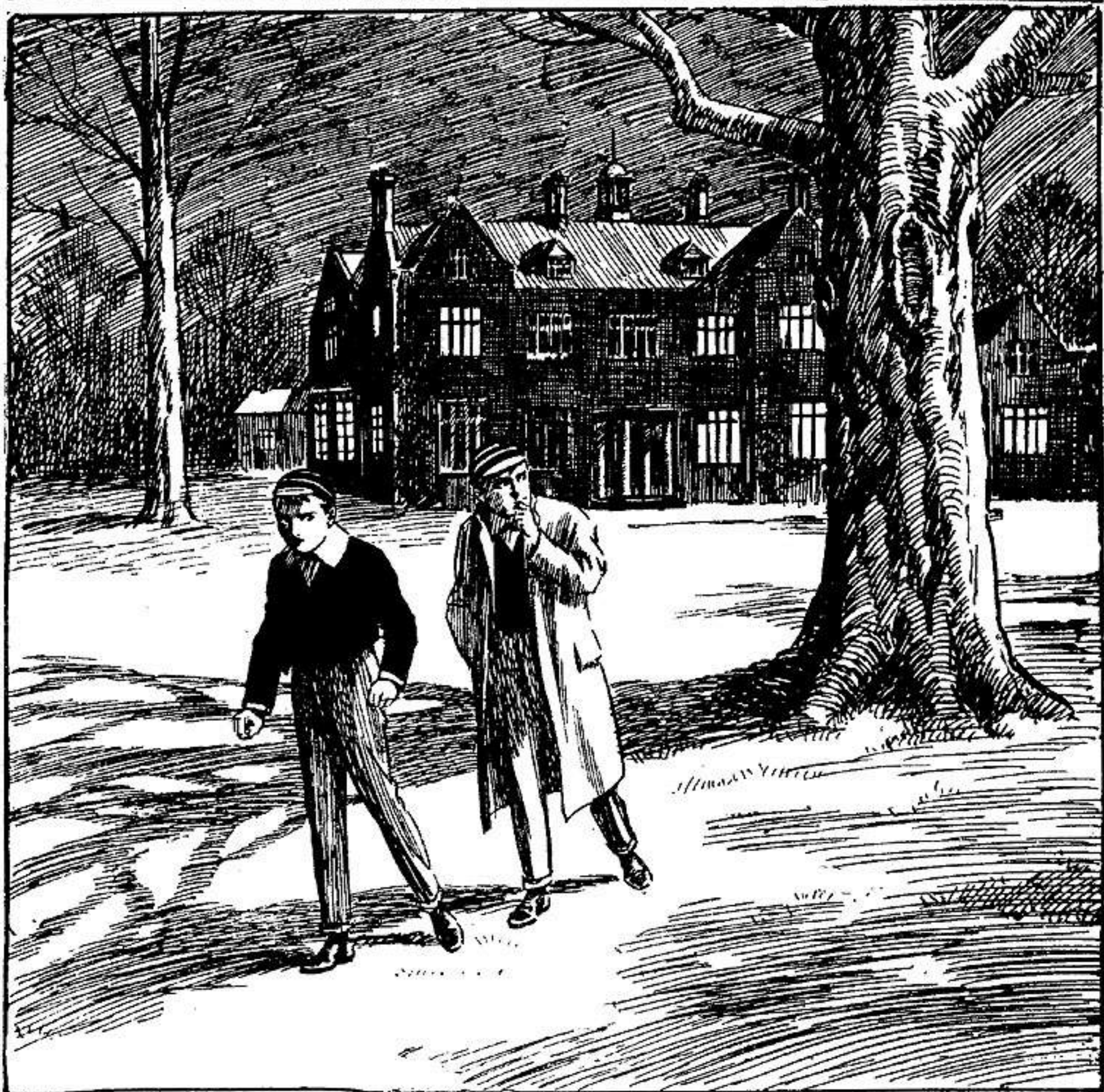
"You're not going to interfere, then?"

"No, I'm jolly well not!"

"Then I shall!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

He jumped out of bed. Dick Penfold was in the middle of the dormitory, surrounded by the ragers. There were twenty or thirty of them, all laughing scoffingly, and the

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All was shadowy and silent in the quadrangle. Lumley-Lumley's pace slackened, and he looked about him. In his old reckless days, his nerve had never failed him on his midnight excursions—his coolness had been equal to anything. But now it seemed to him that searching eyes looked from every shadow, and every moan of the wind seemed a footstep. (An incident taken from the grand, long, complete school tale of Tom Merry & Co., entitled "A False Chum," contained in this week's number of our companion paper, the "Gem" Library. Out on Thursday. Price One Penny.)

new boy was, of course, completely helpless. Five or six fellows were holding him, and the rest were thronging round.

"Get a blanket!" exclaimed Skinner.

Bolsover sniffed contemptuously.

"Tossing in a blanket isn't enough for him," he exclaimed. "That's what we do to decent fellows when they come here. It's too good for a cobbler."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll make him run the gauntlet," said Bolsover. "You fellows form up in two lines, and get something to hit with."

"Pillows and bolsters," said Trevor.

"Yes—and a few boots, too! Boots and slippers—better give him something to remember us by!"

"Oh, draw the line!" said Hazeldene. "No need to hurt him."

Bolsover scowled at the objector.

"You shut up, Hazeldene!"

"But I don't see—"

"Hold your tongue!" roared Bolsover. "We're going

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to put the cad through it, and if anybody interferes we're going to put them through it, too!"

"Hear, hear!" said Leigh.

"Very well; put me through it!" said Harry Wharton, striding through the crowd, and elbowing them to right and left without the slightest ceremony. "Because I'm going to interfere!"

"Stand back, Wharton!"

"Rats!"

"Then I'll jolly well make you!" roared Bolsover.

"Come on, then!"

Bolsover strode towards Harry Wharton. Bob Cherry ran forward.

"Come on!" he said. "I'll attend to this rotter, Harry, and you can look after some of the others."

"Hold on, Bob!"

"I tell you I'm going to tackle Bolsover," said Bob Cherry.

"You can lick somebody else. Let me alone."

It was Bolsover's turn to pause. As a matter of fact, Bob

**NEXT
TUESDAY:**

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

**By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order your copy early.**

Cherry was the only fellow in the Remove who could lick him—and who had done it.

Tom Brown and John Bull, Mark Linley and Russell and Frank Nugent, were tumbling out of bed to follow Harry Wharton's lead. Fisher T. Fish sat up in bed and shouted encouragement to them. His sympathies were on the same side; but he preferred to remain in bed.

Bolsover clenched his hands with fury.

"You—you rotters!" he shouted. "What do you want to interfere for?"

"To stop a cowardly bully from ragging a chap who can't help himself," said Bob Cherry, in his very plain English.

"Just so!" said Nugent. "And we'll go for you bald-headed if you don't let Penfold alone at once!"

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors who were holding Penfold released him. They were in a great majority. But Harry Wharton & Co. were the best fighting-men in the Remove, and if it came to a struggle there was likely to be considerable damage on both sides.

Bolsover was red with rage.

"Look here, you fellows!" he shouted. "Back me up and we'll lick those cads, and make the cobbler run the gauntlet afterwards."

"Come on, then!" said Bob Cherry.

"Rush them!" shouted Vernon-Smith.

"Go it!"

"Pile on!"

There was a rush of the crowd of excited juniors. In a moment the two parties were mixed up and fighting. Penfold sprang to the side of Harry Wharton, and lined up with the chums of the Remove, hitting out fiercely. Vernon-Smith dropped under his right, and Skinner under his left.

There was a roar of voices, a trampling of feet, in the Remove dormitory. In the midst of the wild and whirling conflict the door opened.

Wingate came in.

"Stop that row!" he shouted.

"Cave!"

"Look-out!"

At the voice of the captain of the school the fighting ceased. Some of the juniors bolted back to bed. Some stood rubbing damaged noses and eyes, and blinking at the angry Sixth-Former.

"You young ruffians!" exclaimed the captain of Greyfriars angrily. "Mr. Quelch told me to keep an eye on this dormitory to-night; and he was right. What do you mean by starting a row like this?"

There was no reply.

"I suppose it's a rag on the new boy!" Wingate exclaimed. "Well, it's got to stop! Get into bed at once! Do you hear?"

The juniors turned in.

Wingate watched them with a grim brow.

"If there's so much as a whisper in this room again to-night," he said impressively, "I shall come back with a couple of prefects and lick the whole dormitory! Mind that!"

And Wingate confiscated the glimmering candles, and left the Remove dormitory in darkness, shutting the door with a snap.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"The game's up!" growled Bolsover. "But we'll make the cobbling cad sit up another time!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh, go to sleep!" said Harry Wharton contemptuously.

And the Remove took his advice. There was nothing else to be done.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Barred!

DICK PENFOLD was one of the first up in the morning.

He was accustomed to early rising, and he turned out before rising-bell. At the breakfast-table he sat between Wharton and Bob Cherry, and was free from the polite attentions of Bolsover & Co. In class, Mr. Quelch had changed his place, putting him next to Wharton and Nugent, and it was impossible for the snobs of the Remove to trouble him there. It was not in the Form-room that he had to fear them. Out of doors Bolsover & Co. were likely to make their power felt.

Harry Wharton clapped the new junior on the shoulder in the passage when the Remove came out after morning lessons.

"What are you doing this afternoon?" he asked.

Dick Penfold looked at him inquiringly.

"This afternoon?" he repeated.

"Yes. It's Wednesday—a half-holiday here," Wharton explained. "There will be no more lessons to-day—nothing

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till evening preparation. We are going to have some footer practice after dinner. I'm making up a team to play the Form eleven. Bulstrode's skipper of the Form eleven, you know. We can raise twenty-two footer players in the Remove. And if you like I can put you in, if you play."

"Yes, I play."

"Then come down to the ground now and show me what you can do, and I'll see if we can play you this afternoon."

"Thank you very much," said Dick gratefully. "I should like to play footer. I always used to play on a Saturday afternoon. There were no Wednesday half-holidays at my last school."

Wharton nodded.

"Come on, then!"

Many of the Remove glanced towards them as they walked down to the footer ground. Wharton had judged by Penfold's looks that he could play, and that he would play well; and he wanted recruits for the scratch team he was raising to play the Form eleven. The Remove was a footballing Form, and there were many good players in it. But the best of them, of course, were in the Form team, and Wharton had the rest to choose from to make up his eleven.

Dick's eyes glistened as he came on the footer field. He had always played since he was old enough to kick a ball about, and he enjoyed keenly the prospect of playing at Greyfriars. But the other fellows who had followed Wharton to the ground did not look pleased. Dark glances were cast towards the cobbler's son.

Wharton tossed a ball to Dick.

"Let's see how you can kick," he said.

Dick smiled.

They were in nearly the middle of the field, and with a steady kick he lifted the ball clear through the goal-posts.

"Good!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Jolly good!" said Harry Wharton. "Get into the goal, Hazeldene, and let's see if Penfold can beat you there."

Hazeldene hesitated.

"Get in!" Wharton exclaimed.

"Look here, are you going to play Penfold in the scratch team this afternoon?" demanded Hazeldene, turning red.

"Yes; if he can play."

"The fellows will object."

"Rats! Get into the goal, and don't talk through your hat!"

Hazeldene bit his lip, and went into the goal. Penfold kicked again, Hazeldene watching him like a hawk. Hazeldene was determined that the cobbler's son should not score a goal if he could help it.

But he could not help it. The ball rose from the new junior's foot, and it beat Hazeldene all the way. His wild clutch at it was too late, and the leather lodged in a corner of the net.

Bob Cherry clapped his hands.

"Hurray!" he shouted.

Wharton gave Penfold an approving look.

"Well, you can kick," he exclaimed. "Let's see how you can run. See if you can get the ball up the field."

Wharton and Nugent took sides with Penfold, and Bob Cherry and Bull and Linley opposed him. Penfold's face was flushed now, and his eyes were sparkling. It was evident that he was a very keen footballer.

He dribbled the ball down the field, taking it fairly round John Bull's feet, and then passed neatly to Wharton, who took it on, and returned it to him. Dick received the ball, dribbled it on, and shot for goal, Hazeldene standing all eyes and hands ready for him. The ball shot past Hazeldene into the net.

"Goal!" yelled Nugent.

And the fellows on the ground stared.

There was no doubt that the cobbler's son could play footer. And he was in his ordinary clothes, too, not at all ready for a serious game. He paused, breathing deeply, but quite fresh, as Hazeldene sulkily tossed out the ball.

Harry clapped him on the back.

"Ripping!" he exclaimed. "You'll play in the scratch team this afternoon, and I think you can give the Form eleven something to think about."

"Yes, rather!" said Bob Cherry.

Bolsover strode towards Wharton. He was a member of the scratch team.

"Did you say you are going to play Penfold this afternoon?" he exclaimed.

Wharton looked at him steadily.

"Yes," he said.

"You are going to play that cobbling cad?"

"I am going to play Penfold."

"Then you jolly well won't play me!" Bolsover exclaimed.

"I drop out!"

"Drop out, and be hanged!" said Wharton curtly.

"And I drop out, too!" exclaimed Trevor.

"And I!" shouted Skinner.

"And I!"

"And I!"

"You can play the cad by himself!"

"We're not playing with cobblers."

Wharton's eyes gleamed with anger. His own personal friends were nearly all in the Form eleven; and if the juniors kept to their word it really looked as if he would be left to make up a scratch team solely of himself and Dick Penfold.

The flush had died out of Penfold's face, and he was looking pale and harassed.

He gave Wharton a troubled look.

"I'm sorry for this!" he exclaimed. "I didn't mean you to get into any trouble with the other fellows on my account, Wharton. I shall not play!"

"I've asked you to play!" said Harry.

Penfold shook his head.

"I don't want to cause trouble. I won't play. It's all right."

And he turned to walk away.

Harry Wharton cast a bitter look round upon the objectors. They were laughing with scoffing triumph now. As Skinner said, the cobbler had been downed this time, and downed quite easily.

Penfold walked away, with beating heart and downcast face. He was excluded from the Form footer, and he would gladly have played. But his chief concern was for Wharton.

He had caused trouble to the junior who had tried to befriend him.

"Very well," said Harry Wharton. "Keep Penfold out, if you like; and you can keep me out, too! You can find another skipper for this afternoon."

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Hazeldene uneasily. "We don't want to quarrel with you, Wharton. It's the cad we object to."

"I shall not play!"

And Wharton put his hands in his pockets and walked away.

The juniors looked rather blue.

They would have had a difficult task, at any time, in playing the Form eleven, but without Wharton to help them the game was likely to become a farce.

"Oh, this is rotten!" said Trevor.

"Rats!" said Bolsover. "I'll captain the team, if you fellows like."

"Thank you for nothing!" said Hazeldene.

"Let's ask Vernon-Smith!" Skinner suggested.

"He's going out. He wouldn't stay in for us," said Stott. "Never mind, we've downed the cobbling cad, that's one comfort."

But it was cold comfort to the footballers who had been looking forward to a good game in the afternoon. Two or three of the fellows, however, sought out Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith could play splendid footer when he chose; but he very seldom chose.

"We want you to play this afternoon, Smithy," said Trevor. "Wharton won't captain us, because we've kicked against having the cobbler in the team."

"Quite right of you, I should say," Vernon-Smith remarked.

"Then you'll skipper us?"

The Bounder shook his head.

"Sorry—can't be done!"

"Oh, rot! Look here——"

"I've got an engagement this afternoon," said the Bounder, "otherwise I'd back you up. Why not chuck the match?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Well, I'm sorry I can't help you."

And that was all the angry juniors could get from the Bounder.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Taken Down.

"PLAY up!"

"On the ball!"

Dick Penfold heard the shouts from the playing-fields as he strolled down to the gates of Greyfriars, with a book under his arm. There were several football games going on. The Sixth were playing the Fifth, and the Upper Fourth were playing the Shell. The Remove eleven were playing the scratch team of Removites—and walking all over them.

Harry Wharton had kept his word, and was standing out of the match. He had gone out on his bicycle before it started to pay a visit to a friend in Courtfield—Solly Lazarus, of Courtfield School—and when the juniors had looked for him, to ask him a second time, he had disappeared. Vernon-Smith was gone out also, to spend the half-holiday in his own peculiar way, and the scratch team were left to do the best they could. Their best was not very good, and the Form eleven were scoring goals galore. Dick Penfold's face clouded as he heard the shouts from the foot-

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ONE
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ball-field. They died away as he went down to the gates to go out into the road.

Dick intended to pay his home in Friardale a visit that afternoon, and then to study the book he had with him until it was time to return to Greyfriars. Gosling, the porter, was standing outside the lodge as Dick came down to the gates, and a sneering smile came over Gosling's face.

"Ho!" he remarked, as Dick came up.

Penfold paused.

"Do you want to speak to me?" he asked.

Gosling sniffed.

"Nice goings hon!" he said. "Wet I says is this 'ere—these 'ere are nice goings hon!"

Dick looked puzzled.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"So you're Master Penfold now, and a Greyfriars boy!" Gosling remarked.

"Yes."

"When I fust saw yer," said Gosling, "you was carryin' parcels in Friardale, and you've mended my shoes."

Dick nodded.

"That is true," he said.

"Now you're a Greyfriars boy."

"Yes."

Gosling snorted. He had seemingly expected to disturb Dick's equanimity by his remarks; but Dick did not appear disturbed.

"You going down to the town?" asked Gosling.

"Yes."

"I've got some boots to be mended," said Gosling deliberately. "You can take them to your father."

Penfold coloured.

"And tell 'im that I want them to-morrow morning," said Gosling. "Wait 'ere, and I'll get them for you, and I'll give you tuppence for your trouble."

Dick Penfold looked at him steadily. He understood Gosling's feelings—the mean-spirited man was determined, if he could, to show that he, for one, did not intend to treat the scholarship-boy as a real Greyfriars fellow. He was going to make it quite plain that to him Dick was still the cobbler's son, of Friardale.

"I cannot take your message," said Dick quietly.

"Wot!"

"You must send your boots by someone else."

"Look 'ere——"

"And if you are impertinent, I shall report your impertinence to the Head," said Dick quietly.

Gosling gasped.

"Wot!" he exclaimed faintly.

"You ought to be pleased to see a fellow, born in your own class, getting on in life," said Penfold. "You are a cur!"

"W-o-o-o!"

"And if you speak to me disrespectfully again you will be reprimanded by the Head."

And with that Penfold walked on.

Gosling looked after him and gasped. Then he snorted. That the cobbler's son should take that tone with him appeared outrageous to Gosling.

"'Old on!" he shouted. "Har you going to take them boots, or har you not?"

"Hullo! What's that?"

It was a sharp voice. Courtney, of the Sixth, was just coming in, and he had caught what Gosling said. Gosling turned pink.

"Ho! Master Courtney!" he stammered.

The prefect looked at him sternly.

"What were you saying to Penfold?" he asked.

"N-n-nothing, sir."

"Penfold, what was he saying to you?"

Dick hesitated. He did not want to get the school porter into trouble, miserable fellow as he was.

"I—I don't want to complain of Gosling," he said.

"That's not the point," said Courtney. "I am a prefect, and I order you to tell me what Gosling has been saying to you!"

Dick blushed.

"I'd rather not say."

"You haven't been here long," said Courtney, with a grin, "and you may not know that a junior has to do what a prefect tells him. If you don't know it, you may take my word for it. What did Gosling say to you? Tell me at once!"

"He wanted me to take some boots of his to my father to be mended."

Courtney frowned.

"I thought it was something of the sort!" he exclaimed.

"You know perfectly well, Gosling, that you had no right to be impertinent to Master Penfold!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"You have been impertinent. You have taken a mean advantage of Penfold," said Courtney. "You will beg his pardon, Gosling."

"Wot?" gasped Gosling.

"You will beg his pardon immediately, or I shall report your conduct to the Head!" said the prefect.

"Oh, Master Courtney—"

"Don't keep me waiting!" said Courtney sharply.

"I—I—I—"

"Are you going to beg Penfold's pardon, or not?" exclaimed Courtney.

"Which I—I—I—"

"Very well! I will go to the Head—"

"Old on, Master Courtney!" gasped Gosling. "I—I'm sure I meant no offence, sir."

"Tell Penfold so."

"I—I beg your pardon, young Penfold," stammered Gosling, crimson with rage.

"That is not the way to speak to a Greyfriars fellow," said Courtney. "Speak to Master Penfold in the proper way!"

Gosling snorted with fury.

"I—I beg your pardon, Master Penfold," he muttered.

"Speak louder! He can't hear you!"

"I beg your pardon, Master Penfold," gasped Gosling.

"Very well," said Dick. "It is all right."

"Yes, it's all right," said Courtney; "but you'd better be more careful in the future, Gosling. You are a worm, my good fellow, and we cannot allow worms to turn. Mind what you say to Master Penfold in the future, or you will find yourself in trouble."

"Yes, Master Courtney," said Gosling humbly.

"Don't forget, that's all!"

Courtney nodded kindly to Penfold, and walked away. Gosling gave the scholarship boy a very expressive look; but he dared not speak. He went into his lodge and slammed the door with a slam that echoed across the road.

Dick went out into the road. He was grateful to Courtney. As for Gosling, he did not give the school porter another thought. It was a cold but bright and sunny afternoon, and Dick's spirits rose as he walked down the lane. The village spire came in sight—the spire of the old church he had known since he was a baby. His face grew very cheerful. He was going among the people he knew—where he was loved, and valued, and respected.

He passed the Cross Keys near the entrance of the village. In the alley beside that low public-house, he caught sight of a Greyfriars cap. It belonged to Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Vernon-Smith caught sight of him at the same moment, and his face changed. He came out quickly and stopped Dick in the road.

"What are you spying on me for?" he demanded furiously.

"I was not spying on you."

"What are you doing here at all, hang you?"

"I am going to see my people."

"Your people!" sneered Vernon-Smith. "The cobblers!"

"Yes," said Dick quietly, "the cobblers."

"Don't say a word in Greyfriars about seeing me here, that's all!"

"Why not?"

"You young fool! The Cross Keys is out of bounds!" said Vernon-Smith harshly. "If you say a word about it, I'll break your neck for you!"

"I shall not say a word about it, because I am not a sneak," said Penfold. "As for breaking my neck, you can begin now, if you like. I'm ready."

Vernon-Smith gave him a savage look, and muttered something under his breath, and turned back into the alley beside the public-house. Dick Penfold went on his way, and the Bounder watched him, with a clouded brow, until he was out of sight. Five minutes later Dick was at his own home.

John Penfold was working in the little shop that looked out upon the old High Street of Friardale. It was a little

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place, descended into by a step from the street. Mr. Penfold looked up as his son entered, and uttered an exclamation, and laid down the last he was working on.

"Dicky, my lad!"

"Hullo, dad!"

And Dick, with a very bright face, went in. And that was a very happy afternoon to Dick Penfold. And in his home he did not say a word of the troubles that beset his path at Greyfriars. It would have been useless to cause his mother and his father to feel anxiety on his account, and what troubles he had to face at school he was brave enough to face alone.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

To Save His Foe.

DICK PENFOLD walked back by the towing-path along the river. His face was very cheerful as he set out along the path. He had had tea with his father and mother and little sister, and a happy meal it had been. The lad had almost forgotten the trials of his school life as he strolled along by the river-path in the sunset.

He gave a little start as he caught sight of a figure ahead of him on the towing-path, going in the same direction. It was that of Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith had evidently come down to the river-path through the long garden behind the Cross Keys Inn. It was a safer way of leaving the forbidden precincts than by going out into the street, and it was shorter to get to the school. Dick slackened his pace a little. He did not want to overtake the Bounder, and spoil the happy afternoon by a fresh altercation with him, and he was pretty certain that the Bounder would not allow him to pass without a sneering word at least.

Dick Penfold watched the Bounder curiously.

Vernon-Smith was walking very unsteadily, and lurching strangely from side to side as he walked. It struck Dick Penfold that he must be ill, and he quickened his pace a little, and then slackened it again.

After all, the Bounder had been well enough when he had seen him before; why should he be ill now? Yet what was the cause of that strange unsteadiness in his walk? Had it been a man, Dick would have concluded that he was under the influence of drink. But he had never known of a case of a boy being intoxicated, and the suspicion could hardly enter his mind with reference to Vernon-Smith. He did not know all the peculiar little ways of the millionaire's son. To Vernon-Smith, the taste of champagne was more familiar than that of ginger-beer.

Vernon-Smith halted at last. He had reached the landing-stage outside the school boathouse, where the path turned up from the river, through the trees, and led towards the school. Vernon-Smith passed upon the wooden stage, and paused there, leaning upon the rail which at one side guarded the landing-stage. Dick caught his breath as he saw him. The rail was low, and not intended to be leaned upon, and even at a distance Dick could see it shift as the Bounder leaned.

Outside the rail, on that side, was deep water, which was the reason why the rail had been placed at the end of the planks.

If the Bounder fell in at that spot, he would be in considerable danger, unless he was a good swimmer.

Whether the Bounder was a swimmer or not, Dick Penfold did not know; but he hastened his footsteps now, with an instinctive warning of danger.

That there was something wrong with Vernon-Smith, Penfold could see, whether the fellow was ill or not.

Dick, as he came nearer, caught the Bounder's profile, and saw that his face was very white, the eyes hard and staring, and the lips very pale.

Dick started as he saw it.

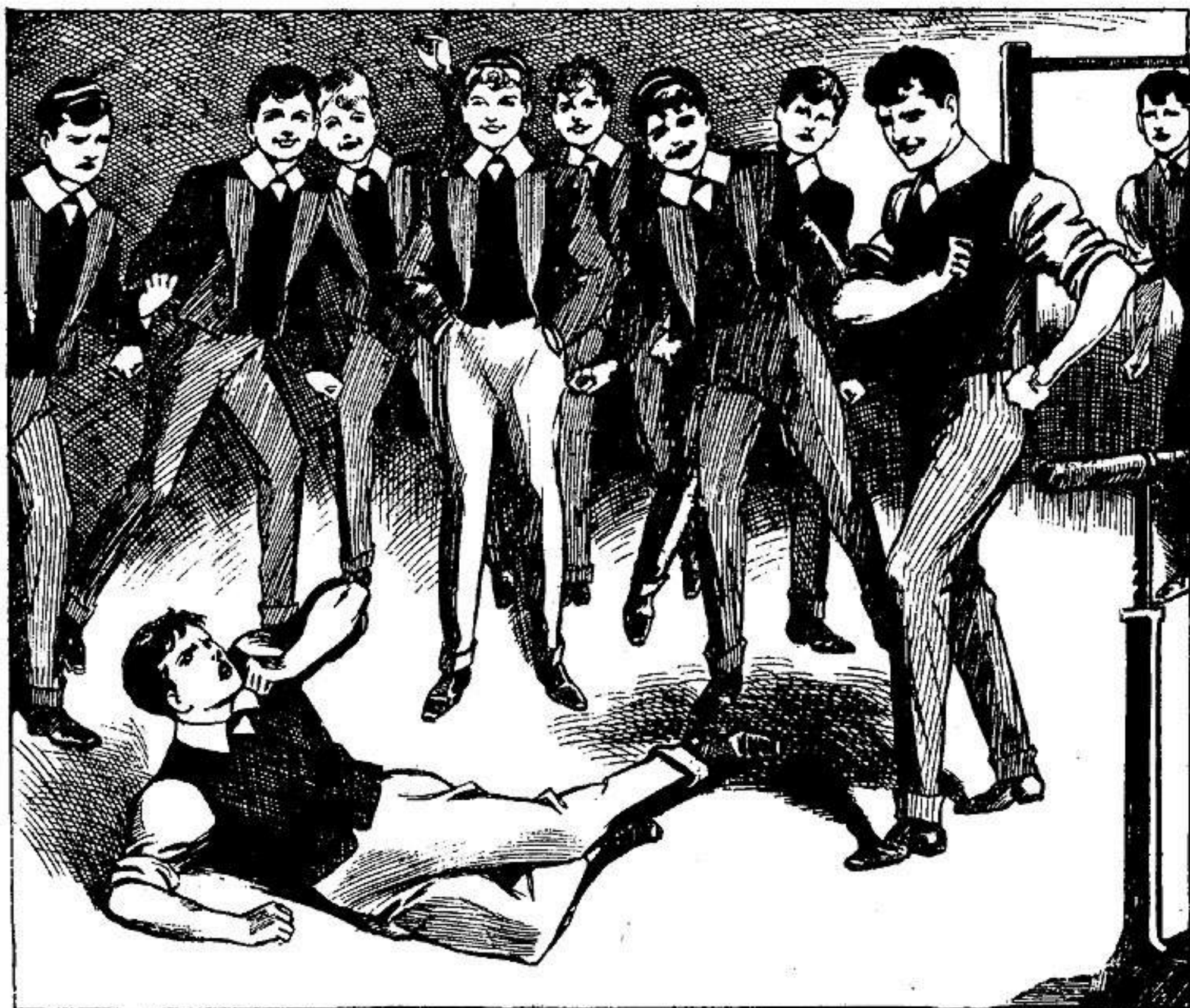
To suspect a lad of fifteen of being under the influence of liquor seemed impossible, and yet it was scarcely possible to doubt it now.

Vernon-Smith had been drinking, and that was the cause of the peculiar stagger in his walk as he had come down the towing-path to—

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE."

A Grand, New, Long,
Complete School Tale of the
Chums of the Remove Form
at Greyfriars. By FRANK
RICHARDS.

NEXT TUESDAY!



Size and strength had carried the day, at least for the moment; and the cobbler's son lay dazed at the feet of the cad of the Remove. There was a shout of laughter from the crowd. "It's all over. The cobbler's licked!" (See chapter 4.)

wards the boathouse. And he was sick, or very nearly sick from what he had drunk.

He certainly deserved it, as far as that went; but he was in danger, too, and it was that which made Dick Penfold hurry towards him.

The Bounder was sinking more and more heavily upon the flimsy rail. His wide eyes stared unseeing at the water. He was conscious, but only sufficiently conscious to know that it would not do to re-enter the school in the state he was in. He hoped that the fresh air of the river would revive him at least sufficiently to enable him to enter the school, and gain his own room without exciting remark.

But the keen wind blowing upon his face had the opposite effect. The river and the landing-stage, and the red sun setting behind the Black Pike, were beginning to swim round Vernon-Smith. He could no longer see clearly, and he leaned his whole weight upon the rail to avoid falling to the ground.

Crack!

Dick Penfold quickened his pace to a run.

"Stand back!" he cried swiftly.

The Bounder dimly realised his danger. He moved away from the creaking rail, and stood unsteadily upon the very edge of the landing-stage, close by the end of the rail. He tried to steady himself, but he could not. His knees gave way under him, and he fell heavily sideways. He made one clutch at the landing-stage, and then there was a sullen plunge into the river.

Dick Penfold paused on the edge of the planking.

He watched the river with searching eyes for the Bounder to rise.

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Dick was a good swimmer; he had been brought up on the banks of the Sark, and there was not a reach or a pool in the river that he did not know by heart. All the sneers of the Bounder, all his gibes, all his unfounded dislike, Dick had forgotten them all now. He remembered only that the Bounder was in danger—that he was incapable of moving a finger to save himself.

A white face glanced above the rushing water.

It was a face conscious, yet without recognition in it. Vernon-Smith was not insensible, but he did not know what was happening. Dick Penfold put his hands together and plunged into the river, and swam swiftly towards the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith was already out into the strong current of the river. The current caught Dick and swept him out, and he grasped the Bounder of Greyfriars as he was going under for a second time.

His strong grasp brought Vernon-Smith's head above the surface again.

"Hold to me!" muttered Dick.

The Bounder looked at him.

But there was no recognition in his glance. Without the saving hand of the scholarship boy the Bounder of Greyfriars would have gone down like a stone.

Dick realised that he was helpless. He kept his firm grasp upon the Bounder, and swam steadily to the shore.

But the current had whirled him out into the stream, and it whirled him out again, and it was growing stronger now, for it was sweeping him down to the bridge, and under Friardale Bridge the water ran swift and deep.

Dick struggled manfully to reach the shore. Once he reached it, and grasped at the rushes along the towing-path with his free hand. But they tore out in his grasp, and came away in a bunch, and he was swept out again.

A shiver ran through the lad's limbs.

If he was swept away under the deep, dark arch of the bridge, he felt that all was lost. On the other side was the deep, dangerous Pool—avoided by all swimmers in the Sark. There he knew that there was no hope.

For a moment, perhaps, the temptation assailed the lad to let his burden go, and to save himself. Alone, he could have breasted the current, and gained the land. But if he was tempted, it was only for a moment, and he drove it from his mind. His grasp tightened upon the almost insensible Bounder.

Once he shouted for help. But darkness was drawing in over the fields—the towing-path was deserted—and in the cold evening there was not likely to be a boat upon the river. Only the echo of his voice replied to the junior's shout—and he did not call again; he saved his breath to fight for his life.

For his life—and the Bounder's!

It seemed like a wild mockery that he should be passing in the shadow of death to save the fellow who had been bitterest, hardest to him, among all those who had been hard and bitter at Greyfriars.

But he did not regret what he was doing.

His senses were beginning to reel now, with his wild efforts, and the rush and swirl and roar of the fierce waters in his ears.

Was this the end?

Suddenly, from the dark towing-path came a shout. Dick's brain seemed to clear in a moment at the chance, the hope, of help.

"This way, my lad!"

A form loomed up in the dusk among the rushes—the form of a man. He was waving his hand to the swimmer.

"This way—this way! I can help you!"

The man plunged knee-deep into the water, holding on to a bush with one hand. Dick Penfold made a desperate effort, and reached him.

Had he grasped blindly at the shore he would have been swept out again—to death. But a strong hand grasped him as he came within reach, and dragged him ashore. Dick kept hold of the Bounder, and they were dragged ashore together.

Dick sank into the grass.

As one in a dream he heard a voice, but could not distinguish what was said. He sank deeper in the grass, and darkness came over him.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

After the Rescue.

DICK opened his eyes.

He shivered.

Over him was darkness, with a few stars glittering in the wide sky. He was soaking with water, which had formed a pool round him in the grass as he lay. A man was bending over him.

Dick started up wildly.

"What is it?"

"Thank Heaven you've come to yourself!" said the stranger. "You fainted. The other lad is quite insensible."

"I—I—he is safe, then?"

"Yes—but pretty far gone." The man looked down kindly, but with a perplexed expression, at the junior. He was a middle-aged man, with a kindly, bearded face. "If you are all right, I can look after him. He is quite unconscious. I shall have to carry him into the village."

Dick sat up dazedly.

"I—I'm all right!" he gasped. "I'm not hurt at all. If Vernon-Smith's safe, it's all right. You are sure he is all right?"

"Yes—but insensible."

"Look after him, sir. I shall be able to look after myself. I'm exhausted now, but it will be all right soon."

The man looked at him doubtfully.

"Do you live far from here?" he asked.

"No; I can get in in a few minutes," said Dick, glancing round him. He was close to Friardale Bridge, and only ten minutes' easy walk from the old High Street. "My father's shop is in the High Street. I can run there. Look after Vernon-Smith."

"Very well, if you are all right——"

"Yes, yes!"

"Good, then!"

The stranger picked up Vernon-Smith in his powerful arms. Dick noticed that he was a very strongly built man, as he

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strode away with the Bounder of Greyfriars resting in his arms and upon his shoulder.

Dick sat gasping for breath.

The fight for life in the stream had exhausted him; every ounce of strength he had in him was expended. But it was only that—he had only to wait for his strength to return. It was coming back now.

It was ten minutes, however, before he felt able to rise. Then he sprang to his feet, shivering.

He set out to walk to his home. He was at a great distance from the school now, the swift current of the Sark had borne him farther away than the point where he had started walking up the towing-path.

He broke into a run to warm his chilling limbs.

The light was burning in the little cobbler's shop when Dick Penfold came in. His father was at work there as usual, and little Kate was reading over a picture-book by his side. Both started up at the sight of the boy, dripping with water, and pale as chalk.

"Good heavens, Dick, what's the matter?" exclaimed the cobbler, dropping his awl in his amazement.

"I've tumbled in the river, dad."

"Mother, come 'ere quick! Dick's gone and got himself wet through!" called out the shoemaker.

Dick's mother was in the little shop in a moment. Dick was rushed to his little attic, the room he was more likely to love than his study at Greyfriars, and there he soon found himself wrapped in blankets, with his feet in hot mustard-water.

"It's all serene, mother dear!" Dick said reassuringly. "I'm as right as rain—only my clothes are pretty well spoiled, that's all."

"We have your other clothes here, Dick," said his mother.

"The new Etons you were going to keep for Sundays. You will have to wear them now."

It was some time before Dick's mother would let him go, and then she made him promise not to go by the towing-path. Dick had told them the story, but he did not intend to tell it at Greyfriars. He said good-bye to his family, and walked down the village street, feeling very little the worse for his adventure.

The gates were locked when he reached Greyfriars, and he rang. Gosling opened the gates, and he gave the scholarship boy a surly nod.

"So you've come back?" he growled.

"Yes," said Dick.

"You're to report yourself to Master Wingate for being out arter locking-hup."

"Very well."

Dick presented himself at Wingate's study. The captain of Greyfriars was at tea with Courtney and North and another Sixth-Former. He glanced at Dick inquiringly as the junior knocked and came in.

"Hallo! Young Penfold, eh?"

"Yes," said Dick.

"You're late."

"I am sorry."

"Where have you been?"

"Home, Wingate," said Dick.

"Oh, very well!" said Wingate. "You mustn't be late for locking-up, you know. That's all. You can buzz off!"

"Thanks!"

And Dick "buzzed off," very well pleased to escape an imposition.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Unknown.

"ANYONE seen the Bounder?"

Bulstrode asked the question.

Nobody had.

"He wasn't here for calling-over," Skinner remarked. Mr Quelch marked him down as absent, I remember. I believe he went down to the village this afternoon."

"Cross Keys—same old game," said Snoop, with a snigger.

"Queer that he hasn't come back."

"Jolly queer!"

The Remove all thought so. Vernon-Smith had missed evening call-over, and he had not yet come in, although it wanted only an hour to bedtime. The juniors could not help wondering what had become of him.

Dick Penfold could have given them some information, but no one asked him. The scholarship boy sat in a corner of the junior common-room by himself, with a book on his knees.

He was reading most of the time. When he left off reading it was to gaze thoughtfully into the fire.

Hafry Wharton and Bob Cherry, and one or two of their friends, occasionally spoke a word to the scholarship boy, and Dick replied cheerfully enough. But no one else troubled to speak to him.

No one was anxious about the Bounder. No one cared for him sufficiently to be anxious. But they wondered what had become of him. If he did not return soon he would have to be searched for, that was certain.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "Visitors, eh? That's the cab from the station. I know it's creak."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The Bounder coming home in style, perhaps," said Bolsover.

Some of the juniors went out into the hall. They did not think that it was Vernon-Smith coming home in the cab; but it turned out to be. The Bounder paid the cabman, and came into the house. He was looking very pale, and was wrapped up in a greatcoat that evidently belonged to a full-grown man.

Mr. Quelch stepped out of his study.

"Is that you, Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, sir."

"You missed calling-over."

"Yes, sir; I'm sorry."

"What do you mean by staying out to so late an hour?" the Form-master exclaimed.

"I could not help it, sir," said Vernon-Smith. "I had an accident as I was coming home from Friardale, sir."

"Indeed!"

"I fell into the river from the landing-stage, sir."

"When was that?"

"Just at dark, sir."

"Three hours ago," said Mr. Quelch, bending a very keen glance upon the black sheep of the Remove. No one knew better than Mr. Quelch that Vernon-Smith had not the slightest regard for the truth if it suited his purpose to depart from it. "You fell from the landing-stage into the Sark, Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, sir."

"How did it happen?"

"I must have missed my footing in the dusk, sir," said the Bounder calmly. "I fell into the river, and was swept away as far as Friardale Bridge."

"In that case, you were in great danger, Smith," said the Form-master, his tone softening a little. "I believe you are a good swimmer. Did anyone help you?"

"Yes, sir. Somebody came in for me, and fished me out, and a man who was on the towing-path carried me to Dr. Short's, where I have been ever since. Dr. Short thought I'd better stay and rest a bit, and he lent me his coat to come home in."

"Very good," said the Remove-master. "I suppose Dr. Short will corroborate your statement, Smith?"

"I suppose so, sir."

"Who was it took you to the doctor's?"

"A gentleman who is staying in the village, sir, at the Friardale Arms. 'He was out for a walk along the river,' he said, when he saw me in the water, and the other fellow holding me afloat," said the Bounder.

"Who was the other?"

"I don't know, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave him a very sharp look.

"You don't know?"

"No, sir."

"But you say that he fished you out of the river."

"Yes, sir; but I think I was too far gone to know what was happening," said the Bounder flushing. He knew perfectly well why he had been too far gone, but he did not intend to explain that to Mr. Quelch. "I didn't recognise him. I have an idea it was a boy, sir, and that is all. I was insensible when I was taken from the water, and the man carried me to the doctor's, and went back to look for the other fellow, but he was gone."

"He was a brave lad, whoever he was," said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir." And for once there was a touch of emotion in the hard face of the Bounder. "He jolly well risked his life. We were close to the bridge when we were pulled out, and if we had gone under it we should have been in the Pool."

"You have had a very fortunate escape, Vernon-Smith. Under the circumstances, of course, I shall not punish you for being late."

"Thank you, sir!"

Vernon-Smith went into the junior common-room.

The Bounder was looking very sick and seedy, as much the result of his recklessness in the afternoon as of his adventure in the river. But the juniors naturally set it all down to the latter experience.

There was a great deal of interest in the Bounder's strange adventure. To be fished out of the river from certain death by a fellow he did not know was curious enough.

"It's odd that you shouldn't have got even a glimpse of him," Harry Wharton remarked. "Do you know whether he was a Greyfriars chap?"

"I haven't the faintest idea."

Skinner burst into a chuckle.

"I think I can account for it," he remarked. "I fancy

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

you were a bit squiffy. Smithy, after going to the Cross Keys."

There was a grin among the juniors, and the Bounder scowled.

"Oh, shut up!" he exclaimed.

"And that would account for the duffer tumbling off the planks," said Russell. "Nobody's ever done that before."

"Yes, rather."

"I guess he had been imbibing, some," Fisher T. Fish remarked.

"Let this be a warning to you, my young friend," said Bulstrode solemnly. "Look not upon the wine when it is red, and seek not the pleasures of the flowing bowl."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Vernon-Smith savagely.

"I suppose the chap will make himself known," said Nugent thoughtfully. "If it's a Greyfriars chap, we shall know soon."

"Oh, he'll own up, anyway, if he finds out that Vernon-Smith is a giddy millionaire," said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, he was a plucked 'un, whoever he was, and I'd like to know who the chap was," said Vernon-Smith. "I think it was some village lad, as he told the man who carried me to the doctor's that his home was only a short distance away. If I knew who it was, I'd give him a ten-pound note with pleasure."

"Put that as an ad. in the local paper, and he's bound to turn up," grinned Hazeldene.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick Penfold heard all the talk. He did not join in it.

Vernon-Smith had not recognised him as the fellow who had saved his life in the swirling waters of the Sark, and Dick did not intend to make the announcement. It would look as if he were trying to make capital out of his action, and he shrank with all his nerves from the mere thought of it.

He had risked his life to save his enemy's. But he did not want it talked about. He did not want to appear to be posing as a hero.

If the facts came out, well and good; if they did not come out, Vernon-Smith need never know who his rescuer was. It was better so, for the Bounder's ideas of gratitude ran in banknotes, and if he had offered his ten-pound note to Dick he would certainly have been knocked down for his pains.

Dick said nothing.

When the Remove went up to bed the juniors were still discussing the strange story, but no one in the Form dreamed for a moment that the hero of the tale was with them, and could hear every word they uttered on the subject. Dick Penfold smiled as he went to bed. Bulstrode, and even Bolsover, had made several complimentary remarks with reference to the unknown rescuer, which they would certainly not have made had they known that the rescuer was in their midst, and that he was the cobbler's son—the despised scholarship boy.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Little Party.

THERE was no ragging in the Remove dormitory that night.

Wingate had made it plain that if there was anything of the sort he would come upon the scene with a cane, and make it warm for the raggers. And Bolsover & Co. had decided to let the idea "slide."

That did not prevent them from coming down as heavily as they wished upon the new boy at other times.

Dick Penfold slept peacefully enough, and was up at rising-bell. Harry Wharton & Co. had fallen into the way of chatting with him when they were near him, and they did so now, in order to make the new junior feel less isolated.

The chums of the Remove were beginning to like Dick Penfold, as a matter of fact. They could see that he had a frank and brave nature, and that the many rebuffs he experienced did not make him sulky or spiteful. A frank and manly nature was what appealed to them, and the more they saw of him the more they were inclined to back him up and give him countenance.

Of all who were against him, Vernon Smith was the bitterest. If the prejudice had shown any sign of dying away, Vernon-Smith was always ready to fan it into flame again. It was partly because the new boy had been put into his study. The Bounder wanted his study to himself, and he wanted to have his habits undisturbed. But a natural antipathy between the two natures existed too.

Vernon-Smith had said that he would make his study too hot to hold the scholarship boy, and he meant to keep his word.

After school that day, Dick had his tea in the hall. Half the Remove turned up to tea in the hall, being the fellows

who could not raise the funds to have tea in their own quarters.

But Dick Penfold was likely to be regular in his attendance there. Being on unfriendly terms with his study-mate, tea in the study would not have been very comfortable, and he could ill afford it, too. And his tea would, in any case, have been a poor one, ill-assorted with the luxuries of the Bounder.

After tea he went up to his study to work.

The room was empty, and it looked very cheerful, with a glint of sun in at the windows, and the fire burning away cheerfully. Dick Penfold cleared a space at the table, and sat down to work. The Bounder was not there, and Dick hoped sincerely that he would not come in.

That hope was soon disappointed.

Vernon-Smith came into the study by the time Dick had been at work about a quarter of an hour, and a sneer crossed his face at the sight of the scholarship boy.

"Oh, you're here, are you?" he exclaimed roughly.

"Yes," said Dick, without raising his head.

"You are sticking here, then?"

"I must."

"Can't you take your precious work into the Form-room?"

"No," said Dick quietly.

Vernon-Smith clenched his hands. He was feeling irritable from his recklessness of the previous day, and his temper was never good, at the best of times.

"Suppose I throw you neck and crop out of the study?" he exclaimed.

Dick rose to his feet.

"You'd better try!" he exclaimed.

The Bounder advanced upon him. Dick put out his hands, and seized the Bounder by the arms. Strong as he certainly was, Vernon-Smith could not release himself from that heavy grasp.

Dick held him pinioned helplessly.

Vernon-Smith's eyes blazed at the scholarship boy.

"Let me go!" he hissed.

"Will you let me alone, then?"

"Hang you! Hang you!"

Dick Penfold released the Bounder. Vernon-Smith moved unsteadily to the door. He realised very clearly that he had no chance in a physical contest with the scholarship boy. Dick Penfold would have beaten him almost as easily as he had licked Skinner. But the Bounder was far from being at the end of his resources yet.

"Very well," he said, between his teeth; "I said I'd make this study too hot to hold you, and I will. Wait a little, and see."

He quitted the study.

Dick Penfold quietly settled down to work again. The interruption did not make his work go any the more easily, but he realised that it would not do to allow himself to be disturbed by such occurrences. They were likely to be pretty frequent so long as he shared the study of the Bounder of Greyfriars.

He was not left long alone.

There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and the Bounder of Greyfriars came in, with Skinner and Bolsover.

The three juniors did not speak to Dick Penfold, or even look at him.

They tramped into the study, talking and laughing, elaborately unconscious of the presence of the scholarship boy.

Dick kept his eyes steadily upon his work. But the din of laughter and talk made it extremely difficult for him to keep his attention riveted upon the pages of Virgil.

Vernon-Smith began to clear the table to lay it for tea, and Skinner banked up the fire, while Bolsover filled the kettle and brought it in.

Vernon-Smith cleared half the table with great exactitude. He was evidently determined not to encroach openly upon the rights of the scholarship boy. But Dick Penfold was not likely to get much work done while the Bounder and his friends were in the study, all the same.

Every time anything was laid upon the table it was jolted, and Dick soon gave up the attempt to write. He drew back from the table, and contented himself with studying from the book.

"Finished with the table, Penfold?" asked Vernon-Smith blandly.

"Yes," said Dick, quietly and scornfully.

"Good! We can have all the table, you chaps."

"Oh, good!" said Bolsover.

"Are you going to poach the eggs, Skinner?"

"Certainly!"

"I say, you fellows——"

A fat face looked into the room, and two round eyes blinked through big spectacles. It was Billy Bunter. Bunter had a wonderful instinct which led him unfailingly to any spot where a feed was in progress.

"Get out!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy! I say, you know, I can poach eggs

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a treat, and I'm quite willing to cook for you fellows. I'd do more than that for chaps I like, I can tell you. Now——"

"Bump him round the study, and chuck him out!" said Vernon-Smith.

The juniors grinned, and seized Billy Bunter as he came into the study. The Owl of the Remove gave a yell. The three young rascals did not intend to punish Bunter so much as Penfold; Bunter was their catpaw. The Owl of the Remove was whirled round the study in three pairs of hands, and he came with a crash against Dick Penfold's chair from behind.

The chair was hurled forward, and Dick Penfold rolled over on the floor, his book flying into the grate.

He jumped up angrily.

"So sorry!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith. "Quite an accident, I assure you."

"Oh, quite!" said Skinner.

"I don't believe you," said Dick angrily; "and if you don't let me alone when I'm doing my work, I shall complain to Mr. Quelch. You can worry me at other times as much as you like, but I must work."

"Good boy!" said Bolsover, with a sneer. "Looking out for more scholarships, I suppose? Give Bunter another bump."

"Ow! Oh, really, you fellows——"

"Collar him!"

Bunter fled from the study. Even the chance of a feed did not tempt him to come back again. Skinner began to break the eggs into the frying-pan. One of them slipped from his hand, and struck Dick Penfold on the knee, breaking over his trousers. The new junior uttered an exclamation.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" said Skinner. "That was an accident."

Dick's eyes flashed.

"That is not true!" he said.

Skinner shrugged his shoulders and sneered.

Dick wiped the egg off his trousers with a duster, his face flaming with anger. He quite understood now the object of Vernon-Smith's little party in the study. The Bounder was carrying out his threat of making the study too uncomfortable for the new boy to stay in it.

The eggs sizzled away merrily in the frying-pan. Bolsover opened a bottle of ginger-beer, and Dick Penfold, who had his eyes opened now, narrowly escaped a drenching. The new boy faced the trio with flashing eyes.

"I can see your little game now," he said.

Vernon-Smith gave him a look of the greatest surprise.

"I don't understand you," he said. "We are going to have a feed, that's all. It's a common custom here."

"You are trying to drive me from the study."

"My dear chap, we value your company far too highly for that," said the Bounder, with a grin. And Skinner and Bolsover chuckled.

"Very well," said Penfold quietly. "If you have any more accidents, I shall begin to have some accidents, too, I warn you. The next time anything is done against me, I shall start; so look out for trouble."

"Oh, rats!"

Dick sat down with his book again. His face was pale and determined. He meant every word he said, and he soon had a chance of showing it. Vernon-Smith and his friends were only just beginning.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Fed Up!

BOLSOVER took a syphon of lemonade from the cupboard and stood it upon the table, with the nozzle turned towards Dick Penfold, who was sitting near the fire. He winked at the other two, and with a slight pressure of his finger sent a stream of lemonade full upon the scholarship boy. Dick Penfold started up with a cry. His face was streaming with lemonade, and his book was soaked, his collar and tie dripping.

His face blazed through the wet as he turned towards Bolsover. The bully of the Remove looked at him with an air of affected contrition.

"So sorry!" he exclaimed. "These things go off so unexpectedly. Of course, that was a sheer accident."

"That is a sheer lie!" said Dick.

"Eh? What's that, you cobbling cad?"

"You did it on purpose."

"My dear chap, do you think I would waste good lemonade in washing a workhouse rat?" said Bolsover. "Why, I—— Oh! Yarrah!"

Dick sprang forward, seized the syphon, and turned the stream of lemonade full upon the face of the bully of the Remove.

Bolsover staggered back.

The stream smote him full in the face, blinding and drenching him, and running down his collar and waistcoat, and for the moment he was helpless.

"Stop that, you cad!" shouted Vernon-Smith. "Oh! Ow!"

Sizz-z-z-z!

The stream of lemonade turned upon the Bounder of Greyfriars, splashing in his face. He staggered back, dazed and drenched. Then the syphon was turned upon Skinner, who was cooking the eggs at the fire. The stream caught Skinner under the ear, and he gave a yell and dodged across the study.

"Here, stop that!" he roared.

Sizz—gug! The syphon was exhausted. Dick Penfold flung it with all the force of his arm into the grate, where it smashed into a hundred pieces.

Wild exclamations broke from the three washed juniors. All of them had been far worse soaked than Penfold. The scholarship boy's eyes blazed as he looked at them.

"I told you what I would do," he exclaimed. "I've had enough of it—more than enough. Do you understand?"

"You clobbering cad!" roared Bolsover.

"You worm!"

"You workhouse rotter!"

Dick's lip curled disdainfully.

"So long as you keep to words, you can blow off as much steam as you like," he said. "But if you touch me again, there will be trouble."

"I'll jolly soon touch you!" shouted Bolsover. "I'll pulverise you! I'll smash you! I'll knock you into little bits! I'll—"

"Stand back!"

"Collar the cad!" yelled Vernon-Smith, beside himself with rage. "We'll bump him, and black his face, and kick him out of the study."

"Go it!" said Skinner. Skinner was brave for once, as they were three to one.

The three Removites rushed at Dick Penfold.

Dick's eyes were blazing. His temper was thoroughly roused now, and he was in a reckless mood, and was far from safe even for three fellows to tackle.

He seized the frying-pan from the fire, and swung it round his head. The half-cooked eggs in it flew through the air, and descended in a shower upon Bolsover. The bully of the Remove roared and sputtered.

"Now come on if you like!" said Dick grimly.

The raggers halted, in spite of themselves.

"Put that frying-pan down!" roared Vernon-Smith.

"Rats!"

"Put it down, you cad!"

"I'll put it down when you three have got out of the study," said Dick Penfold, between his teeth. "Outside! Do you hear?"

They glared at him.

"Outside! What do you mean, you cad?" yelled the Bounder.

"I mean what I say. You've been trying to drive me from the study, and you can't do it. I'm going to drive you out now."

"Why, you—you—"

"Are you going?"

"No!" yelled Bolsover. "I'm going to smash you, you cad!"

"Get out, I say!"

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"Come on, you fellows," he exclaimed. "Back me up, and we'll make him smart for this, in a way he won't get over for a month."

"Right-ho!"

Bolsover and Vernon-Smith rushed at Dick. Skinner followed them more slowly. The frying-pan came down with a swish, and caught Bolsover across the face. The bully of the Remove staggered back, blackened and bruised, and startled almost out of his wits. He had hardly believed that Penfold would venture to use the weapon; though it was a little unreasonable to expect Dick to tackle three enemies at a time with his bare fists.

"Oh!" roared Bolsover.

Dick had not struck as hard as he could, but hard enough to make the bully of the Remove back away promptly. He was joined by Vernon-Smith, who dodged back just in time to escape a second swipe of the frying-pan.

Bolsover rubbed his face dazedly.

"The young ruffian!" he gasped. "Why, he's a regular hooligan!"

"And what are you?" asked Dick.

"You—you murderous young villain—"

"Get out of this study!" said Dick.

"What—I—I—"

Dick Penfold, holding the frying-pan in his hand ready for use if it was wanted, stepped to the table. He picked up the butter in his free hand, and hurled it at the three juniors gathered at the door. Vernon-Smith dodged, and the butter squashed on the door. It was followed by a bag of biscuits, which broke over the raggers, and then by the contents of the milk jug.

The raggers gasped with rage. The tables were being turned with a vengeance; instead of ragging the scholarship

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boy they were being ragged themselves. It was the unexpected that was happening!

"You mad young scoundrel!" gasped Vernon-Smith. "What are you doing?"

"I'm driving you out of this study!" said Dick Penfold.

"It's my own—"

"It's my own, too; but you tried to drive me out," said Dick. "If you don't get out, all three of you, it will be the worse for you. I'm fed up! Do you understand? I'm fed up with your rot. I'm going to make you understand that it's best to let me alone. Get out of this study."

"I'll—I'll smash you—" panted Bolsover.

"Come on, if you like."

But Bolsover did not like. He did not want the frying-pan on his head again. He had a bump on his forehead and a swelling on his nose already. It would have been really dangerous to attempt to rag the new boy just then, and the three cads of the Remove realised it quite clearly.

"Are you going?" asked Dick Penfold.

"No!" roared Bolsover.

"Take that, then!"

The loaf from the table came whirling at the raggers. Then came handfuls of sugar, and then a cake. Vernon-Smith gasped with rage at seeing his feed used up in this way. But he did not venture to come to close quarters with the scholarship boy. Dick's eyes were blazing too dangerously for that.

The raggers dodged the fusillade as well as they could. The noise in the room had brought a good many fellows out of their studies, and there were inquiring voices on the other side of the door. Someone tried to open it, but it would not open with Vernon-Smith, and Bolsover, and Skinner standing just inside.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared a voice. "What's the row?"

"Trouble with the cobbler."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess there's a row in there—some!"

"Are you going?" asked Dick Penfold.

"Hang you! No."

Dick picked up a syphon of soda-water, and turned the stream of it upon the three raggers. They gave a simultaneous yell, and bolted into the passage. A yell of laughter from the crowded juniors there greeted them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is this a new idea in shower-baths? Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess they're wet!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"What on earth's the trouble?" asked Harry Wharton.

"It's that scholarship cad!" gasped Bolsover, dabbing at his streaming face with a handkerchief. "He's dangerous! He's biffed me with a frying-pan, and he was going to brain the lot of us if we touched him. He's a regular hooligan!"

Wharton's lips curled.

"You were going for him three to one, I suppose!" he exclaimed.

"Mind your own business."

"That's as good as saying yes," said Frank Nugent.

"Well, you've only got what you deserve, and serve you jolly well right!"

Click!

The key turned in the lock of the study door. Vernon-Smith was locked out of his own study. The expression upon the Bounder's face made the juniors yell with laughter.

Bob Cherry wiped his eyes.

"Oh, my hat!" he exclaimed. "This is too rich! You've woke up the wrong passenger this time, Smithy, and no mistake!"

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The Bounder ground his teeth.

"I'll make him suffer for it!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "You seem to be doing most of the suffering."

The Bounder strode away. His position was ridiculous, and he knew it. He had taken two friends with him to rag the scholarship boy out of the study; and instead of that the scholarship boy had turned them all out, and remained victorious in possession of the field. It was a defeat for Vernon-Smith that would furnish the Remove with a fund of merriment for a long time to come.

In the study, Dick Penfold went on with his work behind a locked door. The Removes roared over the affair, and as it is well said, laughter softens all hearts, and from that time many of the fellows began to entertain kinder feelings towards the new boy in the Remove.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Takes the Biscuit.

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"But I say, you know, I think it's about time the truth came out, you know. I don't see why I should hide my light under a bushel in this way."

The juniors stared at Bunter. It was a day or two after the ragging in Vernon-Smith's study, which had turned out so disastrously for the raggers. The fellows were in the common-room, and the talk had turned upon the strange story of the rescue of Vernon-Smith from the Sark. Of the unknown rescuer, nothing had been heard. Vernon-Smith, to do him justice, could appreciate courage when it was shown for his sake, and he knew what gratitude was. He was very anxious to know who the fellow was who had risked his life to save him.

But it seemed impossible to discover. The Bounder had made some inquiries in the village without being able to learn anything.

Many of the Greyfriars fellows were surprised by the interest the Bounder took in the matter. From his usual hard and cold nature, they had expected that he would forget a favour done as soon as the matter was over. But there were many good qualities in the Bounder's nature which cropped up unexpectedly.

More than one fellow in the Remove wished he had been the bold rescuer who had fished out the Bounder from death in the river. The Bounder would certainly have "shelled out" most handsomely if his rescuer had made himself known, and had wanted money. Vernon-Smith had no idea that it was a Greyfriars fellow—and he was beginning to think that it had been some chance passer-by on the towing-path.

But in the last day or two Billy Bunter's mighty brain had been working on the subject. It appeared certain that the rescuer would never be known now, and that the matter would be gradually forgotten. And the brilliant idea came into Bunter's brain of strutting in borrowed plumes, and incidentally of making a good thing out of the Bounder in a financial way.

Bunter blinked at the juniors, having arrested their attention by his last words. The Owl of the Remove was certainly the last fellow in the world to hide his light under a bushel. No one would ever have suspected him of that.

"What on earth are you driving at?" asked Frank Nugent. "Do you mean to say that you know anything about the chap who fished Vernon-Smith out?"

"Yes, I do."

There was a general exclamation of interest now. The juniors gathered round Bunter. It was quite possible that the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars had been the one to make the interesting discovery.

"You know who it was?" exclaimed three or four voices.

"Yes."

"Who was it?"

"Not a Greyfriars chap?"

Bunter blinked at the juniors with an air of importance. Bunter was really too obtuse to distinguish very clearly between truth and falsehood, and, as soon as he began to romance, he more than half-believed the truth of his wonderful stories.

"Yes," he said, "it was a Greyfriars chap!"

"How do you know?" exclaimed Dick Penfold hastily, rising from the table and laying down his book.

He was surprised and startled by Bunter's claim to knowledge on the subject. Dick had said no word outside his own home in Friardale; and with that house, of course, no one at Greyfriars ever came into contact. It seemed impossible that the fat junior should know; but his confident manner staggered Penfold.

Billy Bunter blinked insolently at the scholarship boy.

"Don't you talk to me!" he said. "I'm rather particular

whom I talk to, and I draw the line at cobblers. It's like your cheek to speak to a gentleman!"

"He wasn't speaking to a gentleman," said Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

Dick Penfold coloured. Bunter's manner was a plain enough indication that he did not know the facts; that he did not even suspect that it was Dick Penfold who had rescued the Bounder. Penfold made no reply, but quietly left the common-room.

"Floored him, at any rate," said Bunter, with considerable satisfaction.

"You fat duffer," said Harry Wharton, with a curling lip. "He could floor you easily enough, if you were worth knocking over."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"But go on with the yarn," said Bob Cherry. "Did you say it was a Greyfriars chap?"

"Yes."

"What Form?"

"The Remove."

There was a buzz of excitement.

"One of us!" exclaimed John Bull. "My hat! You don't mean to say it was a Remove chap all the time—and he hasn't told us?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Oh, rats—you're rotting!"

"I'm not!"

"But why shouldn't he tell us?" said Wharton. "I don't see what the fellow wanted to keep it a secret from the rest of the Form for."

"Modesty!" said Bunter.

"Oh, piffle!" said Bolsover.

"Oh, really, Bolsover! You see," Bunter explained, "the fellow I'm speaking of is one of the best chaps in the Form, and a jolly good swimmer; but he's never had a chance to show what he can do, because of personal jealousy on the part of other fellows. He has always been kept in the background by personal jealousy—"

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You don't mean—you can't mean—"

"Yes!" said Bunter.

"You!"

"Yes."

"Rats!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You!" roared John Bull. "You risked your life to fish Vernon-Smith out of the river! My hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him indignantly.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

There was a yell of laughter from the crowd of juniors. Billy Bunter had told some astonishing yarns in his time, but none quite so "thick" as this. His announcing himself as the unknown rescuer threw the juniors almost into hysterics.

The common-room rang with merriment.

Billy Bunter blinked at the laughing juniors in great indignation. As there was no evidence as to who the mysterious rescuer really was, the Owl of the Remove did not see why his claim should not be taken seriously.

"Oh, really, you fellows—" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go and tell Smithy!" roared Bolsover. "There's a tenner waiting for the rescuer, you know. Go and claim it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here's Smithy!" exclaimed Nugent, as the Bounder of Greyfriars came into the common-room. "Pitch it to him, Bunter!"

"Smithy! Smithy!"

"Here's the giddy rescuer, Smithy!"

"Fall on his bosom and weep!" chuckled Skinner.

The Bounder started.

"What's that?" he exclaimed, coming forward eagerly.

"What do you mean? Have you found out who the chap was?"

"Here he is!"

"It's Bunter—so he says!"

"Bunter!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, in amazement.

"He says so! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows," exclaimed Billy Bunter, "you might let a chap tell his story his own way! I say, Smithy, I didn't mean to let it out, because I don't want to brag about a little thing like that, but—"

Vernon-Smith's steady, cold stare stopped the flow of Billy Bunter's eloquence.

"It was you fished me out of the river?" he asked.

"Yes; really."

"You can't swim."

"Oh, yes, I can; I'm a splendid swimmer—a regular dab at it!" said Bunter. "Only I've been kept in the shade by

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personal jealousy from the other fellows, you see. I've been thinking of entering for the swimming prize on sports day!"

"And you fished me out of the river?" asked Vernon-Smith incredulously.

"Yes, I did. I was passing the towing-path when I heard you shriek for help—"

"I didn't shriek for help."

"I—I mean when I heard a splash!" Bunter amended.

"Rushing to the river, I leaped in, without stopping to think of—"

"Tea-time!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Without stopping to think of danger, I plunged in, and caught Vernon-Smith in my arms, and swam with him to—a place of safety!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter irritably. "I had a regular struggle for life in the—the raging waves! At last, worn out and exhausted, I struggled ashore, and sank down—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I never said a word about it, because—because—"

"Because it never happened!" suggested Bulstrode.

The juniors roared.

"Look here, I've stated the facts just as they occurred!" said Bunter. "If Vernon-Smith likes to hand me that tenner, I shall accept it as a temporary loan, to be repaid out of my postal-orders next week!"

"How did you dry your clothes afterwards?" asked the Bounder.

"I dried them in the—the sun!"

"But it happened after sunset!"

"I—I mean they dried as I came home!" said Bunter.

"I ran all the way, so as to—to dry my clothes! The wonder is I didn't catch a fearful cold!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Ogilvy. "The best of it is that I remember seeing Bunter in the tuck-shop just at dusk that evening, eating jam-tarts! Perhaps it was your double I saw in the tuck-shop, Bunter, or your ghost!"

"Oh, really, Ogilvy—"

The Bounder grinned. He groped in his pockets, and Billy Bunter watched him anxiously through his big spectacles. He thought that the Bounder was groping for a ten-pound note.

"Of course, I cannot accept a gift of money," said the fat junior. "That would be impossible. I shall take what you give me simply as a loan, Vernon-Smith."

"Oh, you can keep it!" said the Bounder.

"No, no!"

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, if you insist—" said Bunter, gracefully.

"Here you are!"

Vernon-Smith extracted from his pocket what he had been groping for. It was not a banknote. It was a biscuit—somewhat old and dry from having been a considerable time in the Bounder's pocket.

He held it out gravely to Bunter. Bunter stared at it. He adjusted his big spectacles afresh on his fat little nose, and stared at it again.

"I—I don't understand—" he began.

"Take it!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Take what?"

"The biscuit! You've earned it!"

Bunter mechanically took the biscuit. He stood blinking at it, and Vernon-Smith walked away. The juniors roared.

"I—I—I say, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter takes the biscuit!" roared Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha, ha!"

And the biscuit was all that Bunter took.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

His Lordship's Friend.

LORD MAULEVERER came down the Remove passage, and paused outside the door of No. 9 Study. It was evening, and most of the Remove were in their studies doing their preparation. From No. 9—the study shared by Vernon-Smith and the scholarship boy—came the sound of an accordion. It was not being played, or, if it was being played, the player did not succeed in eliciting anything resembling a tune. It was very clear that the player was simply making a noise, and intended to be doing nothing else.

Lord Mauleverer tapped at the door.

"Come in!" called out the Bounder.

The schoolboy carl opened the door. Vernon-Smith was seated in the armchair, and he was playing the accordion. Dick Penfold was at the table, trying to work. If the sweetest of music had been extracted from the accordion, it would have been difficult to work in the study while it was going on. But with the dreadful discordance Vernon-Smith was extracting from the instrument, echoing through the study, work was impossible. Dick Penfold wore a decidedly worried look.

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If Vernon-Smith chose to play the accordion in his study at a time when he ought to have been busy with his preparation, it was his own business. His study-mate had no right to stop him.

It was clear, of course, that the Bounder only meant to be annoying. But Dick Penfold said nothing. He tried to work.

Vernon-Smith nodded to the schoolboy carl.

"Hallo!" he said. "Have you come to listen to the music?"

"You are making a dreadful row, begad!" said his lordship. "What are you doing it for, Vernon-Smith?"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose a chap can practise a musical instrument in his own study if he likes," he replied.

"I don't see how Penfold can work."

"That's his business!"

"By Jove, you know," said Lord Mauleverer, "I'm afraid you're a cad, you know!"

"Thanks!"

"But I've come here to speak to Penfold, not to you! You might shut up that row while I'm speaking, begad!"

"Certainly!" said Vernon-Smith, with a yawn. "Anything to oblige!"

"You want to speak to me?" asked Dick Penfold, looking up from his books.

"Yaas, my dear fellow. I suppose you know that I'm alone in No. 15?" his lordship remarked.

"Yes," said Dick.

"Would you like to share my study with me, instead of sticking here with Vernon-Smith?"

Dick's heart leaped. Vernon-Smith stared at the schoolboy carl in blank astonishment.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "You're asking the workhouse cobbler to share your study! Are you off your rocker?"

Lord Mauleverer did not answer the Bounder or look at him. He kept his glance upon the scholarship boy.

"What do you say, Penfold?" he asked.

"I should be very glad!" faltered Dick. "You're very, very kind! But—"

"Come on, then!"

"But—but you're only doing it out of kindness," said Dick. "I know that you want to have the study to yourself; besides, your guardian pays extra for it."

Lord Mauleverer laughed.

"That's nothing! I can have a study-mate if I like. Look here, I should be glad to have you. I like you, my dear fellow, and I'm sure you can't be comfortable here with Vernon-Smith."

"Not at all," said Dick.

"Then come and dig in my quarters, my dear fellow."

Penfold hesitated.

He would very gladly have shared studies with Lord Mauleverer, not because he was a lord, but because he was a kind and decent fellow, very different from Dick's present study-mate. But he hesitated to invade Lord Mauleverer's quarters, which the lad was entitled to keep to himself if he chose.

"Oh, come on!" exclaimed his lordship. "I tell you I should like you for a study-mate. As a matter of fact, it's rather rotten digging alone in a study. I'll ask Mr. Quelch if you may change, and you can come with me."

"I shall be jolly glad!"

"Then I'll go to Quelch at once. Get your props into my room!"

Lord Mauleverer nodded cheerily to the scholarship boy, and quitted the study. The Bounder looked curiously at Dick Penfold.

"My hat! You're in clover!" he said.

"I think I am," said Dick.

"How did you contrive to suck up to his lordship in this way?"

Penfold made no reply.

He gathered his few belongings together, and was ready with them by the time Lord Mauleverer looked into the study again. His lordship nodded with a smile.

"It's all serene!" he announced. "Quelch seemed quite pleased when I asked him, and he said 'Yes!' at once. I'll help you carry your things."

"You'll soon get sick of the cobbler!" said the Bounder.

"I dare say the cobbler's sick of you already!" remarked Lord Mauleverer.

The two juniors left the study together, carrying Dick Penfold's belongings. Vernon-Smith remained alone, his face a study. The accordion remained unheeded by his side; he did not need it now. He was rid of his study-mate. Dick Penfold was gone, but the manner of his going enraged the Bounder far more than his staying in the study could have done.

Lord Mauleverer was very much sought after by the fellows in the Remove, and Vernon-Smith had made several attempts to become intimate with him, and each attempt had failed. The schoolboy earl did not like him, and made no secret of the fact.

That the scholarship boy, the son of the village cobbler, should succeed where he had failed was bitter enough to the Bounder. That Dick, instead of being driven out of the study, should depart of his own accord, to take up his quarters in a study that the Bounder himself was denied admission to, was maddening to the black sheep of the Remove. Vernon-Smith gritted his teeth as he sat there. The door opened, and Bolsover looked in.

"Hallo! Alone?" he exclaimed. "Did the accordion do for the cad, then?"

"He's gone," said the Bounder.

Bolsover chuckled.

"Then it worked—eh?"

"No."

"No! But he's gone!"

"Lord Mauleverer fetched him," said the Bounder, between his teeth. "Mauleverer has asked him to share his study!"

"My hat!"

"I'm rid of him," said the Bounder, "but I don't care for that! Instead of dragging him down, I've only made the cad better off! I'll smash him up somehow—but how am I to do it? I hate him more than ever."

"So do I," said Bolsover. "But the other fellows seem to be coming round a good deal. That row in the study the other day seems to have made them think better of him, because he can take his own part."

"It's no good denying that the kid has pluck!" said Vernon-Smith. "But I'll bring him down—I'll smash him yet!"

And the Bounder flung himself into his chair again, plunged in gloomy thought. Bolsover quitted the study with a cloudy brow. From the open door of Lord Mauleverer's study he heard a voice as he went into the passage.

"That's all right, my dear fellow. Put your books in the bookcase. Lots of room for two here, eh? I think we shall be quite comfy."

Lord Mauleverer and his new study-mate were making themselves at home. Bolsover scowled as he went down the passage.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Old Boots.

DICK PENFOLD found Lord Mauleverer's study very different from the Bounder's.

He was quite at home there from the start.

The schoolboy earl did everything that he could to make his new companion comfortable, and he succeeded.

Dick had peace and quiet for his work, and a cheery companion when he was in the study; and he more than reciprocated the friendship the schoolboy earl showed him.

That friendship made some difference in the estimation Dick was held in in the Form; and perhaps his lordship, with all his simplicity, foresaw that.

A fellow taken up by Lord Mauleverer could not be wholly rotten; even fellows like Skinner and Stott were willing to admit that.

Perhaps there was something decent about the cobbler after all! He had certainly behaved himself decently all the time he had been at Greyfriars. He had been patient and forbearing, and though he had shown that he could defend himself when put upon, he was not in the smallest degree quarrelsome.

The Remove were getting used to him now, and many of the fellows showed a strong disposition to let him alone, if not to be friendly with him.

But there was one who could not forgive. It was Vernon-Smith. Not that the Bounder had anything to forgive, so far as that went. All the injuries that had been done, had been done by him. But the poet said of old, that they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong. Vernon-Smith neglected no opportunity of injuring the new boy; and he did his best to keep alive the fading flame of animosity in the Remove.

But it was not easy. The novelty of ragging the cobbler was over, and many fellows were growing bored with the whole business. They were inclined to let the cobbler alone unless he made himself obnoxious—and that Dick Penfold was not likely to do. Vernon-Smith and a few others found themselves with the task of carrying on the war, if it was to be carried on at all.

But the Bounder was determined! There was a relentless determination in Vernon-Smith's nature—and he never

forgave. He would make life at Greyfriars a burden to the cobbler's son—that he had resolved upon! And he lost no opportunity of effecting his purpose.

It was curious, too, that at the same time that the Bounder was planning schemes of vengeance upon the scholarship boy, he was neglecting no effort to discover who it was that had saved his life that dusky evening in the Sark.

But the Bounder's nature was a curious mixture.

Of the unknown rescuer, he had heard nothing. The gentleman who had aided him after the rescue, who had carried him to the doctor's house, was still staying in Friardale, and Vernon-Smith had seen him once to question him. But the man could give him no information. He could only say that the unknown was a boy of about Vernon-Smith's own age, that he looked like a schoolboy, and that he had said that his home was in the village, not far from the bridge. That was all the Bounder could learn of the fellow he was so anxious to discover.

Dick Penfold wondered, sometimes, rather grimly, what the Bounder would say if he knew the facts. Not that Dick had any intention of telling him. He had no desire to wish to appear to be trying to propitiate his enemy. He only wanted Vernon-Smith to let him alone; he asked nothing more than that.

"By Jove, Pen, my boy!" said Lord Mauleverer, as they went up to the study a day or two later, after morning lessons. "By Jove, I'm glad I had you in my study, begad! It's a great deal more comfy, with another chap in it—and I never thought you'd be so useful in helping a chap with his lessons."

Dick smiled.

He had had to grind to get the Greyfriars' Scholarship, and he was grinding still to make his way in class, and to make the most of his year at Greyfriars. He had hopes of winning a second scholarship which would extend his term there, and perhaps give him a chance of remaining till he could get into the Sixth. He was very far ahead of Lord Mauleverer in his studies, and he was only too glad to lend the schoolboy earl a helping hand in his exercises in return for his many kindnesses.

Lord Mauleverer had never been under the necessity of grinding, and he had no particular desire to shine. He was incurably lazy, though he sometimes showed a great desire to work—a desire that seldom translated itself into action, however. Many a time Dick was able to save him from being overhauled in class for carelessness, and the schoolboy earl was very grateful for the smallest service in this direction.

"I'm jolly glad to be with you, I know that!" said Dick.

They entered the study. Dick was to take his lordship through a Latin exercise before dinner. As they entered, Lord Mauleverer started back with an exclamation.

"Begad!"

Dick turned crimson.

Across the study a rope had been strung, from wall to wall, and upon the rope were swinging a number of extremely ancient boots.

Eight or nine boots were there, all in a very dilapidated condition, and upon one of them was pinned a card. On the card was scrawled:

"Work for the cobbler!"

"The cads!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Dick clenched his hands.

"Don't mind them!" said his lordship, jerking down the rope. "It's some more of the Bounder's caddishness, that's all."

Dick was silent.

Lord Mauleverer tossed the rope and the boots into the passage. His brows were knitted, and his eyes gleamed with anger.

"It's rotten for you, Mauleverer!" Dick said, at last. "I'm sorry I'm the cause of these beastly tricks being played in your study."

Lord Mauleverer laughed.

"It doesn't hurt me," he said. "Begad, Pen, you're not ashamed of your old trade, surely, and you don't mind being reminded of it!"

"Not at all. But—"

"But it's like their cheek to play such a rotten trick here," said Lord Mauleverer. "I shall speak to Vernon-Smith when I see him. Now about that exercise—"

Dick nodded, and they sat down to work.

The exercise was half finished when a tap came at the door, and Lord Mauleverer raised his head to call out "Come in!" Skinner opened the door and looked in.

"Finished yet?" he asked.

"No—another page to do."

"Ha, ha, ha! I don't mean that. I mean the boots."

"The what?"

"The boots," said Skinner. "Has the cobbler done the boots yet?"

Lord Mauleverer rose to his feet. Skinner backed out into the passage, and stumbled over the string of boots.

He ran down the passage just as the schoolboy earl rushed after him. Lord Mauleverer picked up the rope and the boots.

"If that cad comes back again we'll give him something to remember this by," he said.

He returned to his exercise. Five minutes later Vernon-Smith's sneering face looked into the study.

"Cobbler busy?" he asked.

Lord Mauleverer made one spring at the Bounder, and jerked him into the study. The Bounder resisted.

"Collar him, Penfold!" shouted his lordship.

"What-ho!"

Dick did not know in the least what his lordship intended to do; but he was not likely to leave his chum unassisted. He grasped hold of the Bounder, and held him pinioned. The Bounder gave him a furious look.

"Let me go, you cad!" he muttered.

"Not till I choose."

Lord Mauleverer chuckled gleefully.

"Hold him, Pen!" he exclaimed. "I've got a wheeze! Fasten up his paws with this twine!"

"Right-ho!"

"Let me go!" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, rats!"

The Bounder's hands were fastened behind his back in spite of his resistance. Then Lord Mauleverer coiled the rope about him, stringing the ancient boots all over the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Old boots hung about Vernon-Smith like a festoon. His face was dark with rage.

Lord Mauleverer threw the door open.

"Now get out!" he said.

Dick Penfold laughed. It was come to think of the Bounder presenting himself to his friends festooned over with dilapidated boots. The jape was turned against its author, with a vengeance.

Vernon-Smith ground his teeth.

"Let my hands loose!" he exclaimed hoarsely. "Take these things off me, you cobbling cad!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Are you going out, Vernon-Smith?"

"Not like this! I——"

EVERY
TUESDAY,

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ONE
PENNY.

"Hand me the ink-bottle, Pen."

Penfold obeyed.

"I give you three seconds to get clear!" said Lord Mauleverer, swinging the ink-bottle in the air.

The Bounder rushed into the passage, the boots swinging round him. He ran down the passage, and a roar of laughter greeted him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Smithy's brought away the boots!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cut me loose!" shrieked the Bounder. "Hang you, you cackling asses! Let my hands loose!"

The juniors roared with laughter. They were there to laugh at Dick Penfold; but they were laughing at the Bounder instead. Vernon-Smith, as soon as he was released, slunk away, gritting his teeth, leaving the juniors still laughing.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Dick Penfold—Hero.

"HALLO, my lad! I'm glad to see you again!"

Dick Penfold started.

He was standing on the steps of the School House, after lessons, looking into the Close, thinking. A gentleman had come up the drive, and was coming up the steps of the house, when he caught sight of Dick Penfold there, and stopped. Dick looked up as he spoke, and recognised the man. It was the same man who had helped him and the Bounder from the river.

Dick coloured. He had not had the least expectation of seeing the man at Greyfriars, and the meeting confused him. Several juniors caught sight of them, and some of them came near.

"Old customer at the cobbler's shop, I suppose!" said Bolsover, loud enough for both Dick and the stranger to hear.

There was a chuckle.

But Vernon-Smith, who was with the bully of the Remove, did not join in it. He wondered how it came about that the man who had pulled him from the river knew Dick Penfold. But the truth did not occur to him for a moment.

"I wanted to see you again," the stranger went on, "but you had gone when I returned to the place where I left you. I had no idea that you belonged to this school. You told me that your home was in the village, I remember."

"Yes, sir," stammered Dick; "it is, sir. I am the son of Mr. Penfold, in Friardale."

"Ah! And a Greyfriars boy, too! Well, I should say that your school has cause to be proud of you," said the gentleman, shaking hands with Dick. "I am very glad to see you. I should never have seen you again, I suppose, if I had not come here to visit Mr. Quelch before leaving Friardale. Will one of you boys tell Mr. Quelch that Mr. St. Clair wishes to see him?"

"Certainly, sir," said Harry Wharton.

Mr. Quelch came out of his study at that moment. He had seen Mr. St. Clair from his study window.

"Come in, St. Clair," he said. "What! Do you know Penfold?"

Mr. St. Clair laughed.

"I should say so!" he exclaimed. "I did not know the lad's name before, but I have met him—under very peculiar circumstances—eh, Penfold?"

"Yes, sir," stammered Dick.

"That is very curious," said Mr. Quelch.

"Penfold has cobbled his boots, I suppose," murmured Skinner. Quite a crowd of fellows had gathered round now, feeling that something unusual was on the tapis. A faint chuckle followed Skinner's remark, but as Mr. Quelch glanced round every face became quite grave.

"But you know the story, of course?" said Mr. St. Clair, looking at Mr. Quelch in surprise. "This other boy—Vernon-Smith, I think he told me his name was—must have reported the matter to you?"

"What matter?"

"About his being nearly drowned in the river."

"Yes," said Mr. Quelch, in surprise. "But what has that to do with Penfold?"

"A great deal, I should say. Did you not know that this lad was the one who saved Vernon-Smith's life that evening?"

"What! Penfold?"

"Decidedly!"

Mr. Quelch stared blankly at Dick Penfold. There was a murmur from the juniors who heard what was said—a murmur of wonder and incredulity.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
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"Penfold!" ejaculated Bolsover. "Well, my hat!"

"The cobbler!"

"The shoemaker! Rats!"

"Great Scott!"

"Begad!"

"It was Penfold?" said Mr. Quelch blankly.

"Most certainly!" said Mr. St. Clair, looking very puzzled. "That is the boy I saw swimming and holding the other up near Friardale Bridge. I understood from what he said that he was a village lad, and I have made several efforts to find him. I had no idea that he was a Greyfriars boy."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch.

The Bounder's face was a study.

He understood it all now.

Now that it was explained—it was all clear; but how could he ever have guessed it? He remembered that Dick Penfold had been absent from the school that afternoon—he had seen him pass the Cross Keys. What more natural than that he should walk home by way of the towing-path—the path that Vernon-Smith had taken, in the hope that the cool air of the river would revive him after his drinking at the Cross Keys. It was Penfold—Dick Penfold, the scholarship boy—Dick Penfold, the cobbler's son—Dick Penfold, whom he had injured and sneered at, and given no rest—Dick Penfold who had saved his life!

The Bounder turned white.

"Begad!" said Lord Mauleverer. "We might have guessed it, you know! He's just the kind of ass to do a thing like that and keep his mouth closed about it, by Jove!"

"Then you did not know?" exclaimed Mr. St. Clair, looking at Mr. Quelch in astonishment.

was passing. "There are precious few fellows who would do as you did—precious few!"

"What-ho!" said Temple of the Fourth. "And I'm sorry I called you a cobbler the other day, Penfold. After all, a cobbler's all right."

"Of course he is!" said Hazeldene. "What should we do for boots if there weren't any cobblers? You fellows are a lot of snobs!"

"Well, I like that from you!" exclaimed Bulstrode warmly. "Why, you were one of the hottest against the new chap!"

"I don't know about that. I—"

"So you were!" said Ogilvy. "I just followed your lead, that was all. I thought Penfold was a jolly decent chap all the time."

"Oh, draw it mild——"

"It was the Bounder!" exclaimed Trevor. "It was Vernon-Smith who was against him all the time!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The Bounder!"

The Removites, in their repentance at having ragged a fellow who had risked his life, and nearly lost it, to save one of their Form, were glad to find a scapegoat. The Bounder was to blame—all of them agreed in blaming the Bounder.

"It was Vernon-Smith's fault all the time," said Bulstrode. "I'm sorry I ever said anything unpleasant to you, Penfold."

"So am I."

"And I."

"It was the Bounder all the time!"

"Ungrateful brute, I call him, when the chap saved his life!" said Hazeldene.

"Yes, rather!"

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"Certainly not! Are you sure there is no mistake?"

"Quite sure."

"Penfold!"

"Ye-es, sir," faltered Dick.

"It was you who jumped into the Sark to save Vernon-Smith?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Why did you not say so?"

"I—I didn't think it necessary, sir."

"You have allowed us to remain in ignorance of your action, and now we have only learned it by chance," said the Form-master severely. "You should have reported the whole occurrence to me, Penfold."

"I—I'm sorry, sir."

Mr. St. Clair patted him on the shoulder.

"You are a brave lad, Penfold, and I don't think any the worse of him for saying nothing about it, Quelch. Some fellows would have bragged of it. It was something for him to be proud of, too."

"Quite right," said the Remove-master. "But you should have told me, Penfold. However, let it pass. You are a brave lad. I am proud to have you in my Form."

"Oh, sir!"

Mr. St. Clair followed the Remove-master to his room. Dick was left alone with the juniors. They were in a buzz of excitement.

"So it was you, Penfold?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Dick nodded.

"My hat!"

"Who'd have thought it!" said Bulstrode, but not unkindly.

"You are a jolly plucky youngster, Penfold!" said Wingate of the Sixth, who had paused on the steps to see what

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READ the grand new story of the Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled: "A FALSE CHUM!"

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Vernon-Smith found his voice at last. His face was very pale.

"I—I didn't know——" he stammered.

There was a scoffing laugh. The juniors were not disposed to let the Bounder off. They had an idea that they could make it up to Penfold somehow by being "down" upon the Bounder.

"Oh, rats!" said Bulstrode. "You ought to have known!"

"Of course he ought!"

"Ungrateful brute, I say!"

Vernon-Smith did not heed. He crossed over to Dick Penfold, who was standing in the doorway, red and utterly confused by the turn events had taken. The Bounder held out his hand to the junior he had wronged.

"I—I didn't know, Penfold!" he said huskily. "If I'd known, it—it would have been different. I'm sorry! I can only say I'm sorry, and—and I'll try to make it up to you somehow. There's my hand on it if you choose to take it."

Dick Penfold looked at him. The Bounder had wronged him, and injured him, had given him no rest from sneers and gibes. But there was deep sincerity in the Bounder's look and tone now—and Dick Penfold did not refuse his hand. He took it in his quiet way—he was glad to be friends.

Bob Cherry burst into a shout.

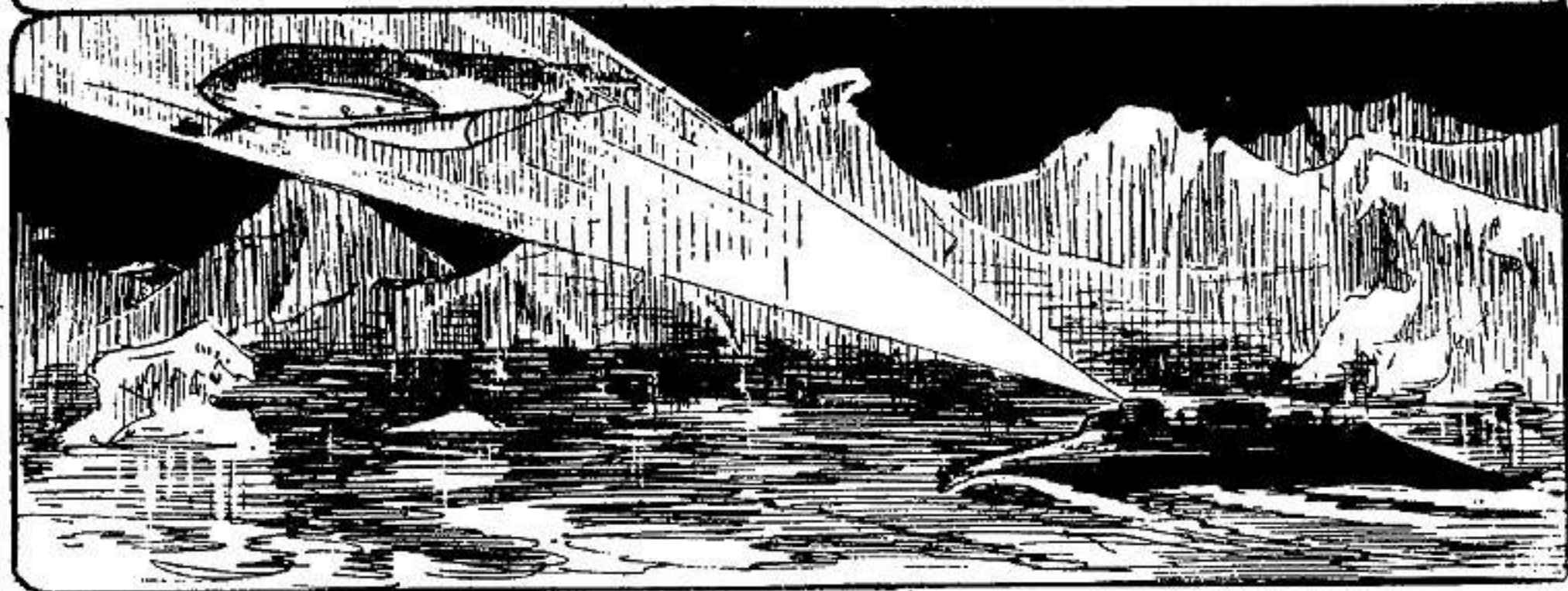
"Hurrah for Penfold! Give him a cheer!"

And heartily enough the juniors burst into a cheer for the scholarship boy—the outcast of Greyfriars, who had won his way into respect and esteem by sheer grit!

(Another splendid, long, complete tale of the chums of Greyfriars next Tuesday, entitled "The Bully's Chance," by Frank Richards. Also a long instalment of "Beyond The Eternal Ice," Sidney Drew's wonderful adventure serial. Order your copy of "The MAGNET Library" in advance. Price One Penny.)

"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE!"

A Thrilling Story of the Amazing Adventures of Ferrers Lord, Millionaire, Ching-Lung, and Rupert Thurston,
By **SIDNEY DREW.**



THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

When Professor Hugley, the renowned American scientist, startles the world by announcing that he is off to find the North Pole in his wonderful air-craft, the Cloud King, there is only one man who dares to enter the lists against him on behalf of Great Britain, and that man is Ferrers Lord, the famous millionaire and inventor. Lord pits his wonderful submarine, the Lord of the Deep, against the Cloud King in the most amazing race the world has ever seen; the goal is the North Pole, and the prize

a million pounds!

The preliminaries are soon settled, a judge is appointed to accompany each of the competitors, and the great race commences.

With Ferrers Lord are Ching-Lung, Rupert Thurston, and Gan-Waga, an Eskimo, while Hugley is accompanied by Paraira, a Cuban, and Estebian Gacchio, a huge negro. These latter soon show themselves in their true colours, and the Cloud King no sooner reaches the region of ice than Hugley, and such of the crew as are loyal to him, are murdered, and Paraira and Gacchio assume

control of the airship.

In the meantime Ferrers Lord and Thurston, at the head of a party, are exploring a mysterious chain of caves, which seem to offer a means of gaining the Pole.

Estebian Gacchio and Paraira, on board the Cloud King,

plot to wreck the Lord of the Deep.

The Cuban offers drugged wine to Clement Morwith, the judge on board the aeronef, and on being met by the negro outside the cabin says, "The bait is taken! In an hour I shall do the rest!"

(Now go on with the story.)

Chug, the Parrot, Saves the Lord of the Deep.

Sir Clement returned to his work. In work alone he found relief from his gnawing fear—from the aching horror of what had happened, and what might happen on the flying death-ship. He wrote on.

Little by little he began to experience a growing thirst. His throat felt hot, dry, and burning. He took another glass of wine, and found relief. Then a strange heaviness stole over him, the words blurred and became misty before his eyes. He yawned once or twice, and put away his pen.

Then his head sank down upon the desk.

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**NEXT
TUESDAY:**

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

By **FRANK RICHARDS.**
Order Early.

Inch by inch the door opened, and the dark face of Paraira appeared. On tiptoe he moved forward.

"Senor," he said.

There was no reply.

"Are you asleep, senor?"

Still no answer. The baronet did not stir. A silver syringe gleamed between the Cuban's fingers. He caught the baronet's left arm, and drew back the sleeve. Sir Clement moved convulsively as the needle pricked his flesh. Slowly Paraira pressed down the piston of the syringe, and then noiselessly he crept away.

Gacchio was waiting in the corridor.

"Is it done, amigo?"

"Yes," said the Cuban, with a brutal laugh. "He is safe for ten hours. Nothing can waken him."

It was snowing heavily, and the midnight sunlight barely pierced the leaden clouds. Men, warmly wrapped in furs, were clearing the flakes away as they fell. The covering had been taken from the twelve-pounder gun, and a waggon filled with shells ran forward noiselessly on its rails.

"Bring her round!" shouted Gacchio. "Fifty pounds to the man who first sights the Lord of the Deep!"

With her mighty pinions lashing the snow-laden air, the Cloud King circled round and swept southwards.

Ferrers Lord heard the story of the murder of Lugard without relaxing a muscle of his passionless face. What his feelings were none could tell, for this man of iron hid his heart under an impenetrable mask. No one on board could be blamed for the tragedy, unless the unhappy man himself, for leaving the prisoner in order to attend to his pet. Thurston's rage was terrible, and little Ching-Lung, he swore vengeance against the murderer.

Though the snow fell fast the sea was smooth. The millionaire shut himself up in his cabin without issuing any orders, and Prout and Maddock played a few dismal games of chess in the wheelhouse.

"Poor Lugard!" sighed Maddock. "It's spoiled the whole trip!"

"And there's the warmint what done it!" said Prout.

Chug, the parrot, flapped in, perched itself on the wheel, and winked at both.

"Nice morning!" it remarked. "What-ho! I love the rolling main, for I'm a sailor bold! Avast! Hurroo!"

Prout threw a chessman at it.

"Cheese it, you lubber!" said the parrot. "Hallo, whiskers!"

At another time Prout and his comrade would have encouraged the bird, but the dark shadow of death that brooded over the ship had made them miserable and melancholy beyond expression. The parrot hopped down.

"Hallo, whiskers!" said the parrot again, eyeing Prout distrustfully. "Get yer 'aircut!"

"Go away," snapped the indignant Prout, "or I'll wring your silly neck!"

"Ginger, ginger, ginger!" croaked the parrot, and laughed delightedly.

Maddock could not hide a grin, for Prout's beard was fiery of hue.

"Look here, Chug," said the steersman, shaking his fist close to the parrot's beak, "you may be only a bird, but I don't allow men, much less birds, to pass personal remarks. Go away, afore you find yourself moulting badly—go away!"

Chug stuck up its crest to its full height, and said "Rats!" That angered the steersman.

"He'd better be put in his cage, Ben," he said. "Nab him, will you?"

"Not for nimpence, Thomas! Nab him yourself."

Chug was good-natured, but he resented familiarities. He had a beak, too, that could close down with the force of a rabbit-trap. Prout stretched out a cautious hand over the bird's back, ready to clutch it.

"Poor Polly!" he said soothingly. "Poor Chug! Pretty Polly! Have a bit of sugar?"

"Rats!" said Chug rudely.

"Nice sugar, Chug—lovely sugar, Chug! Pretty Polly, let 'um scratch 'ums!"

Chug turned his head on one side to receive the "scratching," and Prout made a clutch. So did Chug. Prout missed; but the parrot scored a bullseye by taking a piece as large as a shilling out of Prout's thumb. Chug fled below, howling "Rats, rats!" and laughing gleefully; while Prout danced about with the injured thumb in his mouth and wrath in his heart.

As he placed his thumb under the tap he saw Gan-Waga coming along the corridor. Prout got an idea suddenly, and strangled a giggle.

"Say, Gan!"

"Hunk!" gurgled the Eskimo. "What you done?"

"Oh, just barked my thumb a trifle!" answered the steersman. "It's nothing!"

"Rats!" laughed the distant voice of the parrot; and Prout flushed guiltily.

"Oh, drat that parrot!" said the steersman. "That's what I wanted to see you about, candle face, that parrot. He'll get lost or hurt or something, and I've got to go to Ben. Just get his cage, Gan, and stick him in, and I'll give you some—"

"Butter, hunk?"

"Yes, some butter," said Prout.

Gan-Waga would have caught forty parrots—or, at least, he thought he would—for two pennyworth of butter. But Prout knew Chug, and Gan did not. He was grinning all over his face when he reappeared in the wheelhouse.

"Tell us the joke, Tom," said Maddock.

"I've got Gan in to cage Chug," giggled the steersman. "You'll see some joy!"

They crawled forward, and, lying on their chests, peered down. They could hear Chug warbling about "Rats" and "Whiskers" to himself in the distance. Presently he flapped down close to the tank, and, hopping forward, tried to turn the tap as he had seen the men do. He had a powerful beak, and the tap fitted loosely.

It turned, and Chug got one of the worst shocks in his life, as the water shot over him, washing him off his feet. His language was horrible when he managed to gain the top of the tank, and the spectators laughed themselves hoarse.

"Ha, ha! Hush!" gasped Prout. "He's—ha, ha!—coming!"

Gan staggered down the corridor under the weight of a huge brass cage. Through the bars he espied the draggled parrot, and he heard the language it was using. He put down the cage, turned off the tap, and shook his head at the bird.

"Swearing!" he said. "Bad 'nough—wicked, awful, drefful! Shut up!"

"Go and die!" yelled Chug.

"Come in yo' cage," said Gan-Waga.

Prout nudged Maddock with his elbow.

"I shall bust!" he said. "He's going to grab it!"

"Why don't he, then?"

Gan-Waga was pondering. He did not like the look in Chug's eye.

"Come in yo' cage!"

"Rats!" yelled the bird, shaking itself, and flinging water far and wide. "Go and die!"

"Den I make yo'!" said Gan-Waga.

Using the tap as a step, he clambered upon the tank. The faces of the watchers above were as red as freshly cut beefsteak. Gan-Waga made a snap with both hands, and Chug flew between them before they could close, settled upon the Eskimo's head, took a firm hold upon Gan-Waga's scalp with his sharp claws, and, to make sure of not falling off, clutched the nearest ear—the left one—with his powerful beak.

Gan-Waga shrieked, clutched wildly at his head, rolled from the tank, fell on his back and bounded up again, and hopped

about feeling his ear. The parrot had gone back to its perch on the tank, and sat there laughing joyously, calling him names.

Gan-Waga bolted up the companion-way, and there discovered Prout and Maddock, lying on their backs and kicking, choked with mirth. They did not see him, and he slunk away, feeling that he had been done. Suddenly, as he fondled his ear, an idea came to him, as it had to Prout. Tittering, he went up the companion once more.

"'Allo!" grinned Prout. "Come for your butter, eh?"

Gan-Waga answered the grin and shook his head.

"What's the matter wi' your ear?" inquired Maddock. "It's bleedin'."

Gan-Waga shut one eye, slowly opened it, closed the other, and pointed down the ladder.

"Joe, catch parrot. Tell him catch it, hunk? We watch him!"

Maddock slapped him on the back, and Prout hugged himself, and looked admiringly at the Eskimo.

"You're comin' on," he said—"like noo potatoes. I'll tell him!"

Joe was working in the fore-castle at his wood-carving when Prout strode in. It was late, but for nearly a week the crew had had little to do, except eat and sleep. Some were in their hammocks, others were playing cards, mending their clothes, or knitting rough wool socks.

"Oh, Joe," said Prout, "that confounded parrot is still about! Go and cage him."

Joe, the fat carpenter, grumbled and growled below his breath as he put away his tools. He felt better for the grumbling, though he had to carry out his orders all the same. Prout, chuckling inwardly, returned to the wheelhouse, and three red faces, instead of two, loomed through the dim light.

Presently Joe came, and he was talking to himself. He paused before the parrot, and spat on his hand.

"Time!" said the parrot promptly. "Punch him, 'Liza; I'll hold yer bonnet!"

"Well, yer draggled insecck," said Joe thoughtfully, "you're a good 'un, you are! You reminds me o' Prout, only you're 'andsomer by chunks, and not 'alf so spiteful. Prout's a pig!"

Maddock pinched the steersman's leg to draw his attention to the compliment.

"Say 'Prout's a pig,' Poll."

"Prout's a pig!" roared the parrot. "Pig, pig, pig Prout! Ha, ha, ha! Tchik! Yah—hoo—ha!"

Joe smote his knee in huge enjoyment.

"Never mind," thought the steersman. "He'll get it hot in a minute!"

Joe repressed a sudden start. Reflected in a puddle of water at his feet, he saw three shadowy faces. He was too clever to glance up. He knew that Chug was an awkward bird to tackle, and he guessed that the owners of the faces were waiting for him to come to grief.

He grinned a crafty grin as from his pocket he took a lump of sugar. He showed the sugar to Chug, and then placed it in the cage. Chug shook his draggled feathers, whistled, and hopped into his cage like a lamb. Slowly Joe raised his head, and, putting his ten outstretched fingers to his nose, grinned at the three.

The disappointed three were too crestfallen to speak.

"Yah! Who got biffed? Ha, ha, ha! Who thought—Ow! What—"

Prout flung the first thing he could seize, which happened to be a mop, and a wet one. The aim was deadly, and Joe fell backwards over the cage. The fall jerked open the door, and the parrot, escaping, flew straight through the wheelhouse, and out into the snow.

Chug settled on the rail. Then came a shrill, horrible, ear-splitting shriek of terror.

"By hokey!" cried Prout, leaping to his feet. "What's got the bird?"

He staggered as he gazed through the thick glass. The dark outline of a flying-vessel loomed through the snow. Figures were moving about her deck. A long, grey object, surrounded by men, was veering slowly round. Like a maniac, his face like death, Prout sprang to the lever. The long grey thing was a gun.

"Treason! Treason!" he roared. "Tumble up! Tumble up! There's piracy here!"

The vessel leapt forward like a racehorse, and a gun crashed out. The shot flung up the spray behind them. Maddock and Gan-Waga gazed, numbed with terror, at the flying monster.

"If we're saved at all, it's Chug that has done it," muttered the steersman. "If I hadn't got her goin', that would have plugged us through, and sunk us like a smashed eggshell."



"Look here, Chug," said the steersman, shaking his fist close to the parrot's beak, "you may be only a bird, but I don't allow men, much less birds to pass personal remarks. Go away afore you find yourself moulting badly—go away!" "Rats!" yelled the parrot. (See page 26.)

Baffling the Foe—A Mocking Message—Rupert Hears the Truth—A Dreadful Suspicion.

Before the startled men could collect their senses, Ferrers Lord was among them, grasping the levers. The door of the deckhouse shut, and the water rushed into the tanks. Overhead the green seas closed, and the Lord of the Deep had cheated her foe. The searchlights flashed through the dark waters.

"Torpedo nets," said the millionaire quietly.

He slowed down the vessel as the steel nets were drawn over her by the machinery Maddock had set in motion. Ferrers Lord turned, and saw Thurston's white face.

"What does it mean?"

"Only what I expected," said the millionaire. "Gacchio heard some of you talking about the underground passage. They are getting desperate at the thought of losing their money. We had better hurry. They may find the entrance, and if they do they are sure to blow it up to keep us out. Keep this from Van Witter if you can."

"But who, in the name of everything, are these men?" gasped Rupert.

"A good name for them would be pirates of the air," said Ferrers Lord. "The eagle can fly high, but he does not always escape the sportsman's gun. We will win the race first, and think of other things afterwards. Let us talk to them. Prout, get ready to signal."

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

"Yes, sir."

"Ask them if they will double the bet."

The boat leapt to the surface, and Prout stepped out on to the slippery deck with his bundle of flags. They saw the aeronef poised over the ice two miles away.

"She's seen us!" cried Ching-Lung. "Mind your moustache, Thomas. By Jove, what wretched powder!"

A cloud of smoke burst from the Cloud King's side, and a shot skipped over the waves.

"We sha'n't spring no leaks if they don't shoot better nor that," grinned the steersman. "Up you go!"

The strings of flags fluttered to the truck. Something seemed to have gone wrong with the aeronef. She twisted round awkwardly, and through his glasses Ferrers Lord saw the tiny figures on deck rush about.

Then came a faint crash and a puff of smoke.

"The fools have blown the breech out of their gun!" laughed Ferrers Lord. "It has burst. The clumsy idiots must have got it jammed. They have seen our signal. Give them another, Prout. Tell them we'll give them three millions to two that we win!"

The second message fluttered out mockingly, but met with no response.

The aeronef turned, and slowly headed for the north. Chug, who had flapped into the wheelhouse before the vessel sank, laughed gleefully, and remarked:

"Get yer 'air cut! What-ho! 'I am a sailor bold, and I roam the rollin' main.' Avast, there! Pipe all 'ands for grog!"

"Hear, hear, Chug!" said Ching-Lung. "That's a fine idea. What do you say, Lord?"

"As you like, Prince."

"Then grog it shall be, lads," said Ching-Lung, "and you have to thank Chug for it. He can beat you all for eyes. Maiddock, you be the cellarman. Extra grog in the fore-castle, lads, for Chug's benefit."

The men cheered, and Chug went proudly down on Joe's shoulder, yelling that he was a sailor bold, and asking everybody to shiver his timbers for him and weigh anchor.

Rupert followed the millionaire to the state-room.

"Look here, old chap," he said. "What does all this mean?"

Ferrers Lord yawned.

"Well," he drawled, "I see no reason to make it a secret now, except from Van Witter. We don't want to spoil the race. Take a cigar, and make yourself comfortable. Ah! Here's Ching. Sit down, my boy!"

Ching-Lung squatted down on the rug, and crossed his legs.

"Now, about the Cloud King," said the millionaire. "Hugely planned and designed her, but he had not enough money to build her, though he posed as a wealthy man. Nothing uses up money faster than inventing. The professor used up one enormous fortune with his flying-machine; and just when, after a thousand failures, he hit upon the right thing, he found himself hard up."

"Poor chap!" said Thurston. "I liked him, though I knew so little of him."

"He was a good fellow, Rupert. He knew the value of his invention, and he could have sold it for millions. He hated war, and his airship was such a terrible fighting-machine that he was afraid for any nation to find out the secret. It was the blackest hour of his life when he met Gomez Paraira. Paraira is one of the heads of a great society. It goes by as many names in as many countries. In the United States they call themselves the League of the Seven Stars; in Canada, the Seven Circles; in France, the League of Silence; but their aims are the same—anarchy! The Italian and Belgian circles are the worst of all. They have assassinated two kings, a queen, and a president in four years."

He paused, to choose and light a cigar. They listened intently.

"This league of murderers—I belong to it myself—has twenty-eight million members in Europe alone!"

Thurston started incredulously at these startling figures.

"It is true, Rupert. I am a member, for certain reasons, and so I know. Paraira seemed to twist poor Hugely round his fingers. The league found the money that built that vessel. In some way Hugely was hoodwinked into taking the oath. And now, so craftily has Paraira worked that he is master of the Cloud King."

"And does he intend to use her for piracy and anarchy?"

"Well," drawled the millionaire, "that is one way of putting it, certainly. These people have queer ideas, you know. For instance, they do not believe in kings. To gain their ends, they think anything is right and just. They talk a good deal about freedom, and pretend that one man is just as good as another. It is Paraira's turn first. He says that Cuba ought not to be under the American flag, but independent. And if nothing extraordinary upsets his plans, the Cloud King will be sinking Uncle Sam's warships like so many eggshells."

"That's cheerful for Uncle Sam, I reckon," said Ching-Lung, imitating Van Witter's nasal drawl.

"The Cloud King would be a terrible foe," put in Rupert. "But Paraira dare not make war on a whole nation."

"Don't you think so?"

"Why, the whole world would be up against him. He would be outlawed as a pirate, and he could not always be in the air. He must descend for water, ammunition, and provisions. Who would help him? Who would give him stores?"

"You forget that he has twenty-eight million friends in Europe, and, say, seven or eight in America. Bad luck might bring him to grief, but he could force them to agree to his terms. A nation can't afford to lose a battleship each day. Paraira and Gacchio have only to drop a few shells, and the thing is done. An ironclad can't fight a foe in the air."

Thurston whistled. He was beginning to realise what a tremendous power was wielded by the Cuban and the negro.

"Practically he could make his terms with any nation."

"Undoubtedly. It opens up a wide field to the imagination," laughed Ferrers Lord. "Fancy a note being dropped on the terrace of the House of Commons: 'Dear Sir, Unless you vote us a couple of hundred thousand pounds, there'll be trouble. Kindly despatch the money in bank-notes by balloon from Hyde Park on Monday week. We shall be passing then. If money not to hand, we shall teach you to shell out by shelling ourselves to the extent of half a ton of lyddite.—Yours explosively, Paraira, Gacchio, and Company.'"

Ching-Lung slipped his foot out of his embroidered slipper, and thoughtfully scratched his nose with his toe.

"Oh, old chap, why don't you invent an airship?" he asked. "There's money in it."

"I have invented one already. Rupert has seen the model. But I confess, to my shame, it is not half so clever as poor Hugely's boat."

"Then," said Ching-Lung, still scratching his nose thoughtfully, "it's never too late to patch. Why not borrow the Cloud King? Why should those two blackguards have it?"

"That is exactly what I intend to do," drawled Ferrers Lord. "We must win the race first."

"But suppose they throw up the sponge and go back?"

"They will never do that with their million at stake, desperate as they are getting. I must go and have a chat with Van Witter, and cheer him up. He's lonely there."

He left the cabin. What he had heard made Thurston silent and thoughtful. He was puzzled, too. If Ferrers Lord himself a member of this villainous league—knew so much, why did he not warn Hugely? Why did he let the man he confessed to admire and respect walk to his doom? And, more than that, as a member of the league, the millionaire must have taken the oath. Ferrers Lord was not a man to give his word lightly, and he never broke it or promised without performing.

It seemed a cruel, horrible thing to let the professor go to his death. And Ferrers Lord must have known what Paraira and that black demon intended. Ferrers Lord was harsh, but never cruel; he was incapable of such a crime as this.

"Ching!" he said.

"What's up? You look as happy as a kipper on a gridiron!"

"Do you think Lord knew they would murder Hugely?"

Ching-Lung's slanting eyes dilated with horror.

"Jove!" he answered hoarsely. "He must—By gad, no—never! He couldn't. I'll stake my life on it! Why, not to tell him was as good as murdering him! Of course, he didn't know. What a question to ask!"

"But I did know!" drawled the millionaire's quiet voice.

Pale and calm, Ferrers Lord stood in the doorway. They looked at him stonily, hardly believing what they heard.

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"THE BULLY'S CHANCE."

The Editor

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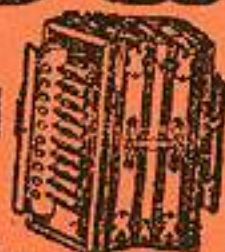
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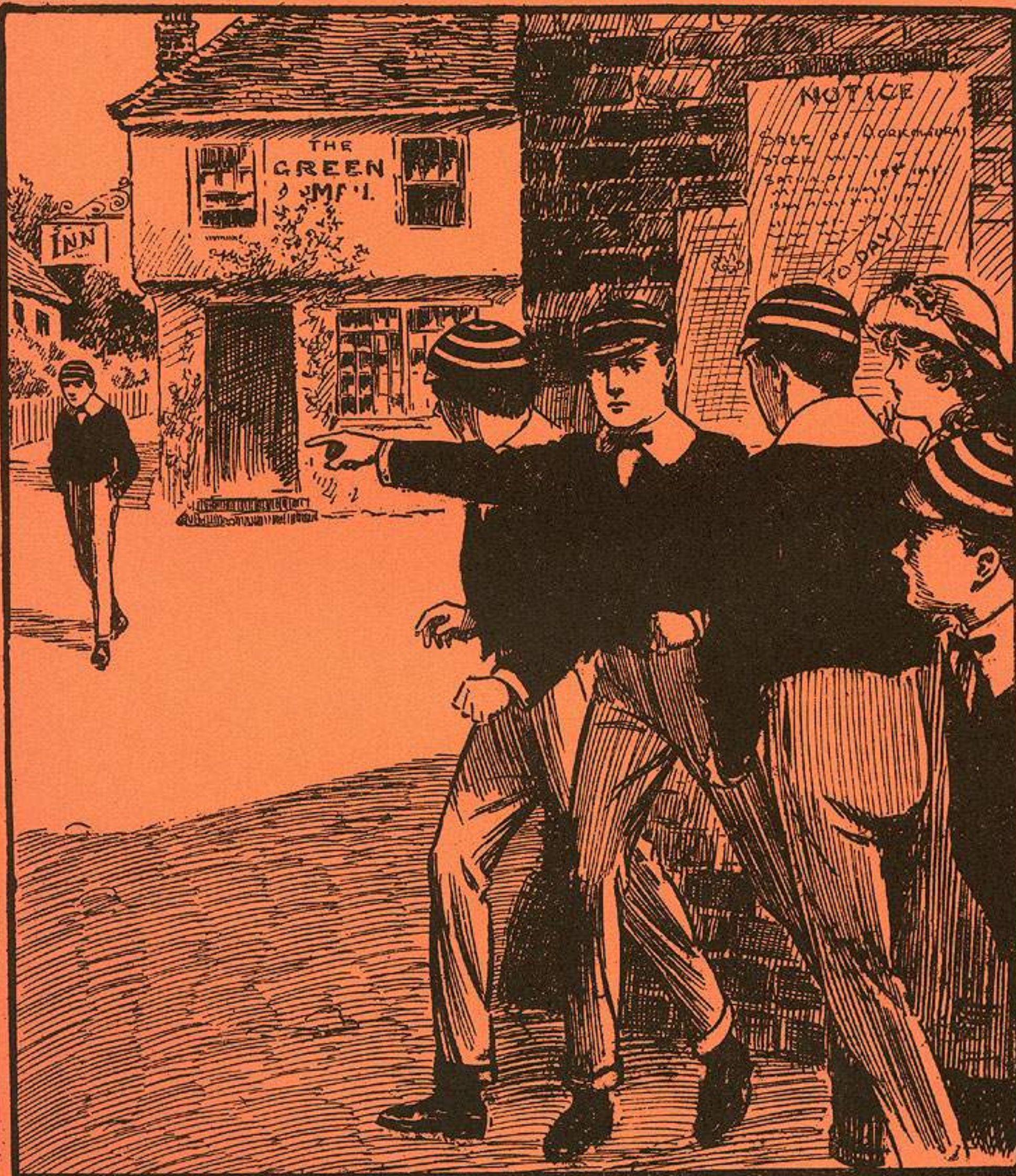
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"LOOK!" LEVISON POINTED TO A FIGURE THAT WAS LEAVING THE INN. THERE WAS NO MISTAKING IT—IT WAS JERROLD LUMLEY-LUMLEY! COUSIN ETHEL TURNED PALE, AND THE FACES OF THE JUNIORS WERE VERY DARK. THE TREACHERY OF THE OUTSIDER WAS CLEAR TO THEM NOW—THANKS TO THE EVIDENCE OF HIS FALSE CHUM.