THE BEST PENNY COMPLETE STORY BOOK.

The Magnet Library 1d.

A Companion Paper to "THE GEM" LIBRARY. The Popular Thursday School-Story Book.

"BOLSOVER'S BROTHER!"

A grand, long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, by Frank Richards.

A splendid serial story, by Sidney Drew, and a grand novel competition.

50 MONEY PRIZES!

No. 208. The Complete Story Book for All. Vol. 6.

The fags gazed at Billy Williams in amazement as he proceeded to take up the sausage in his fingers and gnaw it at one end! *(See the grand complete story inside.)*

THE SECOND FORM AT GREYFRIARS HAVE A SURPRISE!

Applications with regard to advertisement space in this paper should be addressed: Stanley H. Bowerman, Advertisement Manager, "Pluck" Series, 6, Bouverie St., E.C.

A Complete School Story-Book, attractive to All Readers.

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

Bolsover's Brother

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

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Extra Special!

"EXTRY special!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, young shaver——"

"Extry special, sir! Latest news from America! 'Orrible train smash, sir——"

Bob Cherry laughed. Wharton, Cherry, and Nugent, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars School, had jumped out of a taxi-cab outside the London terminus. The Christmas holidays were over, and the Greyfriars fellows were returning to school. In the station entrance and on the long platform crowds of shiny silk-hats and Greyfriars caps could be seen. Fellows were gathering from all quarters to wait for the special train which was to convey them down to the old school. Harry Wharton had just paid his cabby, and the taxi-driver, having received only sixpence over his legal fare, had driven off with an air of stately dignity that was very impressive.

"Extry special, sir!"

The little newsboy had a sheaf of papers under his arm, and his mouth wide open. He was clad in the remnant of an ancient coat, and a pair of old trousers much too large for him, and boots that would have made any respectable dust-heap blush. He must have been cold, for the bitter winter wind was sweeping down the street, and it made his rags dance as it swept by. But his little round face, good-looking, though not over-clean, was very merry and cheerful, and his lungs certainly were in excellent form. He held out a paper to the chums of the Remove, and Bob Cherry, who did not care in the least for the latest news, or the winners, or the result of the bye-election, but who had a strong sympathy for everybody who was down in the world, felt in his pockets for a copper.

"Here you are, kid—— Hallo, hallo, hallo! All gone!" said Bob, his hands coming empty out of his pockets. "Wharton, give the kid a penny for the paper."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I haven't one," he said; "the taxi-man's had my last."

"Nugent, old son——"

"Nothing less than a bob," said Frank Nugent

"THROUGH TRACKLESS TIBET," a tale of Ching-Lung, by SIDNEY DREW, starts in "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY next week.

"Oh, rats!" said Bob Cherry, who had taken the paper, and he looked round in the crowd for another Greyfriars fellow, of whom he could borrow the necessary copper.

"Here's Bolsover!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Bolsover! Bolsover!" roared Bob Cherry.

A big, burly fellow, with his coat buttoned up and a muffler round his neck, was striding through the crowd towards the station. It was Bolsover, the bully of the Remove at Greyfriars. He started a little on hearing his name shouted out, and looked round at the chums of the Remove.

The look he gave them was not a very pleasant one. The Remove bully was not on the best of terms with the chums of the Lower Fourth.

"Hallo!" he growled. "So you've turned up again!"

"Yes—trumps," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Glad to see your holiday's done you so much good, Bolsover! You are looking so nice and cheerful and good-tempered, it does one good to see you!"

Bolsover scowled.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" he replied. "Look here! Have you seen my governor about here? I've missed him in the crowd."

"I dare say I have," said Bob Cherry; "but as I don't know him by sight, I can't say for certain. Have you got a copper about you?"

"Yes," said Bolsover, staring.

"Lend it to me, then."

"What for?"

"To pay this kid——"

"Blow the kid!" said Bolsover rudely. "Here, cut off, you young rascal, and don't bother with your rotten papers. Do you hear?"

The newsboy backed away a pace.

"Extry special, sir!" he said.

Bolsover made a threatening gesture. He could see that Harry Wharton & Co. were inclined to be kind to the little fellow, and that was quite enough to make Bolsover want to bully him. That was Bolsover's amiable way.

"Cut off!" he said threateningly.

"Oh, shut up, Bolsover!" said Bob Cherry, in disgust. "You're not at Greyfriars now, and that kid isn't a Third-Form fag! Shut up!"

"I'll polly wi——"

"Lend me a copper."

"Eats! I won't!"

"Shut up!" said Bob Cherry.

Bolsover turned, and reaching out with his hand, knocked the sheaf of papers from under the arm of the ragged little newsboy. The latter gave a wild yell as the wind scattered his extra specials in the street, and dived after them frantically.

"Ha, ha!" roared Bolsover.

"You cad!" shouted Bob Cherry.

And he knocked Bolsover's hat off, and the wind caught it as it had caught the extra specials, and the silk topper sped away up the street.

Bolsover gritted his teeth of rage, and rushed after his hat. The chums of the Remove burst into a laugh.

"Oh, chase me!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Go it, Bolsover! Two to one on the topper!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover overtook the hat, but a gust of wind caught it again just as he was stooping for it, and whirled it on again. It whisked into the road, and Bolsover disappeared amidst omnibuses and cabs in wild pursuit.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"One good turn deserves another!" grinned Bob Cherry. "But where's that kid? Hallo, hallo, hallo, young Extry Special! How many papers have you lost?"

"Three, sir!" gasped the newsboy, as he came up, red and panting.

"Give him your boblet, Franky."

"All serene!" said Nugent.

He tossed the shilling to the newsboy, who caught it in a grimy paw.

"Old on a minute, gents; I'll get change——"

"No change wanted," said Bob Cherry. "You can spend the change in soap. Good-bye!"

The lad grinned cheerfully.

"Thank you, sir! You're a gentleman, sir!"

"Oh, good!" said Bob. "That's worth a bob—your bob, Franky, anyway. Come on, you chaps, and let's get into the station. I wonder whether Bolsover will capture his hat?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of the Remove walked on into the station. Yells of greeting from a crowd of Greyfriars fellows met them on the platform. Half the Remove were there, and Johnny Bull rushed up to shake hands, and so did Hazeldene, and Tom Brown, and Leigh, and Micky Desmond, and Bulstrode, the captain of the Remove. Further along the platform a group of seniors could be seen—Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars and head of the Sixth, and Valence of the Sixth, and Blundell, and Greene, and Coker of the Fifth. But the seniors were keeping themselves very select, and apparently trying to impress upon the general public the important fact that they really had nothing at all to do with the noisy crowd of youngsters.

"Here we are again!" chortled Johnny Bull. "What have you chaps been doing?"

"Nothing—and doing it well!" said Frank Nugent.

"Where's that blessed train?"

"Not in for a quarter of an hour yet," said Bulstrode.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the chums of the Remove through his big spectacles. He seemed fatter than ever in his overcoat, and his red cheeks were like puddings. He had evidently done full justice to the fare during the Christmas holidays.

"I say, you fellows," he wheezed, "would you care to step into the refreshment-room and have a snack with me?"

"Good egg!" said Bob Cherry. "Are you rolling in money, Bunty?"

"Well, no, not at the present moment," said Bunter cautiously; "but I'm expecting a postal-order as soon as we get to Greyfriars. One of my titled friends——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" growled Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old postal-order!" grinned Bob Cherry. "But come into the buffet, and I'll stand you some jam-tarts for your cheek."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

But Bunter was whirled into the buffet, before he could finish, in the midst of a crowd of exhilarated juniors. John Bull tossed a sovereign upon the counter, and the Removites proceeded to do justice to it while they waited for the train. Bob Cherry looked out once or twice for Bolsover, but the bully of the Remove was probably still chasing his elusive topper. At all events, he did not put in an appearance.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Quite Queer.

BOLSOVER came tramping back towards the railway-station with a black scowl upon his face. The wind had played him the most exasperating tricks during that chase after his hat. Several times he had been on the point of recapturing the elusive topper had been caught up by a sudden gust and had escaped him again. It had blown down a long side street, and finally an obliging navvy had stopped it for Bolsover by jamming his foot upon it. The navvy took a large size in boots, and his stopping the hat had not improved its shape, and Bolsover had received it without thanks. But the navvy was too big for Bolsover to say the things he thought, and so he took the hat, and brushed it as well as he could with his handkerchief, and hammered out the dents with his fists, and strode back to the railway-station in a towering rage. Bolsover would gladly have hammered any of the chums of the Greyfriars Remove at that moment, but they were out of reach, and he was thinking of the various ways of revenging himself when he arrived at the school, when a yell fell upon his ears.

"Extry special!"

He looked round quickly.

The newsboy, the innocent cause of all the trouble, was speeding down the street with a sheaf of papers under his arm, and his unmusical cry ringing out on the keen, wintry air.

"Extry special! All the winners!"

Bolsover's eyes gleamed.

He could not get at Harry Wharton & Co., but the little newsboy was at his mercy, and there was not much mercy in the bully of the Greyfriars Remove at that moment.

He dashed across to intercept the boy.

"Piper, sir!" The newsboy did not for a moment recognise the big schoolboy. "Oh, crumbs!"

Bolsover's grasp was upon his collar.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"Now, you young cad——"

"Ow! Leggo! Chuck it! Yow!"

"You dirty little brat!" hissed Bolsover. "I'll show you——"

"Yow! I ain't done nothing! Oh!"

"Take that—and that!"

"Yooop!"

Bolsover shook the newsboy savagely, scattering his papers in the wind, and boxing his ears with savage force.

The little fellow writhed and struggled in vain in his powerful grasp.

"Oh!" he yelled. Ow! Leggo! 'Elp!"

"You—you——"

Mr. Bolsover came into the study leading little Billy, the new fag, by the hand. "Percy," he said, "this is your brother!" Bolsover turned, and felt a choking in his throat. He could not speak. (*See chapter* 17.)

"Percy!"

It was a sharp, angry voice.

Bolsover swung his head round with a look of alarm.

A portly gentleman was hurrying towards the scene.

His face, fat and prosperous-looking, was clouded with anger. He made angry gestures towards Bolsover as he came up, breathing hard with exertion.

"Percy! How dare you treat the lad like that?"

"I—I say, father——"

"Release him at once!" exclaimed Mr. Bolsover.

Bolsover let the boy go.

The unfortunate news-merchant reeled away from him, almost blinded and dazed by the punishment he had received, and rubbing his ears with cold fingers.

"Ow!" he mumbled. "Ow! I ain't done nothin', sir!"

Bolsover stood quivering with rage and humiliation. His father regarded him with an angry stare.

"Percy! You should be ashamed to treat a boy smaller than yourself in that brutal way!" he exclaimed.

"The cheeky young cad——"

"I ain't done nothin'!"

"What did he do?" exclaimed Mr. Bolsover.

"He cheeked me!" said Bolsover sullenly.

"I didn't do nothin', sir!" mumbled the boy.

"I am afraid this is a fault in your nature, Percy," said Mr. Bolsover. "I have heard something of this sort about you from your school."

Bolsover was sullenly silent.

"I am ashamed of you, Percy!" continued his father. "I hope, upon reflection, that you will be ashamed of yourself. I saw your meeting with this lad from the end of the street, and he did not do anything at all to provoke you. On the contrary, you deliberately crossed the street and attacked him.

"It was before that—at the railway-station——"

"I didn't do nothin'!"

"He cheeked me!" growled Bolsover.

"I didn't, sir! He can't say I've spoke a word to 'im, sir."

"What did he say to you, Percy?" demanded Mr. Bolsover, glowering at his promising son.

Bolsover hesitated. As a matter of fact, he could not say that the newsboy had done exactly anything. It was Bob Cherry who had started Bolsover's topper on its wild career.

"He caused a row with the other fellows," said Bolsover lamely.

Mr. Bolsover's face grew very stern.

"I'm afraid it is a case of the wolf and the lamb over again!" he exclaimed. "You have no excuse for having ill-used this boy. Go to the station at once."

Bolsover tightened his lips.

"Aren't you coming with me, father?"

"No!" said Mr. Bolsover brusquely. "I am ashamed of

you, Percy. You should know better than to ill-treat a lad so much poorer than yourself. Go at once."

Bolsover tramped away savagely.

Mr. Bolsover turned to the newsboy. The little fellow was gathering up the papers that had been scattered; almost a hopeless task now, for the January wind had caught them, and was merrily scattering them like snowflakes in the street.

"Never mind the papers, my boy," said the old gentleman kindly. "I will pay you for them."

The boy straightened up, his dirty little face brightening considerably.

"There was twelve, sir," he said.

Mr. Bolsover smiled, and handed him a shilling.

"Is that right?"

"Sixpence too much, sir," said the lad. "I've got a tanner 'eve."

And he handed Mr. Bolsover his change.

The old gentleman looked at him attentively. The boy had a bright, intelligent face, in spite of the fact that it badly needed a wash.

"What is your name?" asked Mr. Bolsover.

"Billy, sir."

The old gentleman smiled.

"Billy what?"

Billy shook his head.

"Dunno, sir."

"Come, come," said Mr. Bolsover, "you know what your own surname is, surely?"

"I dunno, sir."

The old gentleman's face grew more grave and serious, and he looked more keenly and attentively in the dirty features of Billy, the newsboy.

"Where do you live?" he asked.

"Apple Court, sir."

"Where is that?"

"Orf Charing Cross Road, sir."

"Whom do you live with?"

"Daddy Fox."

"Is he your father?"

Billy grinned.

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Who is your father?"

"Dunno, sir."

"Don't you remember him?"

"No, sir."

"Or your mother?"

"No, sir."

Little Billy seemed surprised by so many questions. He stood waiting the old gentleman's pleasure, however. Probably there were few who spoke kindly to the little waif of the London streets.

"I should like to see you again," said Mr. Bolsover.

Billy stared.

"I mean—

"Where can I find you?"

"Daddy Fox's in Apple Court, sir, or round this 'ere mansion any evenin', sir."

"Very good. Here is a shilling for you, Billy."

"Thanky, sir."

Billy took the shilling, bit it to see if it was a good one, and touched his ragged cap to Mr. Bolsover. He had recaptured three or four papers, and his cry could be heard as he ran up the street:

"Extry special!"

Mr. Bolsover walked on slowly towards the station. Two lads, in Etons and overcoats and silk-hats, who were coming up the street glanced at the newsboy, and glanced at Mr. Bolsover, and grinned at one another. They were two boys of the Remove Form at Greyfriars—Stott and Vernon-Smith. Vernon-Smith, the junior, who had the distinction of being known as the Bounder of Greyfriars, smiled sneeringly.

"That's Bolsover's pater," he remarked. "Looks like a giddy philanthropist."

Stott chuckled.

"Not much like the son," he remarked.

"No fear. Nobody would ever take Bolsover for a philanthropist," said the Bounder, with a laugh. "I've heard about Bolsover's pater before. He takes up poor kids, and sends 'em to charity homes and schools, and that sort of thing."

"Queer!" said Stott.

"Yes, and dear Percy doesn't like it. He thinks the old boy ought to be saving the money up for him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith and Stott overtook Bolsover outside the station. The Remove bully was tramping along with a scowling face. Vernon-Smith greeted him.

"Oh, hallo!" said Bolsover sullenly.

"Just seen your pater at work wasting the family bobs," said Vernon-Smith. "It must be ripping for you, you know—make you feel proud, and that sort of thing, to have a tame philanthropist in the home."

"Oh, shut up!" growled Bolsover.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover stamped into the station, leaving the Bounder and his companion still laughing.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
No Room for Bolsover!

"HERE she comes!"

The "she" Bob Cherry alluded to was not a lady. It was a railway train—the "special" that was to convey the Greyfriars juniors back to school for the opening day of the new term.

The special stopped by the platform.

Wingate and the rest of the Sixth and the Fifth moved with more stately tread, disdainful of appearing in a hurry, and secure in the knowledge that for them, at least, there were plenty of seats.

But the juniors rushed. For the juniors, in all probability, there were not plenty of seats. There generally was a crowd in that train, and fellows often had to sit upon one another's knees, or stand, during the journey down. Corner seats, too, were wanted, and it was clear that everybody couldn't have a corner seat. Hence the excitement.

Bob Cherry bagged the first carriage, and tumbled in, and Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent followed him, and Hazeldene and Johnny Bull and Tom Brown came in after them. The carriage was now full, and Bob Cherry stood at the door to keep other comers out. A crowd of fellows surged past the carriage, and several made an attempt to enter; but Bob dislodged them by the simple expedient of bumping a heavy bag upon them. When Temple, of the Upper Fourth, was bumped over on the platform by this simple and effective means, and his silk-hat rolled under a trolley, there was a roar of applause. Temple recovered his hat—which bore some distant resemblance to a concertina, but no longer looked like a hat—and gazed at it.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar from the carriage.

"Come on!" roared Dabney, of the Fourth, catching Temple by the arm. "Fry's got a carriage for us."

"Look at my hat!"

"Never mind!"

"You blithering ass!" roared Temple. "That was a new topper, and cost seventeen and six——"

"But the places will be filled!"

"I'll jolly well——" Temple made a rush at Wharton's carriage, but an eddying tide of juniors carried him down the platform.

Coker and Green, and Potter, of the Fifth, came along, and Coker put a big foot up on the step of the carriage.

"This will suit us," he remarked. "Jump out, you youngsters!"

"Eh?"

"Jump out."

"What for?"

"Fifth want the carriage."

"Fifth can go and eat cocoanuts!" said Frank Nugent politely.

"Look here——"

"Can't. Gives me a pain in the eyes."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker gave a snort of rage, and leaped up to enter the carriage. Bob Cherry swung the bag forward, and there was a terrific biff as it met Coker's broad chest. Coker descended upon Greene and Potter, and the three of them rolled on the platform.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hurray!"

"Do that again, Coker."

Coker jumped up in a fury.

"You cheeky young sweeps! I'll——"

"Order, there!" exclaimed a sharp voice, as Mr. Quelch came along. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, and Mr. Twigg, the master of the Third, had the enjoyable task of looking after that big convoy of Greyfriars fellows.

"Order! Do you hear!"

"Yes, sir. But——"

"Get into the next carriage."

"Certainly, sir. But——"

"Don't argue, Coker. Do as I tell you."

And Coker, snorting with rage, and mentally promising the Remove fellows all sorts of things when they arrived at Greyfriars, obeyed.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Can't expect fellows to have their carriage overcrowded," he remarked. "The other carriages will be overcrowded, and that's bad enough. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look at Quelchy, herding them in like giddy sheep."

"I say, you fellows——"

Bob Cherry slammed the carriage door as Billy Bunter came panting up.

"No room!" he called out.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Carriage seats six, not twelve," said Bob. "You take up as much room as the lot of us, Billy. Buzz off to the next carriage."

"Look here——"

"Coker's got a lunch-basket with him," said Johnny Bull.

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

"Has he? Which carriage is he in?"

"Next but one."

"Oh, good!"

And the Owl of the Remove sprinted along the train. Harry Wharton & Co. craned their heads out of the window to see how he fared. Bunter scrambled into Coker's carriage, and immediately a sound of yelling was heard.

"Ow! Oh, really, Coker—yaroh!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter was on the platform again!

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Buzz off to the next, Bunty. Temple's got a bag, and I'm sure there something to eat in it."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch came along, and Bunter was bundled into a carriage. He was the last. The two masters stepped in. At the last moment three figures came flying along the platform. They were Bolsover, Vernon-Smith, and Stott, almost too late for the train. Bolsover sprang at the door of Harry Wharton's carriage, while Vernon-Smith and Stott ran along to the two next, and scrambled in. There was no time to get others; the train was already on the move.

"Done!" growled Bob Cherry.

He allowed Bolsover to open the door and scramble in. The Remove bully might have had a nasty fall, otherwise.

The guard was waving his flag, and the porters were standing ready to keep off any other late-comers.

"She's off!"

The train rolled out of the station.

Bolsover snapped the door shut, and stood against it, panting for breath. All the seats were full, and Bolsover looked round in vain for an empty one. It was not a corridor train, and the burly Removite had no chance of changing till the journey's end. He growled angrily.

"Who's going to give me a seat?" he demanded.

Bob Cherry cocked his eye thoughtfully.

"Is that a conundrum?" he asked.

Bolsover grunted.

"I want to sit down."

"Plenty of chaps in the train in the same fix," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "These trains are badly arranged. Carriages ought to be made elastic, to stretch if required."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"Well, I won't say the same to you, Bolsover, because I know you can't help it."

"Look here, Bob Cherry——"

"Rats! You must put on a mask, or a tea-tray, or something, if you want me to do that," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover bit his lip savagely, and glanced round the carriage again. It was a great deal like a lion seeking whom he might devour. Bolsover was turning over in his mind which of the fellows present was likeliest to be bullied out of his seat. It was not much use trying that with Bob Cherry, or Harry Wharton, or Johnny Bull, or Frank Nugent. Tom Brown, the New Zealander, was also likely to prove too tough a customer. But Hazeldene was irresolute, and he would have had no chance at all in a tussle with the Remove bully.

Bolsover, in his amiable way, picked on him.

"I want to sit down, Hazeldene," he said.

"Go bon!" said Hazeldene.

"Look here," said Nugent, "you can sit down presently!

We'll all take it turnabout, and stand in turn. That's fair?"

"Rot!"

"Thanks! You won't have a turn at my seat, after that!" said Frank drily.

"I don't want it! Hazel, are you going to give me your seat?"

"No fear!" said Hazeldene.

"Then I'll give you a licking, and take it," said Bolsover.

"You can lie on the rack, if you get tired, and change about with Nugent, if he likes."

"Look here——" began Hazeldene indignantly.

This was a little "thick" even for Bolsover, the bully of the Form.

"Oh, get up, and shut up!" said Bolsover.

Bob Cherry rose to his feet. Hazeldene was not quite up to a tussel with the Remove bully, but Bob Cherry was, and he was quite willing.

"If you're looking for trouble, Bolsover, come on!" he said cheerfully

"Oh, sit down!"

"You're not going to have Hazeldene's seat!"

"I am!"

"Very well. Take it!"

"Get up, Hazeldene!" growled Bolsover.

"Rats!" said Hazeldene, strong in Bob Cherry's championship. "I'll see you blowed first!"

"Then I'll jolly soon shift you!"

Bolsover's heavy hand descended upon Hazeldene's shoulder. Bob Cherry promptly knocked it off. The next moment Bolsover and Bob Cherry were clutching and rolling over among the feet of the juniors.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Bunter Takes the Cake.

"OH!" "Ow!"

"Lemme gerrup!"

Bolsover had bumped over on his back, and Bob Cherry was sitting on his chest. Nugent and Wharton rested their boots upon Bolsover. Their boots were a little muddy, and the contact did not improve Bolsover's clothes. But the object of the juniors was not to improve Bolsover's clothes.

"Yow!" roared Bolsover. "Will you lemme gerrup?"

"No fear!"

"Gerroff, you cad!"

"I'm quite comfortable, thank you!" said Bob Cherry. "I like sitting on something soft."

"Sit on his head," suggested Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep him there," said Tom Brown. "He's quite as good as a foot-warmer, I consider. Don't wriggle like that, Bolsover! You're wiping all the mud off my boots on to your bags. Of course, I don't mind if you don't."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover struggled furiously. But Bob Cherry held him pinned down in the bottom of the carriage quite easily.

"No, you don't!" he remarked. "I'm going to keep you here till you promise to behave yourself, Percy dear."

"Lemme gerrup!"

"Honour bright, you won't give any more trouble?"

"No!" roared Bolsover.

"Then you stay there!"

"You're afraid!" yelled Bolsover.

Bob Cherry laughed.

"I'll have the gloves on with you in the gym. when we get to Greyfriars, if you like," he replied. "But you're not going to spoil the journey down with your rotten bad temper and bullying. You can stay where you are till you've got over it."

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull.

"Besides, they haven't put any foot-warmers in the carriage," said Tom Brown, looking under the seats. "I think it's kind of Bolsover to oblige us like this."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me up!" shrieked Bolsover, who was foaming at the mouth by this time.

"No hurry!"

"You—you rotter!"

"Same to you, and many of 'em!" said Bob Cherry amiably.

Bolsover made a tremendous effort to fling him off. But it was not of the slightest use. Bob Cherry kept him pinned down. The Remove bully gasped with exhaustion.

"Get off!" he growled. "I—I'll make it pax!"

"Honour bright?"

"Yes, hang you!"

Bob Cherry rose at once.

"There you are," he remarked cheerfully.

Bolsover rose, and began dusting down his clothes. They required it! He scowled savagely at the grinning chums of the Remove.

"I'll make some of you sorry for this when we get back to Greyfriars!" he growled.

"Rats!"

Bolsover jammed himself against the window to stand. The train rushed on through the sunny, leafless landscape. It was cold in the carriage, and the juniors stamped their feet to keep warm. At intervals they leaned out of the window—the one opposite Bolsover—to yell to the fellows in the other carriages. A fat face, with large spectacles upon it, blinked at them from some distance down the train.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Temple's a beast! He won't give me any of his jam-tarts," said Bunter. "I've promised to pay him for them when I get my postal-order, too."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I missed my lunch-basket at the station. It was sent by a titled friend of mine."

"No wonder you missed it," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm frightfully hungry! Could you chuck me something to eat?" said Bunter, blinking along the train. "I'll try to catch it. Have you any pork-pies?"

"No," said Bob Cherry, laughing.

"A jam-tart would do."

"I haven't any!"

"Cake, then!"

"I've got some cake; but you couldn't catch it, you fat duffer, if I chucked it!" said Bob Cherry. "Besides, it would be a waste."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

Bob Cherry drew his head in. The juniors were a little peckish now, and Bob Cherry had a supply of indigestible pastry in his bag. He opened it, and spread out a number of meringues and a cake. The cake was very heavy and solid-looking. The juniors looked it over with critical eyes. The fat voice of Bunter could be heard yelling along the train.

"Cherry! I say, Cherry! I say, you fellows!"

"Is that the cake?" asked Nugent, jabbing it with the end of his umbrella, without making any impression whatever upon the solidity of the cake.

"That's it!" said Bob. "My Aunt Maria made that, and sent it to me."

"What did she use—brickdust?"

"Well, it feels like it, doesn't it?" said Bob Cherry, thumping the cake. "I think, upon the whole, I might as well be generous, and let Bunter have that cake."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob picked up the cake, and leaned out of the window. Bunter was still leaning from his window down the train, three carriages away. He blinked eagerly at Bob through his big spectacles.

"I say, Cherry——"

"Can you catch, Bunter?" called out Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather! Try me!" said Bunter eagerly.

Billy Bunter was not at all sure that he could catch the cake if it were thrown to him. But, after all, the risk was Bob Cherry's, not his, if he missed the cake, and it was lost on the railway track, he would be no worse off than he was now. Bunter had no objection whatever to running risks with other people's property.

Bob Cherry swung his arm out of the window, and calculated the distance. Billy Bunter put out both fat hands.

"Careful!" he called out.

"Mind you catch it!"

"Right-ho!"

"Here you are, then!"

Bob Cherry swung up his arm, and swung the cake along with a deft aim. It swept along the moving train, and Bunter made a wild grab at it. But he had not allowed for the swift movement of the train. The cake was on him in a second, and it missed his clutching hands and crashed full upon his fat, round nose.

"Yooooooop!"

There was a wild yell as Bunter disappeared back into his carriage. The cake dropped by the track.

Bob Cherry gave a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sounds of anguish were heard proceeding from Bunter's carriage. The fat junior had evidently fallen back upon someone, and that someone was going in for revenge, hot and strong. The roars of Billy Bunter resounded along the train.

"Bunter takes the cake!" roared Bob Cherry, as he drew his head into the carriage again. "It was a case of take it or leave it, and he took it on his chivvy, and left it on the railway line."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind. These meringues are all right," said Frank Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors feasted as the train rushed on. Bolsover sulkily refused a share, and with equal sulkiness refused a seat when it was offered him.

"Go and eat coke!" was his courteous reply.

"Oh, rats!" replied Harry Wharton, who had made the offer. "You're a sulky brute, and you can stand up all the way now. You won't have any seat!"

Before the journey was half over, Bolsover had repented of his sulkiness. He was beginning to ache with so much standing.

"I'll sit down now," he said sulkily.

Wharton gave him a grim look.

"You won't!" he replied.

"Look here——"

"You've chosen to stand, and you can stand," said Wharton.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

And Bolsover did stand. It was not till the train was approaching Courtfield that the chums of the Remove relented, and allowed him a seat. Thence it was only a quarter of an hour to Friardale, the station for Greyfriars. When the train stopped at Friardale, and the Greyfriars fellows crowded out, Bolsover had a dozen distinct aches all over him, which was no more than he deserved. But he arrived at Greyfriars in a towering rage, and wary fags, having taken a glance at him, were very careful indeed to keep out of the way of the bully of the Remove.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover is Exasperated.

STAMP!

"What on earth's that?"

It was indeed startling. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were passing along the Remove passage, when the sudden crash in Bolsover's study fell upon their ears. It was the second day of the term, and Greyfriars had already settled down into its old ways again. Bolsover had started the new term in his old temper, and, judging by the sudden sound in his study, he was improving upon his old self.

Nugent grinned.

"That's Bolsover's hoof!" he remarked. "I've heard him stamp like that before when he's been in a rage. There it goes again!"

Stamp!

Bolsover's study quite shook with it, and there was a sound of cracking crockery. The Remove bully had evidently jolted a cup or a saucer from the table.

"My hat!" said Harry Wharton. "I wonder what's the matter?"

"Ragging from home, perhaps," said Nugent sagely.

"Bolsover had a letter among the last lot that came."

"Might be something wrong," said Wharton. "Give him a look in."

Nugent nodded, and tapped at Bolsover's door. There was a growling voice from inside the study.

"Who's there?"

"Us!" said Frank Nugent cheerfully. "Anything wrong, Bolsover?"

"Yes, hang you!"

"Can a fellow help?"

"No, hang you!"

Nugent chuckled.

"I like dear Percy for his nice manners," he murmured. "No good going in, Wharton. I suppose he's had a fatherly ragging, and I'm pretty certain he deserves it."

"Most likely," agreed Wharton.

And the chums of the Remove went into their own study, without giving Bolsover a look in.

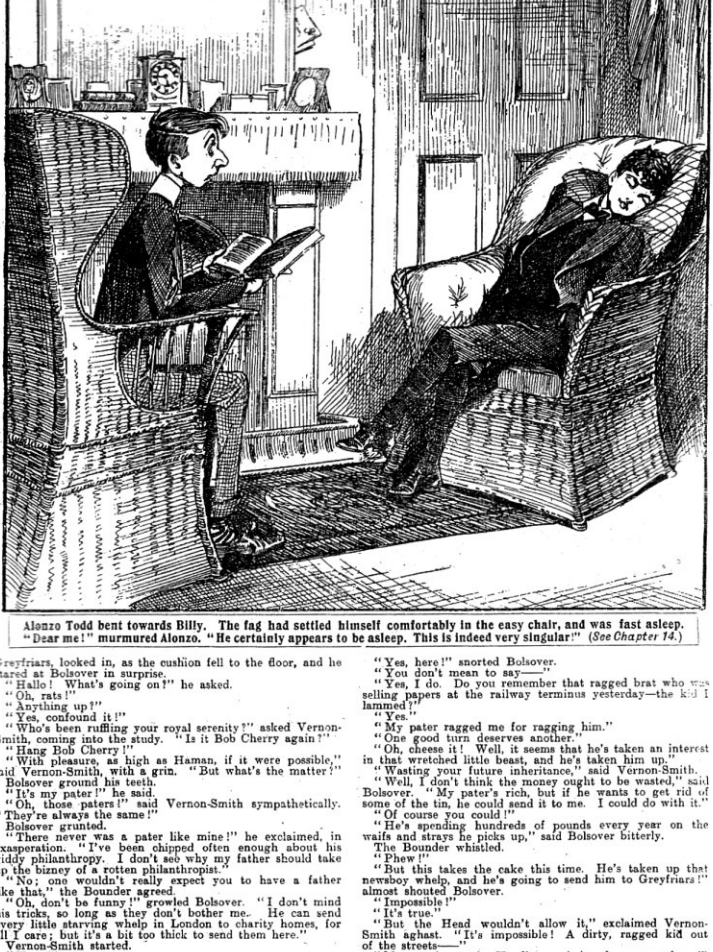
They would have had a sufficiently ungracious reception if they had looked in on the Remove bully at that moment. Bolsover was sitting in his armchair, with a letter crumpled in his hand, and his brows wrinkled with rage.

He had expended the first force of his annoyance in stamping on the floor, and now he was scowling like a demon in a pantomime.

"The rot!" he muttered fiercely. "The utter rot! Oh, it's enough to make anybody sick! The utter rot!"

He rose from his chair and walked about the study, treading hard, and kicking out of his way any piece of furniture that obstructed his path. A chair was kicked into the grate, where it knocked the kettle over, and a flood of water covered the hearth; but Bolsover did not take any notice of it.

"I wish I had that young scoundrel here!" he muttered between his teeth, and he drew back his heavy boot in a suggestive way. He expended the kick upon a cushion instead, and it flew across the study and bumped on the door, just as the door opened. Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of



Alonzo Todd bent towards Billy. The fag had settled himself comfortably in the easy chair, and was fast asleep. "Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "He certainly appears to be asleep. This is indeed very singular!" *(See Chapter 14.)*

Greyfriars, looked in, as the cushion fell to the floor, and he stared at Bolsover in surprise.

"Hallo! What's going on?" he asked.

"Oh, rats!"

"Anything up?"

"Yes, confound it!"

"Who's been ruffling your royal serenity?" asked Vernon-Smith, coming into the study. "Is it Bob Cherry again?"

"Hang Bob Cherry!"

"With pleasure, as high as Haman, if it were possible," said Vernon-Smith, with a grin. "But what's the matter?"

Bolsover ground his teeth.

"It's my pater!" he said.

"Oh, those paters!" said Vernon-Smith sympathetically. "They're always the same!"

Bolsover grunted.

"There never was a pater like mine!" he exclaimed, in exasperation. "I've been chipped often enough about his giddy philanthropy. I don't see why my father should take up the bizney of a rotten philanthropist."

"No; one wouldn't really expect you to have a father like that," the Bounder agreed.

"Oh, don't be funny!" growled Bolsover. "I don't mind his tricks, so long as they don't bother me. He can send every little starving whelp in London to charity homes, for all I care; but it's a bit too thick to send them here."

Vernon-Smith started.

"Here!"

"Yes, here!" snorted Bolsover.

"You don't mean to say——"

"Yes, I do. Do you remember that ragged brat who was selling papers at the railway terminus yesterday—the kid I lammed?"

"Yes."

"My pater ragged me for ragging him."

"One good turn deserves another."

"Oh, cheese it! Well, it seems that he's taken an interest in that wretched little beast, and he's taken him up."

"Wasting your future inheritance," said Vernon-Smith.

"Well, I don't think the money ought to be wasted," said Bolsover. "My pater's rich, but if he wants to get rid of some of the tin, he could send it to me. I could do with it."

"Of course you could!"

"He's spending hundreds of pounds every year on the waifs and strays he picks up," said Bolsover bitterly.

The Bounder whistled.

"Phew!"

"But this takes the cake this time. He's taken up that newsboy whelp, and he's going to send him to Greyfriars!" almost shouted Bolsover.

"Impossible!"

"It's true."

"But the Head wouldn't allow it," exclaimed Vernon-Smith aghast. "It's impossible! A dirty, ragged kid out of the streets——"

"My pater's got the Head's permission, he says, so he will

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 206.

allow it. Of course, the young brute will be provided with clothes and money. My pater will see to that," said Bolsover savagely.

"Well, I don't think the Head ought to allow it."

"I don't, either. But he will. I believe there's something in the constitution of Greyfriars that provides for this sort of thing. You know the school was a charity originally, intended for the education of poor kids."

"Well, so was Rugby, and so were most public schools," grinned the Bounder. "But the poor kids, as you call 'em, don't have much of a look in there."

"Jolly good thing, too!" said Bolsover. "Hang 'em! But the Head has agreed, anyway. My pater seems to have seen him about it when he was in London, and it's all settled."

"And your pater's written to tell you so?"

"He's written to say that the young beast is coming," growled Bolsover. "And what else do you think he has said?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"He wants me to take him up and make much of him, and generally take him to my bosom and weep over him," howled Bolsover.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What do you think of that?"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"Is your pater barmy in the crumpet?" he asked. "He doesn't seem to know you very well. Why does he do these things?"

"Oh, that's an old story!" growled Bolsover. "I had a brother, you know—a kid who was lost. It was years ago, and the kid was taken away by gipsies, and never found again. I hardly remember him—I was a kid at the time—but my father never got over it. He doesn't talk much about it, you understand, but he's always thinking of it; and he's still got detectives at work searching for the kid, and last holiday he told me he thought they were on the track. Of course, it's impossible, after all these years. But the governor takes it to heart, and I didn't say that to him."

"That's a queer story," said the Bounder.

Bolsover nodded.

"Yes; and of course I wish the little beggar could be found. But I'm a sensible chap; I know he can't be found now. Of course, it's rotten to think that he may be poor and starving, and all that, but that doesn't make me hand out cash to every starving kid I meet. My pater seems to think that every blessed ragged whelp in the streets may possibly be young Hubert, and he makes them think he's dotty by asking 'em questions about their names, and who their fathers and mothers are, and that rot. He's discovered lots of make-believe in his time, I can promise you. As for those blessed detectives, I don't believe they're discovering anything. They're pulling the pater's leg, and getting money out of him."

Vernon-Smith grinned.

"I should say so!" he remarked. "Look here, Bolsover, is that the reason why your pater is sending young Extra Special to Greyfriars?"

"I suppose so. It's the reason why he's always taking up homeless brats and providing for them out of money that ought to come to me," growled Bolsover.

"It would be queer if your brother ever turned up."

"Well, I should be jolly glad, of course," said Bolsover. "It's rotten to think of him going around, perhaps a beggar. But it can't be helped. Anyway, if the pater goes about collecting up waifs and strays, I think he might keep 'em away from Greyfriars. It's too rotten to send 'em here."

"But to ask you to look after the kid!" chuckled the Bounder. "That's the thickest part of it."

Bolsover snapped his teeth.

"What are you going to do about it?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"I'll make him glad to get away from Greyfriars again," said the Bounder bully, clenching his hand. "I'll look after him—not in the way the pater supposes, though. I'll make the brat's life a burden to him at Greyfriars, and he'll be jolly glad to run away and get out of it. Then I shall be rid of him; and so will the pater. Of course, the pater has been imposed on. Most likely the kid is a thief, and been in prison."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Anyway, I'm not going to stand this," said Bolsover, crushing the letter in his hand. "I'll look after the whelp; and if I don't make him wish that he'd never been born, my name isn't Percy Bolsover."

And with that kind and amiable remark, Bolsover crumpled the letter up and tossed it into the fire.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 206.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.
A Task for Mr. Twigg.

DR. LOCKE, the Head of Greyfriars, was sitting in his study, with a very thoughtful expression upon his pale, scholarly face. There was a tap at the door, and Mr. Twigg, the master of the Third Form, came in. Mr. Twigg had a round, rosy face, rosier than ever in the keen January weather, and the end of his round, rosy nose was quite crimson. He rubbed his hands before the Head's fire ere he sat down in the deep comfortable armchair Dr. Locke indicated with a motion of the hand.

"You wished to speak to me, sir," said Mr. Twigg. "No new boys in my Form this term, I understand, sir."

"Yes, Mr. Twigg; one."

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Twigg. "He has not arrived yet, then?"

"He arrives to-day."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Twigg looked a little surprised. There was an unusual seriousness in the Head's manner, and Mr. Twigg divined that the new boy who was to arrive that day was something a little out of the common.

"What is his name, sir?" asked Mr. Twigg, as the Head did not speak.

Dr. Locke coughed.

"I do not know."

"You do not know, sir! But his parents—"

"They are not known."

"Ahem!"

Mr. Twigg had to cough. He had never been so surprised in his life.

"Do I understand, sir, that a boy is coming to Greyfriars whose name and parents are unknown?" he exclaimed, in amazement.

Dr. Locke nodded.

"You amaze me, sir."

"I am amazed myself," said Dr. Locke, with a rueful smile. "I cannot help thinking that I was a little reckless to make such a promise to Mr. Bolsover."

"Mr. Bolsover?"

"Yes; the father of Bolsover, of the Remove. You have probably heard of him as a well-known philanthropist. He is a noble and worthy man, whom I respect highly," said the Head. "I only wish his son were more like him!"

"I have heard of him," assented Mr. Twigg. "But—but—"

"He wishes to send to Greyfriars a poor boy whom he has taken up. He says that the boy is a very bright and intelligent lad, and desirous of improving himself. I saw the lad at Mr. Bolsover's house in London yesterday, and I must admit that he favourably impressed me personally. But he has had no advantages of education. He can read, and write after a fashion, but that is all—and his speech is dreadful."

"Poor lad!" said Mr. Twigg.

The Head's expression brightened.

"I am glad to hear you speak like that, Mr. Twigg!" he exclaimed. "I am glad you feel sympathy for the unfortunate boy. There are only too many in his unhappy situation in this country. Mr. Bolsover has done a noble and kind action in rescuing him from destitution and in endeavouring to fit him for a better future than that of the streets. But—"

"But it will be a difficult task, sir."

"Exactly! The boy is certainly not suitable to come to Greyfriars, and I pointed out to Mr. Bolsover that a charity home would be a more suitable place—that the boy himself, indeed, would probably be happier there."

"Very true, sir."

"But Mr. Bolsover was not to be persuaded. He was set upon the boy coming to Greyfriars, for what reason I cannot quite comprehend, excepting that he wished him to be under the influence of his son Percy, whom he has asked to look after the lad."

"Ahem!"

"Bolsover, of the Remove, will doubtless do as his father wishes. Mr. Bolsover assured me that he had carefully examined and questioned the boy, and that he seems to be a very good and honest little fellow. That was my impression, too. But as he will be coming into your Form, Mr. Twigg, I want you to keep a special eye upon him. If there is any chance of his contaminating his Form-fellows with evil knowledge picked up in the streets, he must be sent away at once."

ANSWERS

"I understand, sir."

"So long as no harm is done, the experiment may be made, I suppose," said the Head, with a sigh. "I confess that I have many misgivings."

"But you were not bound to accede to Mr. Bolsover's demand, sir?" hinted Mr. Twigg.

The Head coloured.

"I could not see my way to refuse, Mr. Twigg. You are aware that in the constitution of Greyfriars it is plainly stated that the school is founded for the benefit of poor boys whose relations cannot afford to pay for their education."

Mr. Twigg smiled.

"But that was in the fifteenth century, sir."

"Undoubtedly. But——"

"And most of the public schools in England were founded in the same way, for the same purpose—most of the colleges, too," said Mr. Twigg. "But what chance would a poor newsboy have of getting into Eton or Rugby, even if he could find somebody to pay his fees?"

"None, I suppose."

"And why not the same with Greyfriars?"

The Head hesitated.

"The fact is, Mr. Twigg, that Mr. Bolsover put me upon my honour as a clergyman. I could not deny that Greyfriars, like all other public schools, has been turned from its original purpose, and that its funds are not now used for the benefit of the poor, as the founders intended. The change, I suppose, was inevitable—it is universal, at all events. Yet there is something to be said for Mr. Bolsover's contention that he has a right to send the boy here, especially if he pays the full fees for him. And he made such a point of it that I consented."

"I hope it will turn out well, sir."

"I—I hope so! And I want you to help me in every way you can, Mr. Twigg, to make it a success."

"I shall certainly do that, sir."

"The boy is too old to be placed in a low Form, such as the First or Second; but, as a matter of fact, his knowledge does not even fit him for the First Form," said the Head. "The smallest child at Greyfriars would laugh at him for a dunce!"

"That is bad."

"My idea is that he should be placed in the Third, among boys of his own age, and excused from all lessons that are beyond his powers. In the class he will learn to behave himself, to sit still, and to keep himself clean and orderly. He can be given easy exercises to do while the Third are at work, and gradually he can work his way up, and in the course of time can take on the usual Form work. Meanwhile, he will be learning civilised habits of law and order, regular hours for rising and going to bed, and for washing and taking meals—important matters to a boy who has lived in the streets."

"Quite so, sir."

"But I would not impose this trouble upon you without consulting you first, Mr. Twigg," said the Head. "I ask it as a favour."

"I shall regard it as a duty, sir," said Mr. Twigg.

"Thank you very much!"

And after a little more talk on the subject of the newsboy who was coming to Greyfriars to take his place in the Third Form, Dr. Locke shook hands very cordially with the Third Form-master, and Mr. Twigg left the study.

The Third Form-master's face was very thoughtful as he went down the passage.

The task before him was not an easy one, and he foresaw many, many difficulties, and he could not help thinking that Mr. Bolsover's experiment with the waif of the streets was most likely to turn out a failure.

But he meant to do his best.

Little Billy, the waif of the London streets, was likely to find friends as well as enemies at Greyfriars, and with plenty of pluck and grit he had a good chance of pulling through.

Mr. Twigg, in his study, waited the arrival of Mr. Bolsover's protegee, with an anxious frown upon his face. He had given orders that the moment Master William Williams—that was the name the boy was to be called by—arrived, he was to be brought to his study. And Mr. Twigg occupied the time in wondering what Master William Williams would be like, and what kind of a figure he would make in the Third Form of Greyfriars.

* * * * * * *

"'Ere, old cock!"

Gosling, the school porter of Greyfriars, jumped almost clear of the ground. Gosling had often suffered from surprises in the course of his career as porter at the old school, but he had never been quite so surprised as now.

The youth who had walked up to the gates of Greyfriars in the early dusk of the winter evening looked very much like any other fag at Greyfriars.

He was diminutive in form, with a clear, boyish face, bright, intelligent eyes, and thick hair. He was dressed in immaculate Etons, with an overcoat of good cut and material, worn open. His gloves were very neat, only one of them showing traces of toffee. He wore a silk hat which was very new and shiny. There was only one thumbstain upon his nice white collar. His boots were a little muddy, doubtless because he had walked from the railway-station to the school, and Friardale Lane was not a cleanly thoroughfare in winter. But on the spots where they were not muddy they were very shiny.

There was nothing in the appearance of the boy to startle Gosling. He had never seen him before, but there was nothing surprising in a new boy dropping in on the second day of the new term.

But his mode of address was startling. Gosling had never been spoken to like that before within the walls of Greyfriars. He had known peculiar modes of address. Fellows made all sorts of variations of his name—Gossy and Goosey and Gander, and so on. Wun Lung, the Chinese junior, would address him as "handsome ole fellee," or "nicee ole Gossee." Bolsover sometimes called him old duffer and sometimes old idiot. In all sorts of ways, indeed, the long-suffering school porter had been addressed, but never like this. To be addressed by a lad who looked as spick and span as the best-dressed boy in Greyfriars, and who spoke in the accent of the eastermost extremity of the East End, was something new in Gosling's experience, extensive as it was.

Gosling stood in the gateway and stared at the new-comer as if he had been a ghost.

The boy stared back at him.

"'Ere, old-cock, is this 'ere place Greyfriars?"

"Ho!" gasped Gosling.

"Is this 'ere Greyfriars?"

"It's Greyfriars," said Gosling, majestically correcting the pronunciation of the first word.

"That's wot I said—Gryfriars," said the boy cheerfully. "All serene! I'm coming in!"

"You ain't a new boy!" gasped Gosling.

"That's jest wot I am—a noo boy!"

"My 'at!" gasped Gosling. "Wot's the school coming to, I wonder? Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"My box is coming along in the 'ack!" said the cheerful youth. "They wanted me to ride in it, but I wasn't taking any! All right for a funeral!"

"Wh-what's your name?" gasped Gosling.

"Williams—William Williams!"

"Ho!" said Gosling. "You're to go to Mr. Twigg's study at once."

"Who's Twigg?"

"The master of the Third Form 'ere," said Gosling haughtily.

"What's that?"

"Oh!"

Billy surveyed the porter in surprise.

"Can't you answer a question?" he inquired.

"'Ere, you come in!" said Gosling. "You're to go to Mr. Twigg, and I'm to take you there! Foller me! Wot I says is this 'ere—wot's the school coming to? That's wot I says. Ho!"

And the porter, puffing with indignation, tramped across the Close, with the newsboy at his heels. Billy walked along cheerfully enough. He was in high spirits. It was a change for him, and he felt that it was a change for the better. Two days ago he had been selling papers in the London streets, with clothes that the winter wind blew through, and a blissful uncertainty as to whether he would get to bed hungry or not. Now he was at school, in warm clothes, with good meals inside him, and the prospect of many more—as many as he could eat. School work, certainly, did not appeal to him—but he had to take the bad with the good. He was provided for—he was not used to the thought yet, and it delighted him beyond measure. Mr. Bolsover, who had taken him up, was as a god in the eyes of Billy, and he worshipped him. Billy was feeling very happy indeed—and the big grey building looming through the winter dusk impressed him with a sense of what he had gained. Only two days ago this very school porter would have regarded him as a waif of the streets, to be cuffed with impunity. Now——

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! New kid!"

It was Bob Cherry's voice. Three or four Removites were coming across the Close, and they came upon the new boy following in the wake of the portly Gosling.

Billy glanced at them, and recognised Bob Cherry.

"Cheero, guv'nor!" he said.

Bob Cherry almost fell upon the ground.

"The kid!" he gasped.

"Yus; 'ere I am!"

Bob Cherry stared at him blankly. Harry Wharton and

Nugent recognised Billy, too, and their amazement knew no bounds. Billy grinned at them in a very friendly way. He was quite prepared to be friendly with everybody at Greyfriars; he had come there with his heart full of good intentions and the milk of human kindness.

"What are you doing here?" gasped Wharton.

"I've come 'ere!"

"Yes; I can see you have! But what for?"

"I'm comin' to school."

"Eh?"

"You—you are coming here?" exclaimed Nugent.

"I've come!" grinned Billy. "Lark, ain't it?"

"Well, my hat!"

Billy grinned and winked, and walked on after the porter into the School House. The chums of the Remove looked at one another in blank astonishment.

"Well, this takes the cake!" ejaculated Nugent.

"It does!" said Bob Cherry. "It do!"

"How on earth did it come about?" gasped Wharton.

"Blessed if I can understand it at all!"

Billy entered the School House after Gosling. Gosling was marching ahead with a manner of stately dignity. He tapped at the door of Mr. Twigg's study.

"Come in!"

Gosling opened the study door.

"Which this is the noo boy, sir—Master Williams, sir," said Gosling.

"Come in, Williams! Thank you, Gosling; that will do."

Billy walked into the study, and Gosling drew the door shut, and retired, muttering to himself.

Gosling's view was that the school was "coming to somethink," and the "somethink" that it was coming to apparently shocked the serene dignity of the school porter.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Vowel Play.

BILLY stood scraping with his feet, and with his hat in his hands before the master of the Third. The quiet, well-furnished study was a new scene to Billy, the newness of Mr. Twigg, in his gown, with the bald spot showing on top of his head, was a very awe-inspiring personage to the little waif. Mr. Twigg looked over Billy as he might have looked over some new variety of biped at the Zoological Gardens.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Twigg. "You are the new boy—Williams?"

"Yessir."

"Sit down, Williams!"

"Yessir."

Billy sat down, on the extreme edge of a chair, very nervously. Mr. Twigg was still watching him, and the prolonged scrutiny made Billy feel uncomfortable. He did not feel comfortable, either, in his nice new clothes.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Twigg.

"Yessir," said Billy, for the third time.

"H'm! You should not say 'Yessir,' in one word, but 'Yes, sir,' in two words," said Mr. Twigg mildly. "In the French language, Williams, two words may be joined in this manner with perfect correctness, but in English it cannot be done."

"Yessir," he repeated.

Mr. Twigg smiled slightly.

"H'm! Never mind that now, however, Williams. Perhaps you would be more comfortable if you sat further on the chair."

"Yessir."

Billy sat further on the chair. It certainly was more secure, if not more comfortable.

"You are to come into my Form, Williams," said Mr. Twigg.

"Yessir."

The Form-master regarded him doubtfully.

"You know what a Form is, Williams?"

"Yessir."

"What is it?"

"Thing you sit on, sir."

Mr. Twigg coughed.

"Ahem! That is quite correct, Williams; but—ahem!—a Form is also, as it were, a class. I am the master of the Third Form, and it will be my duty to instruct you."

"Thank you, sir!"

"First of all," said Mr. Twigg, "I must ascertain the exact extent of your knowledge. You have, of course, been to school before?"

Billy shook his head.

"No, sir."

"But—but I understand that there are officials, called, I believe, inspectors, who see to it that the children of the poor attend schools regularly."

Billy looked worried. Mr. Twigg's language was a little over his head.

"Did no school inspector ever come upon you?" asked Mr. Twigg.

Billy grinned.

"They wouldn't come down Apple Court, sir," he said, with a chuckle.

"Ahem!"

"Nor the perlice, neither, sir," said Billy.

"Dear me! I should advise you—ahem!—not to speak of those matters here," said Mr. Twigg. "The other boys would not—er—understand. But you can read?"

"Oh, yessir!"

"How did you learn?"

"From the pipers, sir."

"The—the what?"

"The pipers, sir."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Twigg, in surprise. "That was very kind indeed of the pipers, I am sure, to instruct you in reading. Did you give them any remuneration?"

Billy looked perplexed.

"I mean, did you pay them?" said Mr. Twigg

"Pay 'oo, sir?"

"The pipers, who taught you to read."

"Pay the pipers, sir?" said Billy, in astonishment.

"Yes."

"I—I don't catch on, sir."

"Dear me! Never mind! How have you lived, Williams? I mean, whence did you derive your support?"

Billy had to think that out and mentally construe it into simpler English before he was able to answer.

"Oh, I lived on the pipers chiefly, sir."

"The pipers furnished you with the means of support?"

"Yessir."

"Dear me! That is very curious and very interesting," said Mr. Twigg. "They must have been a very benevolent class of men."

Billy looked blank.

"Did they earn much money with their piping?" asked Mr. Twigg.

"Eh?"

"I presume you allude to the bagpipes?" went on Mr. Twigg. "It is an instrument I do not like personally, but I have frequently seen a crowd attracted in the street by a man playing the bagpipes. They do not look, as a rule, the kind of men to have much money to expend in charity, and therefore it is all the more noble of them to have supported a helpless boy. I trust you will always remember your benefactors with gratitude, Williams."

"Eh?"

"Humble as their circumstances may be, they have dealt very generously by you, Williams, if what you tell me is correct."

Billy's face was a study.

"And how did you learn to write, Williams?"

"Pipers, mainly, sir."

"Dear me! They must have taken a great deal of trouble with you," said Mr. Twigg, in amazement.

"I took a lot o' trouble, sir. You see, sir, I used to copy out the letters, and that was 'ow I learned to write, sir, fust—printed letters."

"From copies set by the pipers?"

"The letters was printed in the pipers, sir."

Mr. Twigg jumped.

"Printed in the pipers, Williams?"

"Yessir," said Billy innocently.

"I do not understand you, Williams," said Mr. Twigg, his brow growing stern. "Are you joking?"

"No, sir."

"Then what do you mean by saying that letters were printed upon the pipers?" demanded the Third Form-master.

"So they was, sir," said Billy, in distress. "You've seen the pipers, sir, surely? I used to copy out the name of the piper fust, sir, and then the smaller letters."

"The name of the piper?"

"Yessir."

"Do you mean to tell me, Williams, that the pipers in the streets of London have their names printed upon them?" demanded Mr. Twigg sternly.

Billy looked astounded.

"Why, o' course, sir!" he exclaimed. "If they didn't, sir, 'ow would you know one piper from another, sir?"

"This is amazing!" said Mr. Twigg, rubbing his double chin very thoughtfully. "Of course, I am not fully acquainted with the customs of that—er—class in life, but I should never have imagined that pipers had their names inscribed upon them."

"Printed on 'em, sir!" said Billy. "The nime's always printed on top of the piper, sir."

"On his head, do you mean?" exclaimed the astounded Mr. Twigg.

"'Ead!" said Billy. "On top of the front page, sir."

"What?"

"Top of the front page, sir," said Billy, in wonder. "In big letters, sir. You must 'ave noticed, sir, if you've read the pipers."

"Read the pipers?" said Mr. Twigg faintly.

"Yes, sir; the evenin' pipers—'Evenin' Noos' and 'Star,' sir."

"Oh!"

"The nime's always printed on the pipers, sir—always," said Billy, more astonished than Mr. Twigg. "I wonder you've never noticed it, sir."

Mr. Twigg stared at Billy.

"When you say pipers, Williams, do you mean papers?" he asked, after a long, long pause.

"Yes, sir, pipers," said Billy, to whom the two vowels were evidently much the same thing. "The mornin' and evenin' pipers, sir."

"Oh," said Mr. Twigg, giving the boy a very peculiar look, "so you learned to read and write from the papers?"

"Yessir. I used to ask coves wot the words meant and the letters, and that was 'ow I started, sir, and then it comes pretty soon," said Billy.

"Dear me! And what do you know of history, Williams?"

Billy reflected for some moments.

"Nothin', sir," he said at last, with great frankness.

"Ahem! And what do you know of geography, Williams?"

"Jography, sir?"

"Geography."

"Dunno, sir. What is it?"

"Eh?"

"Is it something to eat, sir?" asked Billy cautiously.

Mr. Twigg looked at him blankly. A boy who asked him if geography were something to eat was beyond Mr. Twigg's powers.

"Dear me!" said the Third Form-master. "I am afraid we have a difficult task before us, Williams. But we will do our best. But—but at present you may go."

"Yessir," said Billy.

And he went.

FIFTY MONEY PRIZES for 'MAGNET' READERS!

Save your Numbers of "The MAGNET" Library and Win a MONEY PRIZE!

Printed below is a miniature reproduction of pages 11 and 18 of No. 199 of "The Magnet." On the next page you will find miniature pages 12 and 17 of the same issue. Next week four more diminutive pages of the same number will be given in the same way, with a special cover, thus completing this novel edition of "The Magnet" Library. When the whole of this miniature number has been thus reproduced, competitors will be asked to cut out each set of midget pages, fold and bind them up, thus making a Real Miniature Issue of our Popular Story-Book. To the reader who sends in the neatest and cleanest effort, a money prize of 10s. will be awarded, and forty-nine other miniature copies purchased by the Editor at 1s. each.

NOTE.—Readers of "The Magnet" Library who desire to enter this competition, and who would also like to retain in their possession such a novel edition of "The Magnet," would do well to take in an extra copy while the competition is in progress, as on no account will competitors have their copies returned. The Editor's decision in all matters connected with this Competition will be Final.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover Breaks Out.

"SO you're here, you pound cad!"

It was Bolsover's voice, and Billy gave a start as he heard it.

The Remove bully had come upon him just after he had come out of Mr. Twigg's study, and was looking round, wondering which way to go.

Billy backed away as Bolsover came towards him with a threatening scowl. But he was cornered in the end of the passage, and could not retreat very far. Billy recognised Bolsover at once as the fellow he had had an encounter with in the London street, though he did not know his name or know that he was any connection of the old gentleman who had been so kind.

"Yes, I'm 'ere," said Billy. "I didn't know you was 'ere, though."

"You young cad! I suppose my father has told you about me!" said Bolsover.

Billy stared.

"I don't know your farver," he said.

"You young liar! My father sent you here."

"Your farver?" said Billy, in dismay.

"Yes."

"You ain't Master Percy Bolsover?" ejaculated Billy, in dismay and alarm.

"You know I am, you worm!"

"I know it now you tell me," said Billy. "I didn't know it afore. Look 'ere, Mr. Bolsover said that his son was at Greyfriars, and he would be kind to me, and 'elp me, and look arter me 'ere."

Bolsover laughed savagely.

"Yes, I should be likely to do that, you cadging cad!" he exclaimed.

The new fag flushed crimson.

"Who's a cadger?" he exclaimed hotly.

"You are!"

"I didn't ask the old gent. to do nothin' for me," said Billy defiantly. "He offered it all of his own accord, he did. He says to me, says he——"

Bolsover laughed sneeringly.

"Oh, I know your sort!" he exclaimed. "You know how to worm things out of old duffers."

"You call your farver an old duffer?"

"Mind your own business, you street arab!"

"I may be a street arab," said Billy scornfully, and his eyes flashed. "I never 'ad a farver, as I know on, but if I 'ad one I wouldn't go for to call 'im names. I should be ashamed, Master Percy."

Bolsover gritted his teeth with rage.

The adoption of this boy by his father he regarded as an injury to himself, and the boy's being sent to Greyfriars he looked upon as insult added to injury. But to be called to account and lectured by the street waif—that was too much.

He clenched his hands and rushed at the boy.

Billy backed away, a desperate light in his eyes. But there was no escape, and the burly Removite bore down upon him and grasped him in his big, strong hands.

"Ow!" roared Billy.

"Now, you young cad—— Oh!"

Billy had desperately bitten the strong hand upon his arm, and Bolsover released him with a howl of agony.

The moment his grasp relaxed Billy made a dash to escape.

Bolsover reached fiercely after him, and the fag bumped into him, and sent him flying. The Remove bully went with a crash to the floor, and Billy sped down the passage.

Bolsover struggled to his feet.

He was considerably hurt by his sudden fall, and there was an ache in his bones, and he was in a raging temper. In a moment he was speeding down the passage after Billy.

Billy heard him coming, and put on a desperate spurt, panting with terror. Bolsover had a cricket-stump in his hand—he had brought that with him, to wait for Billy in the passage when he had heard that the boy was with Mr. Twigg. And his look showed that he would use it without mercy if he captured the new fag.

Patter, patter, patter!

Billy ran out into the hall, and there was a roar. A little fat gentleman was coming towards the passage, and Billy bumped right into him.

"Ciel! Mon Dieu!"

Monsieur Charpentier, the Greyfriars French master, sat down.

Billy reeled, but he did not lose his presence of mind. He made a dash for the stairs, and ran up them, not knowing where he was going, thinking only of escaping from the pursuer who was on his track.

He dashed into the Remove passage, and three juniors who were chatting in the open doorway of Study No. 1 called to him. There was a smell of cooking in the study—John Bull was in there, attending to the bacon and eggs. Wharton and Nugent and Bob Cherry were chatting together, and they sighted the racing fag as he came tearing on.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Is this a foot-race?"

"What's the row, kid?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, catching Billy by the shoulder as he tore past, and stopping him.

"What are you tearing about like that for?"

Billy struggled in his grasp.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Don't stop me! Don't! He's after me!"

"Who is?"

"Master Percy."

"Master who?"

"He means Bolsover," said Harry Wharton, knitting his brows. "I suppose that beastly bully has picked on him already."

"Here he comes!"

Billy wriggled in Wharton's strong hand.

"Let me go—let me go!"

"It's all right, kid!" said Harry reassuringly. "He sha'n't hurt you."

"No fear!" said Bob Cherry, stepping out into the middle of the passage, so that the bully of the Remove had to stop, panting.

Bolsover clenched his hand on the stump.

"Get out of the way, Bob Cherry!" said the Remove bully hoarsely.

"What for?"

"I'm going to lick that cheeky brat!"

"What for?" said Bob Cherry again.

"Mind your own business."

"I rather think this is our business," said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "You are certainly not going to touch that kid while we're here."

"Get out of the way!" roared Bolsover.

"What has he done?" asked Nugent.

"He's bitten me."

"Phew!"

"He bumped me over, too."

"He was 'oldin' me and 'ittin' me, young gents," gasped Billy. "I didn't want for to do it, 'specially as his farver sent me 'ere. But he was 'urtin' me."

"And I'll hurt you some more, you low cad!" howled Bolsover.

"You won't!" said Wharton.

"Who's going to stop me?"

"I am!" said Bob Cherry. "Wharton or Nugent would, but it's easiest for me, as I happen to be able to lick you, Bolsover, my boy. And I jolly well will lick you hollow if you try to lay a finger on that kid!"

"You rotter——"

"Better language, please!" said Bob Cherry sharply. "I don't like those names."

Bolsover swung up the stump. He was in such a rage that he hardly knew what he was doing.

"Stand aside!" he said thickly. "If you stop me I'll brain you!"

He ran forward. Bob Cherry did not budge, and the stump came down with a savage swish. But Bob was ready. He dodged the blow, ran in, and dealt Bolsover a right-hander full upon his prominent jaw, which sent him spinning back along the passage. There was a crash as the burly Removite measured his length upon the linoleum.

Bob Cherry rubbed his knuckles.

"Beastly hard chin that chap's got!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover sat up, dazedly, his hand to his jaw. Harry Wharton picked up the cricket-stump, and looked scornfully at the fallen bully.

"You cowardly brute!" he said. "If you had hurt Bob with this we would have wiped up the floor with you! Now buzz off, or we'll lay it about you!"

Bolsover staggered to his feet.

"I'm going to lick that cheeky brat," he said thickly.

"You're going to get out of this passage at once, or be bumped out of it!" said Harry.

The three juniors made a forward movement at the same moment. Bolsover gave them one savage look, and then decided that discretion was the better part of valour. With his hand pressed to his aching jaw, he strode furiously down the passage, and little Billy was left in peace—for the present, at least. A junior with lank hair and a benevolent expression, who had been watching the scene with wide-open eyes, laid a finger on Bolsover's arm as he passed. It was Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars, who generally managed to do the wrong thing at the wrong moment. But he had never been quite so tactless as at the present moment.

"My dear Bolsover," he said mildly, "I trust that upon reflection you will see that your conduct was quite unjustifiable. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked—nay, disgusted. He would say—— Ow—ow—ow!"

Alonzo finished like that, as Bolsover gave him a savage push, which made him sit down in the passage with disconcerting suddenness. Bolsover strode on, scowling, and Todd sat and gazed after him, more in sorrow than in anger.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.
Friends in Need.

LITTLE BILLY stood rubbing his ears, and blinking at the chums of the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. turned to him as Bolsover disappeared. They were very much interested in the little waif.

"So you're here?" said Bob Cherry.

"Yessir."

"Have you had your tea?"

"No, sir."

"Hungry?"

Billy grinned.

"Yessir, rather!"

"Come into the study, then," said Harry Wharton, at once. "We're just going to have tea, and we shall be glad for you to join us."

"Crumbs!" said Billy.

The chums led him into the study. Johnny Bull turned a crimson face from the fire.

"Done!" he announced.

"Oh, good! Trot it out!"

"Hallo! Who's that?"

"New kid."

"How do you do?" said John Bull. "You're not in the Remove, surely?"

"What Form are you in, kid?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Third Form, sir," said Billy, remembering what he had learned in Mr. Twigg's study.

"New dodge, bringing Third Form fags in to tea?" asked John Bull.

"This is something special in fags," said Wharton, laughing. "Yesterday this kid was selling papers outside the railway terminus in London."

"My hat! Is that the kid you told me about—the one Bolsover was ragging?" asked Johnny Bull, looking at Billy with great interest.

"That's the merchant."

"How on earth did he get here?"

"I dare say he'll tell us if we ask him," said Wharton. "Sit down here, kid. Do you like bacon and eggs?"

"Don't I just!" said Billy.

"Good! Pile in, then!"

Billy lost no time in piling in. His manner of eating was not elegant, but it was expeditious. He had developed a keen appetite on the journey down, and he did full justice to the spread in Study No. 1.

The juniors looked at him rather queerly. They had never seen anybody take bacon in his fingers to eat it before. But it did not seem polite to find fault with a guest, and they did not speak a word on the subject to Billy.

"What's your name?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Billy."

"Anything else?"

"Dunno!"

"My hat! We've got hold of a queer customer," murmured Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I don't like the little bounder, all the same. But what will Twiggy say if he eats at the Form table in hall like that?"

"Things!" said Nugent.

"What are you called, then?" asked Wharton. "I suppose you're going to have some name on the books of the college?"

"Williams, sir—Billy Williams."

"And how did you come here?"

"Train from London, sir, and then 'oofed it."

Harry Wharton laughed. Billy was paying more attention to the eggs and bacon than to the questions put to him, and did not quite understand.

"I mean, how did you come to be a pupil at Greyfriars?" Wharton asked.

"Mr. Bolsover sent me 'ere, sir."

"Bolsover's pater."

"No, sir—his farver," said Billy innocently.

The juniors laughed.

"I've heard of Bolsover major before," said Nugent thoughtfully. "He's a giddy philanthropist. Not much like Bolsover minor."

"My hat! No," said Bob Cherry. "It was jolly decent of the old boy to take the kid up in this way."

Billy left off eating for a moment.

"He's a splendid good sort," he said. "There never was sick an old gent. I'd die for 'im, I would, any day; strike me pink if I wouldn't!"

And Billy licked the bacon-fat from his fingers.

"And he's paying your fees here?" asked Nugent.

"Yessir!"

"Bolsover doesn't seem to get on with you."

"I s'pose 'e don't like the money bein' spent on me, p'raps," said Billy. "I can't help it. I'd do anythin' for Mister Percy, 'cause 'e's the old gent's son; I would really. But 'e don't like me."

"Just like Bolsover," growled Bob Cherry. "Any decent chap would be kind to the kind, if his father was paying the fees. But it's no good expecting Bolsover to be decent."

"No fear!"

"Course," said Billy, "I ain't jest like the other fellers 'ere. I've got a lot to learn. I know that."

"You have!" agreed Harry Wharton.

"But I know you young gents wouldn't be down on a cove because he started low down," said Billy. "It wouldn't be like you."

"Quite right," said Bob Cherry heartily—"quite right, kid, and I'd shake hands with you over it, only—ahem! But it's quite right. You can always depend upon the Famous Four—that's us—to see you through. If Bolsover tries to bully you again, ask somebody to fetch Bob Cherry—that's me—and I'll wallop him."

"Thank you kindly, sir."

"Another cup of tea, Williams?" asked John Bull.

"Yessir!"

"Will you try these jam-tarts, Williams?"

"Yessir. Ain't they prime, though!" said Billy admiringly.

"Ahem! You won't call the boys 'sir,'" said Harry Wharton. "You call a fellow by his name. The masters are called 'sir.'"

"Werry good, sir."

"My name's Wharton. You can call me that."

"Yessir—I mean Wharton. These jam-tarts is splendid. Not much jam-tarts for me when I was sellin' pipers," said Billy, with a sigh.

"Are you glad to be at Greyfriars?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Wotto!" said Billy. "Plenty to eat, Mr. Bolsover said, lots of grub, warm clothes, and no work to do—'cept larning. Course, I don't like that. But a cove 'as to take the good with the bad, don't 'e?"

Ha, ha! Yes. Have you seen any of the Third yet?"

No, sir—I mean Cherry."

Bob Cherry looked round at his chums.

"We might take the kid along to the Third Form-room after tea. He remarked, 'Of course, Bolsover ought to be looking after him; but it's pretty certain that he won't. We might as well take him round, and—and put in a word for him."

"Good egg!"

"Can you fight, Billy?" asked John Bull.

"I kin put up me dukes," said Billy. "I 'ad a fight pretty orfen when I was sellin' pipers. Wotto!"

"Mind you don't get into a quarrel if you can possibly help it," said Harry. "But if you do get in one, hit as hard as you can, and don't give in so long as you can stand. That's the best advice I can give you. And never be afraid."

"Wotto!" said Billy.

He had finished his tea. He emptied his fourth cup with a round like beer gurgling from a bottle, and wiped his sleeve across his mouth. Then, apparently noticing for the first time that his fingers were greasy, he wiped them down his trousers.

"We'll take you along to the Third Form-room now, if you like," said Harry Wharton, rising. "You'd like to see the kids you're to be with."

"I ain't to be with you, then, sir?" said Billy, a little wistfully.

"No; we're the Remove—the Lower Fourth. I wish you could be with us, Billy; we'd look after you," said Wharton, sincerely enough. "But you'll get on all right in the Third, I hope."

"I 'ope so, sir."

"Never pick quarrels, and never allow yourself to be bullied," said Bob Cherry; "and when you have to hit out, hit like a hammer. Remember that."

"Yessir!"

And Billy followed the chums of the Remove from their study, to enter upon his first introduction to the Form of which he was to be an ornament.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.
The Third Don't Like It.

THERE was a buzz of voices in the Third Form-room.

Tubb, the acknowledged leader of the Third, was especially eloquent.

The news was out.

Billy Williams had not been an hour and a half at Greyfriars; but already the news was over the school—that among the new boys who had come with the new term, there was the queerest fish that had ever been seen at Greyfriars.

Perhaps Bolsover had explained to the fags. But news soon spreads in a school, and the Third, at all events, were now in possession of the facts; and indeed of a great deal more than the facts.

Tubb was bursting with indignation. The rest of the Third were excited. Some were indignant; some opined that it was a "lark." Tubb held that it was an insult to Greyfriars, and an insult to the Third, and an insult to himself, Horace Tubb. Tubb was very eloquent on the subject. The Third were nearly all in their Form-room, which they preferred to the junior common-room, where they would have been under the domination of the Remove and the Upper Fourth and the Shell. It was getting near the time for evening preparation, which the Third had to do under their master's eye at the desks in the Form-room. But until Mr. Twigg arrived the Third had the room to themselves.

"It's rotten!" bawled Tubb.

"Shame!" said a dozen voices.

"Here's a kid who has got his living by selling papers in the street, planted on us at Greyfriars!"

"Couldn't get your living that way, Tubby, could you?" asked Paget.

"Shut up, Paget!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Couldn't get it at all, in fact," said Paget. "Let the kid alone till we see him."

"I won't have him in the Form!" roared Tubb.

"How are you going to stop it?" asked Taylor.

"There ought to be a protest to the Head."

"Rats!" said Paget.

"Look here, Paget, if you want a thick ear, you'd better say so!" roared Tubb.

"Thanks! I don't!"

"Then shut up! I suppose you've got some relations selling papers for a living," said Tubb, "that's why you stand up for this street arab."

Paget grinned.

"My dear Tubb, you've grown too haughty during the vac.," he said. "This is what comes of a chap going home to the family grocery for three weeks——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a lie!" shrieked Tubb.

"My people ain't grocers."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The door opened, and the Famous Four of the Remove came in, and the shouting died down for a moment, in sheer curiosity. The new boy, the bone of contention, walked into the room in the midst of the Removites.

"Hallo! Here he is!"

"Here's Extra Special!"

"Here's the crossing-sweeper!"

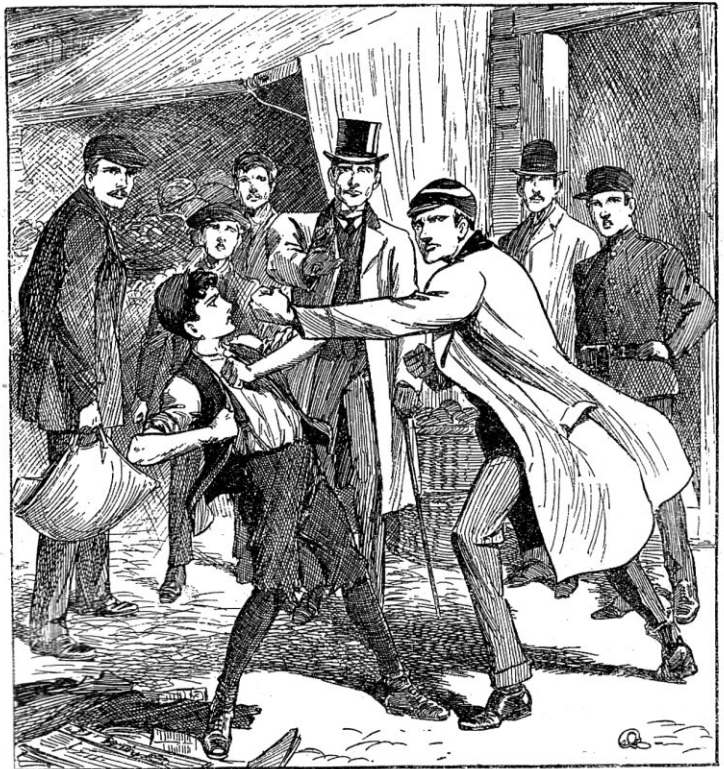
"Yah!"

"Get out!"

Bob Cherry whistled softly.

"Dear Percy," he murmured, "it's out already, and Bolsover's had first whack! I wish I had given him one in the eye as well now."

"Hallo, you kids!" said Harry Wharton genially. "There's a new kid for your Form, and we've brought him along to you."



Bolsover hit at the new boy savagely, scattering the paper to the wind. "Percy!" it was a sharp angry voice. Bolsover swung round with a look of alarm. *(Chapter 2.)*

Tubb snorted.

"You can take him back again, then!" he exclaimed. "We don't want him!"

"I don't think you've got much choice about that," said Harry, laughing; "and you'd better mind how you rag him, as he's here under the protection of Bolsover's pater."

"Yah! Bolsover's told us," sneered Tubb. "The kid got round the old man to pay for him to come here and disgrace Greyfriars."

"Tubb doesn't like that," said Paget. "He thinks that if there's any disgracing to be done, he can attend to it himself."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're not going to have that blessed crossing-sweeper in the Form!" said Tubb. "Fellow without a name! Yah! Rats! Take him away!"

Billy's clear blue eyes glittered.

"I ain't going away," he said, "and I ain't a crossing-sweeper, and if I was I shouldn't be ashamed of it, neither. Parson told me there ain't nothing to be ashamed of 'cept bein' mean and dishonest, and I ain't that."

"Hear, hear!" said Paget. "The kid can speak for himself. He's got you there, Tubby; of course, you can't help being mean."

"Shut up!" roared Tubb. "Look here, young workhouse—"

"I ain't taking any of your lip," said Billy, his eyes flashing. "If you can't speak civil, don't you speak to me. You 'ear that?"

Tubb gasped.

"What—what did you say?"

"I ain't taking any of your sauce," said Billy cheerfully. "I don't want to 'ave any row, but if you want to put up your 'ands, there you are—I'm ready!"

"Hear, hear!" said Paget. "Stick to him, young Rags!"

"Shut up, Paget!" roared Tubb.

Billy pushed back his cuffs. There was jam on them, and streaks of bacon-fat, but Billy did not mind little things like that. He faced Tubb, who towered over him, with perfect coolness, and the way he put up his hands showed that he was used to it.

The chums of the Remove had been a little perplexed at first what to do. To leave Billy to be slaughtered by the Third was not pleasant—yet to interfere on his behalf would do him no good in the Form. Nothing was more resented by the fags than the interference of Upper Form fellows in their personal disputes. But Harry Wharton & Co. soon saw that Billy would be able to take care of himself. He was not so large as Tubb, but he was much more quick and nimble, and he evidently had plenty of pluck. And if he defeated Tubb, he was more likely to be respected than attacked by the rest of the Form. Paget, indeed, from mere opposition to Tubb, was already inclined to take his side.

Tubb clenched a pair of big fists.

"I'm going to smash you, you cheeky young cub!" he exclaimed.

"Wotto!" grinned Billy.

"Don't you Remove rotters interfere, that's all," said Tubb, with a frown at Harry Wharton & Co.

The Removites laughed.

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "We won't interfere—so long as it's fair play, at all events."

"Now, then, young Extra Special——"

"Ere you are!" said Billy cheerfully.

And in a moment more the cock of the walk in the Third Form and the new fag were "going it" hammer and tongs.

The fags gathered round in an eager ring. Anything in the nature of a mill was a welcome diversion in the Third Form-room. Everybody expected to see the new fag overborne, and knocked sky-high by Tubb of the Third. But it did not happen. Billy's sparring was not of the most scientific variety, but it was better than Tubb's, and he guarded all the Third-Former's clumsy blows, and planted several in return that made Tubb roar.

"Hurrah!" said Paget. "That's one for his nob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crash!

Tubb descended upon the floor on his back.

"Bravo!" shouted Bob Cherry.

Tubb sat up, looking somewhat dazed. He rose very slowly to his feet, and came on to the attack again in rather a gingerly manner. Billy greeted him with a cheerful grin. The little waif had had hardly a knock.

Tubb came to close quarters, and grasped the new fag, and endeavoured to swing him off his feet.

"Break away!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Tubb took no notice. But suddenly a foot glided behind his. Billy's weight was thrown forward, and Tubb went down backwards, with Billy on top of him. The crash upon the floor, and the weight of the new fag, knocked all the breath out of Horace Tubb.

"Ow-w-w-w-w-w!" he gasped faintly.

There was a roar.

"Extra Special wins!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry clapped his hands with reports like pistol-shots.

"Hurray!" he shouted.

It was at that moment that the Form-room door opened, and Mr. Twigg came in to take the Third in evening preparation. The Form-master gazed in astonishment at the scene before him.

"Cave!" murmured Nugent.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked out before the Third Form-master could find his voice.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mr. Twigg, at last. "Tubb! Williams! What does this mean?"

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Billy, in dismay.

He jumped up, and stood crimson and confused.

"Williams!"

"Yessir."

"Fighting already!"

"Ye-e-esir."

"It wasn't his fault, sir," stammered Tubb, scrambling up.

"I—I began it, sir."

"Good old Tubby!" murmured Paget.

"Oh, you began it, did you?" said Mr. Twigg, with a severe look at Tubb. "Well, I am glad you have the frankness to say so. Let us have no more of this, or I shall punish you both. Take your places, boys."

And the Third Form took their places; and Billy, sitting in his corner wondering, had his first experience of preparation at Greyfriars. He did not take part in the work of the Form. An easy exercise, suitable for the youngest boy in the First Form, was set for him, and he worked at it diligently. Dilligence was all he was capable of, so far; his writing was very bad, his blots were numerous and extensive, and he had to unearth the method of erasure by the use of the thumb. But he was attentive, and he was willing to work, and Mr. Twigg gave him a word of approval at the finish.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.
Billy's Progress.

THE advent of William Williams caused quite a sensation at Greyfriars.

For a lad who had lived in a London slum, and earned his own living at an early age by selling newspapers in the streets, should come to Greyfriars as a pupil, was something so new that the whole school could talk of nothing else for a time.

But, upon the whole, Greyfriars turned kindly to the new "kid."

He was so little, and so defenceless, and so evidently keen and eager to work and get on, that most of the fellows took a kind of protecting interest in him.

If he had had bad, mean ways, if he had been a coward or a sneak, certainly the fellows would have "jumped" upon him fast enough. But he had nothing of the kind. He was quite plainly a decent little fellow. Harry Wharton & Co. had broken the ice, as it were, by taking him up, and plenty of fellows followed their example. Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove, took special notice of him, and Alonzo Todd announced his intention of passing on to Billy some of the wisdom he had imbibed at the feet of his Uncle Benjamin. Hobson, of the Shell, was very kind to him, and Coker, of the Fifth, was seen to cuff a fag who was ragging the newsboy by calling after him "Extry Special!" in the Close.

Wingate, the captain of the school, a most awe-inspiring personage to the little fag, condescended to notice his existence, and spoke to him several times in the Close or in the passages. And even in the Third Form, which had been at first inclined to resent the intrusion of the peculiar new boy, Billy was soon regarded with favour.

The way he had stood up to Tubb showed that he had pluck, and as he had beaten Tubb, and Tubb was the great fighting-man of the Third, it was evidently of no use to attempt to lick him. As for ragging him, the Third did not do that. Even Tubb did not recommend it. Paget said that the chap ought to be let alone, and the Third agreed with Paget. The Form, indeed, was inclined to take the new boy in a comical spirit. His wonderful English was a source of never-ceasing amusement to them, and they anticipated a great deal of fun in the class-room when he tackled the Form subjects.

Billy had only one enemy at Greyfriars, but that enemy was a dangerous and a troublesome one, who was not likely to give him much peace.

It was Bolsover of the Remove.

Bolsover had expected to see the school, and especially the Third Form, get its back up against the new-comer; and he was enraged and disappointed when it did not happen. There had been a set made against Mark Linley when he came to Greyfriars on a scholarship, and it was known that he had worked in a factory. There had been trouble for Dick Penfold, the son of the village cobbler, who had come to Greyfriars on a scholarship like Linley. Neither of them was anything like Billy. Both had been taught quite sufficiently to take their proper places in the school.

Billy was quite "outside," and yet he was received with more kindness than either Linley or Penfold. Bolsover could not understand it. Perhaps, as Nugent suggested, because Williams was such an utter outsider, that the school took him with comical good-humour. Perhaps many of the fellows stood up for him simply because the Remove bully was down upon him. Whatever the reason, certainly Billy seemed likely to get on very well, and Bolsover found that if he persisted in hostility to the new fag, he would persist alone.

"Blessed if I can understand it," he said to his chum, the Bounder of Greyfriars. "It's utter rot to have such a beast at any decent school. You think that, don't you?"

"Yes, rather," said Vernon-Smith.

"The fellows ought to be ten timos as bitter against him as they were against Linley or Penfold, but they ain't!" said Bolsover savagely.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"He's a plucky little beggar, and there's no rot about him," he remarked; "the fellows seem to take to him. Why don't you let him alone?"

"Let him alone!"

"Yes. He's not worth powder and shot."

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"I'll make his life a burden to him," he said. "I'll get rid of him. I'll make him glad to run away from Greyfriars before I've finished! I'm not going to have him sponging on my father, and taking money that ought to come to me!"

"Well, that's rough," agreed the Bounder.

"I hate him, too. My pater ragged me, with him looking on, because I was cuffing him," said Bolsover.

"Well, that wasn't his fault, was it?"

"I don't care whether it was or not. I hate the young cad!"

Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Well, go ahead!" he exclaimed. "But I don't mind betting you a sov. or two that you don't succeed in downing that kid. I can tell you he's got a will of his own, and it won't be easy to squash him."

"I'll do it, though."

"Well, pile in."

Bolsover understood that he would get no help from Vernon-Smith. The Bounder of Greyfriars was not a good-natured fellow; but bullying as an amusement had never appealed to him. He was too practical for that; ragging the fag seemed to him a useless expenditure of energy. It was different with Bolsover. Every time he saw the newsboy in his Etons and his clean collar the flame of his hatred was fed.

Without reckoning with Bolsover, the new fag had enough difficulties to contend with. His early training had been of the roughest, or, more properly speaking, he had had no early training at all. The first morning he appeared at the Third Form breakfast-table, in the dining-hall, he had given his Form-fellows and his Form-master a shock. There were sausages for breakfast, and Billy's method of eating a sausage was to take it in his fingers and gnaw from one end.

Which he had proceeded to do!

The other fags gazed at him, and the general hush at the table drew Mr. Twigg's attention to the new boy.

Mr. Twigg half-rose in his seat, gazing at the new fag in horror.

For some moments he could not speak.

"Williams!" he gasped, at last.

Billy looked round.

"Yessir," he said cheerfully.

"What are you doing?"

"Heating, sir," said Billy.

"What!"

"Heating, sir—I mean, eating," Billy corrected. "Eating sassingers, sir."

"Williams, do you not know the use of a knife and fork?"

"Yessir."

"You must not take your food in your fingers like a wild animal!" gasped Mr. Twigg.

"Do wild animals, sir?" asked Billy, in astonishment.

There was a chuckle along the Third Form table. As a matter of fact, Mr. Twigg's simile was not a happy one. The Form-master coughed.

"Ahem! You must not touch your food with your fingers, Williams, under any circumstances whatever. Use your knife and fork."

"Yessir," said Billy obediently.

"Kindly remember that, Williams. Under no circumstances whatever."

"Yessir."

Billy wiped his hands on his trousers, and picked up knife and fork. He dealt with the sausages quite easily, though he held the knife as if it were a dagger with which he intended to do some deadly deed. But when he wanted to eat his bread, he was in a difficulty. Billy was an obedient lad.

He gazed at the bread for some moments in perplexity, and then started upon it with the knife and fork. He cut the bread, and the tablecloth at the same moment, with a long gash. There was a giggle along the table.

"Dear me," exclaimed Mr. Twigg, "what are you doing, Williams?"

"Wot you told me, sir."

"Oh, dear!"

Mr. Twigg gave up for the present.

After breakfast, he called Tubb aside.

"You are the eldest boy in the Form, Tubb," he said. "I think I may ask you to take some little trouble with Williams. You can see that he has had no advantages of training, and his manners—ahem—leave much to be desired. May I rely upon you to show him, in a good-natured way, the usages that he should become acquainted with."

Tubb looked a little green. He had been thinking out various plans of ragging Williams, and to be thus put upon his honour to treat him well was a little trying. But Tubb was a manly fellow at heart, and he played up nobly.

"Yes, sir," he said. "I'll do my best, sir."

"Thank you, Tubb. It would be a kind action on your part."

And Tubb did do his best, and, as a matter of fact, he pulled very well with Billy. For Billy did not crow in the least about having licked Tubb; indeed, he seemed to have forgotten all about that little incident. He treated Tubb with respect, as a fellow who knew more than he did, and his admiration for Tubb, which was evidently quite sincere, quite won Tubb's heart.

"He's not a bad little beast," Tubb confided to Paget.

"Look here, I'm jolly well going to stand by that kid, so none of your rot, you know."

Paget stared.

"My rot!" he repeated. "Your rot, you mean. I stood up for the young beggar from the beginning."

"Oh, don't argue, for goodness' sake!" said Tubb. "I mean what I say, and I'm not going to see that kid put upon simply because he's had bad luck to start with."

Paget grinned, and said no more. He had taken a liking to Billy himself, and he was glad to see Tubb come round, too. In his own Form, there was peace and friendship for the little waif who had found so unexpected an asylum in Greyfriars. One black cloud loomed upon his horizon—Bolsover, the bully of the Remove. And Bolsover was a very painful thorn in the side of Williams, of the Third!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.
News for Bolsover.

"BY Jove!"

Vernon-Smith looked up quickly. He was sitting in Bolsover's armchair, smoking a cigarette—a little habit the Bounder of Greyfriars had. Bolsover was sitting on the edge of the table, reading a letter from his father. The Remove bully had opened the letter with a growl, and the remark that it probably contained some more

"rot" about the "kid" whom his father had sent to Greyfriars. But there was no mention of Billy Williams in the letter, and what it contained evidently had a softening effect upon the hard, cynical bully of the Remove. Vernon-Smith was surprised to see that Bolsover's face was marked with a strange emotion as he uttered the ejaculation and lowered the letter he had been reading.

"By Jove!" repeated Bolsover.

"News?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Yes."

"More ragged kids coming to Greyfriars?" asked the Bounder, with a grin.

Bolsover shook his head.

"No; it's not about that. The pater doesn't mention that young whelp at all. Perhaps he understands by this time that I don't like it."

Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Well, it's time he did," he remarked. "I dare say the kid writes to him and tells him how you get on."

"No, he doesn't," said Bolsover. "I thought that he would. But if he did, my father would write to me about it, and rap me on the subject. The kid doesn't seem to have said a word."

"Hang it all," said the Bounder, "that's decent of him, you know! You've been piling on to him for the past week, and he must know that he could get you into trouble with your father if he told about you. He's not a sneak, at all events."

"Oh, hang him!" said Bolsover.

"Certainly! But as I said——"

"For goodness' sake get off that subject!" said Bolsover, irritably. "Are you going to champion the rotten pauper, like everybody else at Greyfriars?"

"Oh, it's no bizney of mine," said the Bounder, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Let the subject drop, with pleasure! Have a cigarette?"

"No."

"Turning over a new leaf?" sneered Vernon-Smith.

"No, confound you! There's some jolly queer news in this letter," said Bolsover.

"Go ahead, if you want to tell me!" said Vernon-Smith, yawning.

"You remember what I was telling you the first day of the term?"

Vernon-Smith made an effort to remember.

"You told me a lot of things," he said at last.

Bolsover frowned.

"I mean, about my young brother who was lost when he was a kid—stolen by somebody—gipsies, it was supposed."

"Oh, yes; I remember."

"You remember! I said that the detectives were still at work, and that they were leading my father on to suppose that they were on the track?"

"Spoofing him, of course?"

"Well, I thought so," said Bolsover slowly. "I thought it was only a dodge of theirs to get money out of the pater. You know what detectives are. But it seems not."

Vernon-Smith looked interested at last.

"You don't mean to say there's news!" he exclaimed.

"My pater says so," said Bolsover, looking at the letter again. "He says that he's been feeling very hopeful about it, and that a strange chance has brought him in contact with someone whom the detectives had been trying to find."

"Queer!"

"Yes; and he says it's almost certain now, but he will have complete proof in a few days. He believes that my young brother is found; but he won't say any more at present, in case it turns out to be a mistake. He's been fed up on hopes before, you know. Lots of times he's thought he was near getting young Hubert back, and it's turned out a sell."

"Yes, I suppose so. It will be queer if they find him," said the Bounder slowly. "You haven't any other brothers, have you?"

"No. I had one, who died." Bolsover's face was very grave, and there was a soft light in his eyes. "By Jove, I'd give something if young Hubert could be found. It's worried me a lot sometimes, thinking of what he might be going through, you know—living among beggars, or perhaps worse, and not about enough grub, and that sort of thing. I wonder what he will be like?"

Vernon-Smith grinned.

"Something like the beggar-kids your pater takes up and sends to charity homes, I should think," he replied. "Something like that fed in the Third."

Bolsover started.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "How dare you speak of my brother like that!"

"Well, if he's lived among beggars and thieves, I suppose they haven't brought him up like a giddy bishop!" said the Bounder. "Most likely they've brought him up to be a beggar or a thief. It will be jolly good luck if he turns out to be a chap as decent as young Williams, I should say."

"Oh, shut up!" said Bolsover.

Vernon-Smith rose and yawned, and threw the stump of his cigarette into the fire. He crossed to the window, and looked out into the windy Close.

"There's the young bounder!" he exclaimed.

Bolsover joined him at the window. Billy could be seen in the Close, punting a footer about with Paget and Tubb and a couple of Fourth-Form fags.

Bolsover scowled. He thrust the letter into his pocket. Whatever soft feelings it had awakened in his breast were gone now, as he looked upon the boy he hated.

"Queer how he seems to get on with the fellows!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Hang him!" said Bolsover.

Vernon-Smith grinned, and quitted the study. Bolsover remained at the window, looking down upon the shouting fags, for some minutes. His face was dark and scowling. Billy's success at Greyfriars was, as it were, the last straw. If the boy had been universally hated and set upon, Bolsover might have let him alone. But the fact that Billy was growing to be quite at home at the school, and that his Form had taken to him kindly, seemed to Bolsover like a new wrong to himself.

He gritted his teeth as he looked.

(Continued on page 19.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 206.

GREAT NATIONS OF HISTORY.

By Eugen Sandow.

Every boy knows that in all periods of the world's history there have been certain nations which have been so superior to their neighbours that they have earned the title of "Great Nations."

Did you ever trouble to think why one nation out of many should come to the front and rule the world for a time? The problem is very interesting, and the boy who thinks about it will find it by no means a "dry" subject.

More than that, I promise that he will find the result interesting to himself *personally*, for reasons which I will presently show.

Every boy should read history. I know some boys look upon it as a "school" subject, and avoid it accordingly, but in reality there is nothing more profitable to read than history. Not only the history of your own country, but the history of other countries, too. There is a lot to be gained, and, apart from the interest and value of the subject, a knowledge of history will prove useful to you throughout life.

The Greeks, the Romans, the Vikings, the Spaniards, the French, and the English have each in turn been masters of the world. How did they attain their power, and why did the first five nations lose it?

In every case we find the nation which rose to power was one which devoted great care to the culture of physical strength and health, and that loss of power always followed when this training of the body was neglected, and easy, luxurious living was adopted.

Now England is the world-wide power, and it is every true English boy's hope that she will remain so; but whether she does or not depends upon the interest which you boys—the coming manhood of this great Empire—take in your health, strength, and fitness.

You can make yourselves strong, able men, worthy of the wonderful British Empire, the future of which is *in your hands*. No boy that takes a pride in the name of "Briton" can afford to be careless about himself; he must do his best to make himself healthy, strong, and successful.

Health and Strength are so greatly dependent upon food that my first piece of advice to any boy is "Feed wisely."

See that your food is of the right kind; this is all-important.

Avoid foods and beverages that are useless to your body; prefer those which will help you to be well and strong. Cocoa is admirably suited to the needs of you growing lads, and my new "Health and Strength Cocoa" (of which you can now obtain wonderful value in a 3d. packet) is a perfected form of this wonderful brain-and-body builder, which is being drunk by hundreds of thousands of young fellows.

I know the value of Cocoa as a help to physical development, because I used it when I was a young fellow, and found it wonderfully useful to me. That is why I advise you now to drink "Health and Strength Cocoa" regularly for breakfast, tea, and supper. I know every cup will help you onward to vigorous, splendid manhood, because every drop of this delicious food-drink helps to build healthy tissue, strong bone, active brain, and steady nerves.

My "Health and Strength Cocoa" is more nutritious, more digestible, and far more delicious to the taste than any cocoa you have ever tried before.

There is no other breakfast beverage which gives you so much nutriment for your body and your brain and nerves as my "Health and Strength Cocoa."

The Cocoa will furnish your system with the rich materials for growth and muscular development, will feed the tissue of your brain, and help you lay the foundation of success by assisting you to sound health and manly strength.

7½d. is the price of a full-weight quarter-pound tin of this delicious, wholesome, and nourishing cocoa, and 7½d. cannot be spent to better advantage in any other direction.

All Grocers, Chemists, Provision Dealers, and Stores sell Sandow's "Health and Strength Cocoa," in 3d. packets, and in ½lb., ¼lb., and 1lb. tins, at 7½d., 1s. 3d., and 2s. 6d.; but if you have the least difficulty in obtaining it you can secure a supply direct and post free, by sending the necessary amount to Mr. Eugen Sandow, Elephant and Castle, London, S.E.

"By George, I'll take him down yet!" he muttered.

There was a sudden yell in the Close. Billy had kicked the ball, and it had swept on the wind right for the entrance of the School House. At the same moment, Wingate, of the Sixth, came out.

Biff!

The whizzing football caught the captain of Greyfriars on the chest, and he slipped on the School House steps, and sat down quite suddenly.

In a moment the fags were scattering. Billy stood undecided whether to run or to tell Wingate he was sorry. The captain of Greyfriars jumped up, red with anger.

"Who did that!" he roared.

"I'm sorry, guv'nor," said Billy.

Wingate stared at him.

"Did you kick that ball at me, Williams?"

"I didn't go for to do it, guv'nor," said Billy.

"Don't call me guv'nor!" snapped Wingate. "Call me by my name, if you must call me anything!"

"Yessir."

"And don't call me sir, you young ass!" growled the captain of the school.

"No, sir—I mean, Wingate!" stammered Billy. "I—I'm sorry, sir—Wingate! I didn't go for to kick the ball at you. The wind caught it."

"Oh, never mind," said Wingate. "It's all right."

And he walked on.

Billy picked up the ball, and started it with a drop-kick, and ran after the scattered fags.

Bolsover clenched his hands.

He had been expecting to see the Greyfriars captain box Billy's ears right and left, but it had not happened. Billy's luck had held good again. How was it that the street-arab had such luck?

"Let him wait a bit, that's all!" muttered Bolsover savagely.

And he turned away from the window.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Intellectual Feast.

"My dear Williams——"

It was Alonzo Todd who spoke. The Duffer of Greyfriars was wearing his most benevolent smile.

The Third had just come out of their class-room, after school, and the Duffer of Greyfriars had waylaid Billy in the passage. He tapped the new fag on the shoulder, with his benevolent smile.

"Ullo!" said Billy.

"My dear Williams, would you care to come to my study?" asked Todd, with a beaming smile.

"Goin' to 'ave a feed?" asked Billy. Billy had already learned to appreciate feeds in the Remove studies. He had been a guest of the chums of the Remove several times already, in the course of his first week at Greyfriars.

Todd coughed.

"Well, no," he replied. "Not a feed in the vulgar sense of the word, Williams; but a feed for the intellectual side of your nature."

Billy looked puzzled.

"Oh!" he said.

"The fact is, my dear Williams, that I have determined to befriend you and help you," said Alonzo Todd. "That, I am sure, is what my Uncle Benjamin would recommend under the circumstances. I am going to improve you, Williams."

"Oh!" said Billy again.

"You have heard, of course, of the potato?" said Todd.

"The tater?" repeated Billy.

"H'm! The potato! A volume my Uncle Benjamin has presented to me contains a history of that valuable vegetable, and a full description of its growth and progress, from the seed to the saucepan."

"Oh!"

"I would improve your mind very much, I think, if I were to read you a few chapters," said Todd impressively.

"Oh!" said Billy.

"In fact, I am determined to improve you!" said Alonzo.

"Will you pray come to my study?"

Billy cast a glance along to the open doorway, and then meekly nodded his head. He knew that Alonzo meant to be kind, and he was a grateful little fellow.

"Thank you werry much, sir," he said.

"Not at all," said Todd. "It is my duty, and I may say a pleasure, too. I am sure that my Uncle Benjamin would approve of the trouble I am taking on your account, my dear Williams. Pray follow me."

Billy followed Alonzo into his study. Todd waved his hand towards the armchair.

"Sit down, my dear Williams."

Billy sat down. There was a cheerful fire in the study. That was something, and Billy put his feet upon the fender and settled himself down comfortably. Todd sat down, and opened his big book, and blinked at Billy.

"In the first place, my dear Williams, the seed is planted in the ground——"

"Yessir," said Billy.

"In the second place——"

The study door opened, and a fat face adorned with big spectacles looked in. It was the other and more famous Billy—William George Bunter. And he blinked round the study through his spectacles, with an expectant air.

"I say, you fellows——"

"My dear Bunter——"

"Ogilvy said there was a feed on in this study," said Bunter, blinking at Todd. "He said you were giving young Williams, of the Third, a treat."

Alonzo beamed.

"So I am, my dear Bunter, so I am!" he exclaimed.

"Ogilvy was perfectly right. You are welcome to share the treat I have for Williams, if you like."

"I'm on!" said Bunter promptly.

And he came into the study.

"I don't mind helping with the cooking," he remarked. "I'm a jolly good cook, you know. I used to do all the cooking in Study No. 1 before I parted with those fellows. They grew so selfish I couldn't stand 'em. What is there to cook?"

"Nothing, my dear Bunter."

"Nothing to cook!" said Bunter, with a disappointed look. "Oh, it's a cold collation, then! Well, I don't mind. After all, ham and beef are all right cold. Is it ham and beef?"

"Certainly not! You see——"

"Well, a cake is all right," said Bunter. "I'm not the kind of chap to turn up my nose at a cake, so long as there's enough of it. Is it a cake?"

"Oh, no! You see——"

"Jam-tarts?"

"Not at all. It is——"

"Doughnuts?"

"I'm sorry there are no doughnuts, Bunter. Really, it is nothing to eat at all.——"

Bunter stared.

"You don't mean to say you've asked me in here only to drink tea or ginger-pop?" he exclaimed. "Still, I'll have some of the ginger-pop, as I'm here. Where is it?"

"There is nothing to drink, my dear Bunter," said Alonzo mildly. "You see——"

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bunter, exasperated. "Nothing to eat or drink! What sort of a blessed feed do you call it, then?"

"A feast for the mind, my dear Bunter."

"Eh?"

"I am going to read some chapters aloud from my Uncle Benjamin's book, 'The Story of a Potato,'" Todd explained. "You are welcome to listen, my dear Bunter, and you can improve your mind at the same time that Williams improves his."

Billy Bunter looked at the Duffer of Greyfriars. If looks could have slain, there would have been a deceased Duffer in the old school on the spot. Words failed the Owl of the Remove. He stamped to the door, and stepped out of the passage, and slammed the door after him with a slam that rang the whole length of the Remove passage.

"Dear me!" said Todd, in surprise. "Bunter seemed to be annoyed about something. Have you been saying anything to annoy Bunter, my dear Williams?"

"Groo!" said Williams sleepily.

"Dear me! He is going to sleep!" Todd bent over the little waif, and shook him, and Billy Williams opened his eyes again. "Williams, my dear fellow, I was reading you the opening chapter of my Uncle Benjamin's book, 'The Story of a Potato, From the Seed to the Saucepan.'"

The fag blinked at him.

"Right-ho!" he said.

"In the first place, my dear Williams, the seed is planted in the ground——"

"Yaw-w-w-w-w!"

"Please do not go to sleep, my dear Williams," said Todd anxiously. "You will improve your mind very extensively by hearing this masterly exposition of the history of that very valuable vegetable, the potato, during its progress from the seed to the saucepan."

"Orright!" murmured Billy.

"I will recommence, my dear Williams," said Todd. "In the first place, the seed is planted in the ground."

And then the Duffer of Greyfriars ran on, and he became so interested in the entrancing subject that he forgot to notice whether Billy was asleep or not.

The fag settled himself more comfortably in the easy-chair,

and soon a low and steady snoring mingled with the droning tones of the reader.

"There!" exclaimed Alonzo, as he reached the end of the chapter. "There! Is it not masterly, my dear Williams?"

Snore!

"Would you care for me to go on with the next chapter, Williams?"

Snore!

Alonzo Todd bent towards Billy. The fag was fast asleep in the armchair, with his mouth open, and snoring away merrily.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "He certainly appears to be asleep. This is indeed very singular."

Todd shook Billy by the shoulder, and the fag opened his eyes and jumped up. He rubbed his eyes, and blinked at Todd.

"I have finished the first chapter, Williams," said Alonzo, in a tone of mild reproach.

"Thank you, sir!" said Billy. "It was werry kind of you, I'm sure."

"I will now read the second chapter if you wish."

Billy executed a strategic movement towards the door.

"Thank you werry much!" he stammered. "I—I couldn't think of troubling you so much—I couldn't really, sir!"

"No trouble at all, my dear Williams. Dear me, he is gone!" exclaimed Alonzo, staring rather blankly at the door, which had closed behind the departing form of Billy Williams. "How very singular! It was kind of him not to wish to trouble me, but I should have been quite pleased to read to him. Perhaps I had better call him back."

But Billy had disappeared by the time Alonzo Todd put his head out of the study.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Failure.

TUBB of the Third came along the Remove passage, with a very dubious expression upon his fat face. Paget was following, looking still more dubious. They stopped outside Bolsover's study, and looked at one another.

"Shall we go in, Tubby?"

"Well, he asked us," said Tubb.

"Lot like going into a giddy lion's den, though," said Paget. "Blessed if I trust Bolsover. What does he want to ask us to tea for?"

"He said he would like our company."

Paget sniffed.

"That was only gammon, of course."

"Might be gammon as far as you're concerned," said Tubb. "I don't see why a fellow shouldn't like to have me to tea."

"Blessed if I see why he should!" said Paget, with a most unfavourable look at Tubb.

"Look here, Paget——"

"Look here, Tubb——"

The study door opened. Bolsover of the Remove looked out at the two fags, and both of them backed away instinctively. They knew Bolsover.

But the Remove bully wore his most genial and agreeable smile now. Through the open doorway, Tubb and Paget caught sight of a tea-table well spread.

After all, what did Bolsover's motives matter, if he meant business, and really had a good feed for them?

"You fellows are late," said Bolsover genially, speaking quite as if the fags belonged to the Remove, instead of the Third Form. "Come in!"

"Sorry we're late, Bolsover," said Tubb, not caring to explain that the delay was due to a long debate whether it would be safe to venture into Bolsover's study.

"Never mind. Come in!"

Bolsover stepped back, and went round the table. The two fags entered. So long as the table was between them and the Remove bully, and they were nearest the door, they felt that they could make the venture. If Bolsover observed the uneasiness of his two guests, he did not show it.

He lifted the teapot from the grate, and stood it upon the tray. There was no one else in the study; Tubb and Paget were Bolsover's only guests. Considering the smallness of the party, Bolsover had certainly provided a good feed. There were ham, and hard-boiled egg, and cake, and jam, and tarts, and meringues, and doughnuts. The fags' eyes glistened as they looked over the festive board. It was but seldom that fags of the Third had access to a spread like this.

"Sit down," said Bolsover hospitably.

Paget and Tubb exchanged glances again, and sat down. They did not understand it. If anybody had told them an hour before that they would be entertained to a sumptuous tea by the Bully of the Remove in his study, in the most hospitable manner, they would have laughed at the idea. But it was no dream. The tea was real, the ham was real, the tarts were real, and Bolsover's hospitable smiles were apparently real.

"Tuck in," said Bolsover.

"Thanks, I will!" said Tubb.

And he did. Paget was a good second. Paget could not help thinking that the affair would end in a row of some sort, but he saw the wisdom of eating as much as possible before he had to bolt.

"Like the ham?" asked Bolsover kindly.

"Ripping!" said Tubb.

"'Nuff sugar in your tea, Paget?"

"I'll have another lump, thanks," said Paget.

"There you are."

Bolsover began to eat, too; but it was clear, from his thoughtful expression, that he was thinking of something else beside the tea. Paget and Tubb, too, could see that he had something in his mind, and that he had not invited them to the study solely for the purpose of seeing them eat.

"New fellow in your Form this term?" said Bolsover.

"Yes. Young Extry Special," grinned Tubb. "Ham, please."

"Help yourself, Tubb, old man!"

"Thanks; I will."

"Rotten cheek, that whelp coming to a school like Greyfriars," said Bolsover.

"Wasn't it your pater sent him?" said Paget.

"Yes; he's wormed it out of my pater, you see. He's a cunning young scoundrel," said Bolsover. "My pater's a tender-hearted old chap, and people get things out of him."

"Not much like you, is he, Bolsover?" said Tubb innocently.

Bolsover glared for a moment.

"I think all the decent fellows in the school are really up against having that street cad in the place," he said, after a pause to control his feelings.

"Think so?" said Tubb.

"Oh, I'm sure of it! More ham, Paget?"

"No, thanks. I'll try the tarts."

"Please, do."

Paget did.

"I suppose the Third don't like having a street arab in the Form?" Bolsover hinted, after a pause.

"Well, some of them were ratty at first," said Tubb. "I was. But they've got over it. I have."

"But it can't be nice."

"Oh, I don't know! Pass the tarts, Paget, you young pig! You don't want to scoff them all, do you?" said Tubb warmly.

"Plenty here," said Bolsover. "Have as many as you like. I should be glad if you chaps would drop in to tea with me often."

"Good egg!" said Tubb. "We will. Can't you get chaps of the Remove to come in to tea, Bolsover?"

Bolsover nearly choked. Either Tubb was very tactless, or else he was paying off old scores against the Remove bully in a very subtle way. Bolsover decided to ignore the remark. He did not want to quarrel with the fags after the trouble he had taken, though, really, Tubb was dangerously near at that moment to going out of the study on his neck."

"I like cheerful kids in here," said Bolsover. "But, speaking of Williams—of course, his name is not really Williams—he's some beggar's brat without a name at all, as a matter of fact."

"I suppose he can't help that," said Paget.

"I didn't say he could," replied Bolsover, glaring. "But you'll admit that Greyfriars isn't the place for him, and it's an insult to the Third Form to put him in it?"

"May be," said Paget. "I wonder, though, whether perhaps Hay Head knows best. Look here, Tubb, let me have some of those doughnuts, you pig!"

"Look here, Paget——"

"I'll jolly well——"

"Here you are," said Bolsover. "Speaking of Williams——"

"I was speaking of doughnuts," said Paget. "They're jolly good. That chap Tubb is a regular glutton for doughnuts. He scoffed a lot of mine in class this morning——"

"You gave them to me!" said Tubb warmly.

"I meant you to take one or two, not the whole blessed lot!" said Paget. "It was just like you, Tubby, to scoff the whole show."

"They were rotten stale, anyhow!" said Tubb.

"They weren't. I——"

"Ahem!" said Bolsover. "Now, look here, I've been thinking over this matter——"

"About the doughnuts?" asked Paget innocently.

"No, you young ass! Ahem! No; about young Williams."

"Oh, Williams!" said Paget. "Pass the meringues, Tubby. If I have some meringues, if you're going to make a beast of yourself over the doughnuts!"

"Look here, Paget—"

"I think the Third ought to make a set against having a beggarly cad like young Williams thrust upon them," said Bolsover. "What do you fellows think?"

Paget and Tubb exchanged a wink. If Bolsover had been a little keener, he would have seen what they thought. They knew now perfectly well why Bolsover had invited them to his study, and why he was standing them an expensive feed. He wanted to use them back up against the boy he detested—a thing which they had not the slightest intention of doing. Even if they had bitterly resented Billy's presence in the Third Form, they would not have played Bolsover's game for him. They disliked the Bully of the Remove far more than they could ever possibly have disliked Williams.

But the stealthy glance Tubb and Paget exchanged said, as plainly as glances could say, that there was no need to disappoint Bolsover until the end of the feed. If there was to be a row, it was better to finish the meringues and doughnuts first.

"It's an insult to Greyfriars, and an insult to the Third Form especially," said Bolsover. "I think you ought to look at it in that light. If you choose to take any steps to get rid of young Williams, you can depend on me to back you up. Look here, why don't you rag him till he's sick of the place?"

"Ahem!" said Paget.

"H'm!" said Tubb. "Pass the jam!"

Bolsover passed the jam.

"If you fellows took the lead, the rest of the Third would jolly soon follow," Bolsover remarked. "Don't you think so?"

"Yes, rather," said Tubb emphatically. "I'd like to see the chap in the Third who'd refuse to follow my lead, that's all."

"I would!" said Paget.

"I'd punch your head if you did," said Tubb.

"Like to see you do it," replied Paget.

"I'll jolly well—"

"Try the cake," said Bolsover, pouring oil on the troubled waters, as it were. "You two fellows ought to stand together, and the Third would follow you like sheep. You've only got to make up your minds to it, and you could make young Williams so sick of the place that he'd be glad to bolt."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Well, why not do it?" asked Bolsover.

"I suppose we could," said Tubb, slipping doughnuts and biscuits into his pockets. "I suppose you don't mind if I take a few of these with me, Bolsover, old man."

"Not at all," said Bolsover. "Now, about young Williams."

"He's all right," said Tubb, having finished his tea. "You see, I've rather taken the chap up, and I can't treat him as you suggest."

"Why not?" demanded Bolsover, glowering.

"Well, it would be caddish, for one thing," said Tubb. "Don't you think so, Paget?"

"Certainly," said Paget.

Bolsover contained his temper with an effort.

"I should back you up all along the line," he said. "And—and if you kids were in want of pocket-money at any time, I've always got a little to lend."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure!" said Paget disdainfully.

"You could make Williams feel that life wasn't worth living in the Third, Tubb. You could bother him with his lessons in class, and worry him in the dorm—"

"That would be pretty rotten, wouldn't it?" said Tubb.

Bolsover turned crimson.

"What!" he roared.

"I mean, it would be beastly caddish."

"Oh, Bolsover doesn't understand these things!" said Paget loftily. "He doesn't understand a fellow having a sense of honour, or anything of that sort."

"No, I suppose not!" agreed Tubb thoughtfully.

Bolsover could stand no more

"You young cads!" he roared, jumping up. "I'll—"

Tubb and Paget made a wild spring for the door. Tubb's chair went sprawling over the rug, and Paget's teacup was knocked over along the table. Paget tore the door open. Bolsover came round the table at a rush, and stumbled over Tubb's chair, and fell with a heavy bump on the carpet, and yelled.

"Blessed if I'll come to tea with you again, Bolsover!" said Tubb, looking back from the doorway as the burly Removite rolled over. "Blessed if I like your table manners. Do you, Paget?"

"Not a little bit," said Paget.

Bolsover scrambled up. Paget and Tubb fled down the corridor, and Bolsover rushed to the door after them. The fags were going down the stairs at top speed, sliding on the banisters, and they vanished in a second. Bolsover rushed down the passage, and paused. The fags would be safe in their Form-room long before he could reach them, he knew that. The Remove bully returned to his study, grinding his teeth.

His latest move against Billy, planned as it had been with great cunning, had been a dismal failure, and he had the additional satisfaction of knowing that he had stood a feed to the fags, who had been laughing in their sleeves at him all the time, and who were doubtless now retailing the whole affair to the rest of the Third Form, to the accompaniment of roars of laughter at Bolsover's expense. Which was not very nice for Bolsover; but undoubtedly quite as nice as he deserved.

EVERY TUESDAY. The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

In the Hands of the Bully.

"OH, crumbs!"

Billy uttered the ejaculation in dismay.

School was over for that day, and Billy had gone up to the box-room in search of a cricket-bat, with which Paget had offered to instruct him in the elements of batting—the Third Form-room answering the purpose of a cricket-pitch for the nonce. Billy had never played cricket, but he was eager to learn, ready for the time when the summer game should start at Greyfriars, and he had gone cheerfully up to the box-room to look for Paget's old bat. He had lighted the gas in the box-room, and was looking round when Bolsover came in

Billy swung round, and faced the bully of the Remove. There was a cruel grin on the Remove bully's face. Facing Billy, he closed the door behind him, keeping his eyes fixed upon the fag, very much in the manner of a snake glaring upon some terrified animal whom it was about to devour.

"Crumbs!" murmured Billy, in dismay.

"So I've caught you, you young cad," said Bolsover.

"I ain't done nothing!" said Billy.

"You cadging young rotter! You've wormed a great deal out of my pater!" said Bolsover. "You've sneaked into a school where you've no right, and my pater's paying for you. If you had any decency, you'd get out."

"Crumbs!"

"I've been looking for a chance like this for a long time, you young sweep!"

"I know you love, Master Percy," said poor Billy. "Look 'ere, don't you go for to 'it me. I ain't done nothin'!"

"I'm going to lick you," said Bolsover, his eyes gleaming with cruelty. "I'm going to thrash you within an inch of your life."

"Look 'ere——"

"And I'll give you the same again and again, till you get out of Greyfriars," said Bolsover. "Do you understand? You're not going to stay in this school. I won't have you here."

"I can't 'elp it. Mr. Bolsover, 'e sent me 'ere," said Billy. "I didn't go for to ask him for to do it, Master Percy!"

"You wormed it out of him, you rotten beggar!"

"I didn't, really, Master Percy! And Mr. Bolsover, 'e said to me that Master Percy would 'elp me on 'ere, and look arter me!" said Billy.

Bolsover sneered.

"I'll look after you," he said. "I'll look after you in the way you need, you charity brat! Mind, I'm going to get rid of you. If you promise to run away from Greyfriars, and never come back, and never see my pater again, you can go."

"I can't do it, Master Percy."

"You've got to."

"I won't, then."

"Then I'll make you wish you'd never been born—I'll make your life a burden to you while you stay here," said Bolsover.

Billy did not reply. He stood watching the big bully, keeping one eye past him on the door. He was watching for a chance to dodge and escape. But there was no chance. Bolsover reached out behind him and locked the door and took out the key.

Billy's face fell. The Remove bully laughed grimly as he watched the expression upon the fag's dismayed face.

"Look 'ere, Master Percy——" said Billy feebly.

Bolsover put the key in his pocket. Then he advanced upon the fag. Billy tried to dodge, and stumbled over a box, and the next moment was in the powerful grip of the Remove bully. Bolsover had a walking-cane in his hand.

"Now, you young cad, look out for the licking of your life," he said between his teeth.

"'Elp!" shouted Billy desperately.

Bolsover laughed.

"You can yell as much as you like," he said. "Nobody's likely to hear you, here."

He twisted the fag over a trunk with an iron grip on the back of his collar, and the cane rose and fell with cruel force.

Billy gave a wild yell.

"Oh, oh, oh!"

Lash, lash, lash!

"Oh, oh, oh! 'Elp, elp!"

Lash, lash!

Bolsover had promised the poor lad the licking of his life. And certainly Billy received it then. The Head had never flogged a delinquent in his study, with the deadly force and persistence which Bolsover showed in thrashing the lad who had never offended him willingly, and who had come to Greyfriars prepared to look up to him in every way.

"Oh, Master Percy, don't!"

Lash, lash, lash!

"Ow! Oh! 'Elp!"

Billy's struggles grew weaker. He was as an infant in the hands of the powerful junior. There came a shake at the door, and a sharp knocking. Bolsover paused for a moment in alarm. Paget's voice rang through the door.

"Billy! How long are you going to be getting that bat? What's that row about?"

"It's Bolsover!"

"Oh!"

Lash, lash, lash!

"'Elp!"

Paget hammered on the door.

"Open this door, Bolsover, you bully! Let Williams alone! Open this door, you cad!"

"Clear off, or I'll come and give you some of the same medicine!" said Bolsover

Lash, lash!

"Open the door!" shrieked Paget.

"Oh, get away!"

The cane descended still Paget hammered on the door, and yelled through the keyhole.

"If you don't open the door, Bolsover, I'll go and call Mr. Quelch!"

"Rats!"

"Right, then——" Paget's feet were heard on the stairs, and Bolsover stopped, his face changing colour. He knew what would happen to him if his Form-master were called upon the scene. He unlocked the box-room door and shouted after Paget.

"It's all right, you young fool! You can come in!"

Paget ran up the stairs again. He passed Bolsover into the box-room. Billy was sitting upon a trunk, his face deadly white, and twisting with pain. Bolsover looked into the room, the cane still in his hand. He seemed inclined to lay it about Paget.

Paget uttered a cry

"Billy! What has the cowardly brute been doing?"

"What's that?" exclaimed Bolsover furiously.

Paget faced him with blazing eyes.

"Don't touch me, you coward!" he bellowed. "Billy, get up! You're coming to Mr. Twigg! He's going to know what the brute's done! Come on!"

He seized the new fag by the arm, and tried to drag him from the box.

Bolsover turned quite pale.

"So you are going to sneak, you young cad!" he said, between his teeth, more scared now than he cared to show.

"Sneaking or not, Mr. Twigg's going to know what you've done," said Paget. "Come on, Billy; I'll help you!"

Billy resisted.

"Don't, Paget, old man! I ain't goin'!"

"You must!" shouted Paget. "You shall!"

"I ain't goin' to sneak. 'E's a brute, but I ain't going to tell," said Billy. "Don't you pull me, Paget, it 'urts—it 'urts all over!"

"Come and show Twigg."

"I won't!"

Billy evidently meant what he said. He was writhing and twisting with pain, but his brave little heart was loyal. He would not tell tales. Bolsover drew a breath of relief as he passed out of the box-room. He could see that Billy meant what he said, and that he was in no danger of being betrayed. In the box-room Billy moaned in a low tone; the pain was cruel, and Paget raged. Bolsover descended the stairs, and with a scowl upon his brow walked into the Remove passage.

"Bolsover!"

It was Harry Wharton's voice.

Bolsover gave him a savage look.

For the moment he thought that Harry knew of the cruel scene in the box-room, and intended to call him to account for it.

"Well?" growled Bolsover, clenching his hands.

Wharton looked at him in surprise.

"It's all right," he said. "I only called to you to tell you that your father's come."

Bolsover started violently.

"My father?"

"Yes," said Harry, in wonder, "that's all."

"I—I didn't expect him to-day," muttered Bolsover. "Where is he? Thanks for telling me. Is he in my study?"

"Yes; he's waiting for you there."

Bolsover walked away to his study, his heart beating with uneasiness. His father had come—at that moment, of all others! Was there ever such rotten luck? Mr. Bolsover would be certain to ask to see Billy while he was there, there was no doubt about that. And he would find him—so! Find him white and weak, and almost fainting with pain, and would learn who had inflicted that cruel punishment. No wonder Bolsover's face was dark and his heart thumped as he walked towards his study to meet his father.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

His Brother.

"PERCY! My dear boy!"

Mr. Bolsover had been sitting in the armchair in the study while he waited for his son. He rose to his feet as Bolsover entered, and came towards him so quickly and so eagerly that he looked like a young man again.

He did not notice the hesitation in his son's manner. He was evidently occupied by thoughts that moved him strongly.

"Percy!"

"Hallo, dad!"

"My dear Percy, I have news for you," said Mr. Bolsover, his voice trembling, and he took both his son's hands in his own. "Can you guess?"

Bolsover shook his head.

"No," he replied.

"It's about Hubert."

"Hubert?" said Bolsover, looking interested now. "You wrote me the other day——"

"That the search showed every sign of ending in success," said Mr. Bolsover. "I wrote you as I had learned, Percy, from the men I have employed. They were on the track at last, and a strange chance—or, rather, a mercy of Providence—placed the boy in my hands for whom they had been searching."

"What jolly good luck!" said Bolsover.

"Yes, indeed. You understand, the clues had been followed up to a certain point, and there all had ended. The people in whose charge the boy had been had disappeared—one of them had necessity to escape the police—and it was certain that they had changed their names, and hidden themselves somewhere in the heart of the slums of the metropolis, and from that point all trace was lost. But I found the boy by chance, and from him I learned enough to raise my hopes, and he could tell me enough to enable my men to work backwards, as it were, to the point where the trail had been lost."

Bolsover started.

"One of the kids you've picked up and sent to charity homes, do you mean, dad?" he asked.

"Yes."

"It's jolly queer!" said Bolsover.

"I think it is a reward for my having tried to help the poor and unfriended," said Mr. Bolsover. "In my search for poor Hubert I have been able to relieve a great deal of suffering."

Bolsover was silent.

"When I first saw the boy I am speaking of," said Mr. Bolsover. "I was struck by something in his looks."

"That's happened before, dad, you've told me."

Mr. Bolsover nodded, with a faint smile.

"Yes, Percy; I have often allowed my hopes to lead me astray. But in this case I think it was really a natural instinct that helped me. He has eyes the same colour as his poor mother's, and very like hers. He was always like his mother, the dear lad. And from what I learned from him, Percy, I was almost certain that he was the boy; but I said nothing to him. He knew nothing of his parents, nothing of his origin, and I would not raise his hopes. But now all is established."

"I'm jolly glad, father!"

"I knew you would be," said Mr. Bolsover, with a quiver in his voice. "You will have your brother again now."

"What is he like, dad?"

"Poor and uneducated, of course, but a fine fellow—a really fine little fellow, eager to learn, eager to get on," said Mr. Bolsover; "a boy, I think, of whom we shall both have reason to be proud, Percy."

"That's a jolly good thing! Have you told him yet?"

"Not yet."

"Where is he?"

"Here!"

"At Greyfriars?" exclaimed Bolsover, with a start.

"Yes."

"You've brought him with you?" exclaimed Bolsover.

"No; he was here already."

Bolsover looked astounded.

"I don't understand," he said. "How did he get here, then? Who is he?"

"Cannot you guess, Percy?"

"Blessed if I can, dad! I don't know what you're driving at," said Bolsover, in surprise. "Who is he, and where is he?"

"Cannot you guess now, Percy, why I sent that boy whom we call Williams to Greyfriars instead of to a charity home?" said Mr. Bolsover.

"No. I thought it rotten to send him here."

"Percy!"

"Well, I did. This isn't the place for a kid of that class," said Bolsover sulkily. "I should have said so if you'd asked me."

"Percy—Percy!" cried Mr. Bolsover. "Cannot you guess?"

"Guess what?"

"Who this boy Williams is."

Bolsover stared blankly at his father. Like a flash it came to him.

"Father!" he almost shouted. "You—you don't mean—you can't mean——"

"I do!"

"Good heavens!"

Bolsover reeled against the study table, and grasped at it for support. His father looked at him with a kind smile.

"You are a little overcome, Percy," he said. "Wait here; I will bring your brother to you."

"Good heavens!" muttered Bolsover again.

"Compose yourself, my dear lad."

Mr. Bolsover quitted the study. Bolsover heard his voice in the passage, inquiring of some of the juniors. He was asking where Billy Williams was. Bolsover heard him like one in a dream.

It seemed like a dream.

Could it be true?

This boy—this ragged street-arab, whom he had injured, and bullied, and insulted, whom only half an hour before he had beaten cruelly—could he be——

"It can't be!" panted Bolsover.

But he knew that it was so. He understood it all now. That was why the street waif had been sent to Greyfriars. That was why his father had asked him to be kind to the little fellow.

And he——

Bolsover groaned aloud as he thought of it.

What a brute—what a blind brute he had been! How brutal, how cruel he had been to the poor boy! If he had known.

He had not known, but what excuse was that for him? What excuse could there be for his cruelty, for his bullying, for his brutality?

None! He was suffering now the remorse he deserved to suffer.

The study door reopened at last. There were tears in Bolsover's eyes now—tears of shame and regret.

Mr. Bolsover came into the study. His eyes were shining. He led little Billy by the hand. Billy's face was pale, and strange little shivers ran through him every moment. He was still suffering cruelly from the punishment he had received. But he was keeping a stiff upper lip, and he had said nothing to Mr. Bolsover. That much was evident. The lad did not mean to betray his benefactor's son to his benefactor, and repay Mr. Bolsover's kindness by inflicting that pain upon him. What Billy had to endure, he could endure with pluck and fortitude.

"Percy!"

Bolsover turned towards them. Billy looked at him in amazement. What did the bully's softened face mean? What meant the tears that were glistening on his eyelashes?

"Percy, this is your brother!"

Bolsover felt a choking in the throat. He could not speak. Little Billy uttered a cry of amazement.

"Wot did you say, sir?" he exclaimed.

"My dear, dear lad," said the old gentleman, almost breaking down, "this boy, my son, is your brother."

"Oh, sir!"

"You never know a father," said Mr. Bolsover. "You have found one now. It is all discovered and proved. Billy, dear lad, I am your father."

Billy staggered.

"My father?" he muttered.

"Yes, yes."

Billy's eyes turned upon the bully of the Remove.

"And 'e's my brother?" he muttered.

"Yes, your elder brother."

"Crumbs!"

That was all Billy could say. Bolsover burst into a cry.

"I—I—I'm sorry!" he panted. "Williams—I—I mean Hubert—I never knew—I hadn't an idea! I—I'm sorry."

Mr. Bolsover looked amazed.

"Sorry!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean, Percy? What have you to be sorry about?"

Bolsover groaned.

"I've been a brute to him," he muttered. "I—I hated him because you sent him here, and—and I've been a brute to him."

Mr. Bolsover's brow grew very stern.

"Percy, how could you—how could you?"

"I—I didn't know!" The tears ran down Bolsover's cheeks. "Hubert, kid, I'm sorry. If I'd only known—if you'd only told me, father! But—but it's not too late now. I'll show that I'm sorry—Hubert—my brother!"

His father's face softened.

"That is enough," he said. "Let the past be the past; do not think of it again. You have found your brother. Hubert, give him your hand."

Billy hesitated a moment, and then held out his hand frankly and freely.

"I'm jolly glad!" he said simply.

* * * * * * *

It was a nine days' wonder at Greyfriars.

That the little waif of the street should find his father at all was surprising; but that his father should turn out to be the rich philanthropist who had rescued him from poverty was more surprising still. But that Billy Williams, of the Third, was the brother of Bolsover, the bully of the Remove, his bitter enemy ever since he had come to Greyfriars, was the most astounding thing.

In all the studies and in all the Form-rooms nothing else was talked of.

Fellows wondered how Bolsover would take it.

Bolsover took it very well. The bully of the Remove was little liked, but the fellows who liked him least had to admit that he was undoubtedly glad to have found his lost brother again, even though that brother had proved to be the little waif he had been so "down" upon.

"The beast isn't such a beast after all, you know," Bob Cherry remarked in No. 1 Study; and No. 1 Study agreed with him.

In the Third Form, Billy—or Hubert Bolsover, as he was now called—was quite a hero. His romantic history took the fancy of the fags very much.

"Blessed if I shall ever get used to calling you Bolsover minor, Billy!" said Tubb. "But I'm jolly glad of your good luck. Rather rotten having Bolsover of the Remove for a major, though, ain't it?"

To Tubb's surprise, Bolsover minor, alias Billy Williams, clenched his fists.

"Don't you go for to say anything agin my brother," said Billy, "or you and me'll quarrel."

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Tubb.

"My brother's all right, and don't you forget it," said Billy.

Tubb laughed.

"All serene!" he replied. "Perhaps you're right. Anyway, it's a jolly good thing you think so."

And after that the fags were careful not to say anything in Bolsover minor's hearing to the detriment of Bolsover major. In spite of all that had passed, the cock of the walk in the Remove had one unfailing champion, and that champion was Bolsover's brother!

THE END.

"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 Parairu, a Cuban, and Estebian Gacchia, 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 Parairu and Gacchia assume control of the airship.

Ferrers Lord wins the race by 14hrs. 28mins., and finds at the Pole a beautiful city called Shazana, inhabited by a strange race of people, and governed by a king named Wattmooc.

When the airship arrives, the papers certifying that the race has been truly and fairly won are signed. Estebian Gacchia, who is a bitter enemy of the Chinese prince, captures Ching-Lung and takes him on board the Cloud King. Ferrers Lord and Gan-Waga set out, separately, to rescue him. The three meet in an ice cave, and plan to capture the crew of the Cloud King. Ferrers Lord and Gan-Waga stay in the cave, and capture four of them, while the fifth, seeing the fate of his comrades, turns to flee, and finds himself looking down a revolver held by Ching-Lung.

(Now go on with the story.)

A Batch of Prisoners!

"Hands up, my darling, and right-about-face! Thank you! Quick march!" cried Ching-Lung coolly.

"I—"

"Never mind about 'if,' my son!" chuckled Ching-Lung. "I see you understand plain English. Well, go hon, as they say, and turn out your toes! I wouldn't like to hurt you; but I'm not used to firearms. I think I've got the right end pointed at you. And I read in a book about shooting that if you pull the trigger of a loaded revolver the thing is sure to go off. I know I shall jump if it does—I always jump if I hear a bang. Funny, isn't it? Why, your back view is ever so much prettier than your front view! What a pity your face spoils it! Do get along, please; I'm sure this wretched thing will explode!"

"Hang you!"

"Hush! That's naughty! Go on, and don't be rude!"

He drove his prisoner forward until he was barely a yard off the face of the cliff.

"Do you mean to force me over?" asked the man, white to the lips.

"Not at all! Turn to the right! Now halt!"

Ching-Lung caught the bar and looked down.

"Coo-ee! Coo-ee!"

"Ching-ee!" came Gan-Waga's answer.

"Have you bagged 'em?"

"Four of 'em, my boy," said Ferrers Lord.

He stepped out of the cave and looked up, smiling.

"And I've got two more. I counted wrongly. I've got one tied up; this happy-looking gent is the other. Have you got your ropes?"

"Yes."

"Then send Gan up to truss up this beauty—if he's not too fat to climb. Come on, you grinning hyena, and perform the natural duties of your tribe—the monkey tribe!"

"May be monkey tribe," chuckled Gan-Waga; "but no' got tails like you! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, candle factory, and don't talk.

Gan-Waga pressed his feet against the ice, and, seizing the rope, absolutely walked up the face of the cliff, to Ching-Lung's intense admiration. His Highness helped him over the ledge, and patted him on the back. Gan-Waga was breathless, but his oily face glowed with delight.

"Got no rope, Ching," he said.

"You brainless mass of value-oil, how did you arrive here then? Yank it up, and hack a piece off the end for the gentleman's bracelets."

"Good 'nough!" gurgled Gan-Waga. "Not tink ob dat. Feel happy now. Wot a funny face!"

"Well, he doesn't look as if he liked it, does he? Never mind his face. He can't hurt us with that much, unless we are silly enough to look at it, my Waga-Waga. Rope up his little fists. Stick them out, please, sir. We're much obliged."

The Spaniard submitted sullenly. He had given in. There was no hope now that his comrades had been taken. He held out his arms, and the Eskimo knotted his fists securely together. Gan-Waga was quite an artist in knots.

"Gan-Waga, my prince of string fasteners," said Ching-Lung, "accept a cigar."

Gan-Waga pocketed a cigar, which Ching-Lung removed the moment his back was turned.

"That's three or four I've given you to-day," said the prince. "Have another one?"

"Good 'nough; like them. Like hundred and tousand. Butterful—tanks!"

He took the cigar. It left his pocket, accompanied by two others, all unnoticed by him. Ferrers Lord was pacing in front of the cave backwards and forwards. It was fine, cold, and much lighter.

"Your orders, royal sovereign!" said Ching-Lung. "Command the servant to whom you pay no wages. What's the best thing to do. It will be a dickens of a job to get those chaps up here!"

"So I think, and I dare not leave them. Throw the rope down, please."

He emerged from the cave, carrying the rifles and revolvers of the prisoners. He tied them to the rope, and Gan-Waga hauled them up.

"I think you had better go and try to signal the Lord of the Deep."

"That's just my own idea."

"Well, go, my boy. Bring about five men and a sledge. We'll take them over to Shazana until we can make up our minds what to do with them. Thurston won't go far away, and it's getting much too cold to stay here. Gan-Waga will watch the fellow. Good luck!"

Ching-Lung was treading on air. He quickly reached the beach, and looked out on to the placid sea. What a magic contrast to the dim peaks that towered beyond him, and the wild desolation of ice and snow beyond.

He searched the rippling waters in vain. Seals and birds alone seemed to people it. Then something round and glistening rose above the water. It was the glazed conning-tower of the Lord of the Deep.

Ching-Lung danced, shouted, waved his arms, and snapped off his revolver. They had seen him. The whole vessel came into sight. He saw black figures on her low deck. They were getting out the launch. With a yell of delight Ching-Lung rushed into the sea, and flung himself forward with quick overarm strokes. Only Gan-Waga could have kept pace with him. The launch raced to meet him, Thurston and Van Witter, standing in the bow, Prout at the helm.

"Hurrah!"

"Hurrah—hurrah!" came an answering cheer from the launch and the Lord of the Deep.

"Hip, hip!" yelled Ching-Lung, raising himself in the water. "Throw me a match; I'm drowning. If you've not got a match, shy the cork of a whisky-bottle. No, never mind the cork; throw the whisky. That will support me better. I say, this water is quite wet. Oh, I've caught a crab! Steady on with my curly locks!"

They were howling and yelling themselves hoarse. It was against orders to bring the Lord of the Deep any nearer the shore, and Maddock, who had been left in charge, was dancing a wild and dangerous hornpipe on the top of the conning-tower. Van Witter was bawling out one of those hideous Yankee Varsity cries, which go "Rah-rah-rah-rah-rara-rats!"

Everybody was yelling, and when Thurston seized Ching-Lung by the pigtail, and lifted the prince's grinning face into view, the babel was deafening.

"Let go!" roared Ching-Lung. "Hit him in the ribs, Van Witter, before he scalps me! What-ho, Thomas! What-ho, everybody! Run home and get the mangle for me. Don't pull my arm out of joint, or squash my hand to a pulp. Out of the way, Tom, and let me get hold of the tiller. We want a sledge."

"What for?"

Ching-Lung looked round at the beaming faces. If he had not been wet they would have torn him to pieces.

"What do you think I want a sledge for—to go black-berrying with?"

"No; but tell us," said Thurston, "where have you been? What has happened to you? Where's Lord?"

Ching-Lung sighed.

"Why don't you write the things down, Rupert? Give me a chance. Hallo, is that a circus?"

They turned their heads, and burst into a roar of laughter at the sight of Maddock dancing on the roof.

"Mind you don't fall, cocky!" shouted Ching-Lung. "What did I tell you? Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

They shrieked as the bo's'un slipped. There might have been an accident, resulting in the breaking of a limb, for Maddock could not recover himself thoroughly. However, he recovered himself sufficiently enough to turn the fall into a clumsy dive, just managing to clear the deck, and striking the water with a tremendous splash.

He came up, red in the face, but happy, and swam to the side of the launch. There were more howls of mirth as Ching-Lung patted him a good two feet under water.

The rest of the crew had manned the side, and were cheering themselves hoarse, and waving their caps. Ching-Lung shook himself, shook hands with everyone, and closed his ears to the babel with his fingers.

"Order, please—order!" he wailed. "It's like a dog-fight! Hurrah—hurrah!"

"Oh, dry up, lads!" cried Ching-Lung. "I want to tell you some news!"

At once there was a breathless expectant silence. They knew by his beaming face that the tidings must be good.

"Out with it, Ching!" said Thurston eagerly.

"Well, the news is that I'm confoundedly wet, and I'm going to change my clothes."

There were loud groans of disgust. Ching-Lung made a dart for the companion, but Thurston seized his pigtail just in time.

"Now, you little villain, out with it, or I'll shake you to a jelly!"

"Come on, old chap!" pleaded Van Witter. "I reckon you're keeping us on thorns!"

"Don't I wish I could always be on thorns! Look what a saving it would be in the bill for rations! If you said I could keep you on thistles, I could understand it. The natural food for the moke, or donkey, is the succulent thistle, and as you all belong to the tribe——"

He dived into the companion again, but Prout was guarding that. Ching-Lung sighed.

"Gentlemen," he said, "as you interfere with the liberty of the subject, and I am contracting rheumatics, I will tell you the truth—the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We have captured the Cloud King, and all its blackguardly crew."

Then caps went into the air, and cheer after cheer went ringing across the blue water.

How the Cloud King was Boarded and What They Found.

The sledge sped merrily up the snowy ravine, the dogs barking joyously, the great whip cracking like a succession of pistol-shots. Ching-Lung, Thurston, and Van Witter were on the sledge, and Tom Prout and his men floundered along behind, shouting and laughing.

"Yi-yi-yi-hi!" howled a voice.

"Pip-pip!" roared Ching-Lung.

Gan-Waga was standing on his head close to the edge of the precipice, and spreading out his legs like a pair of enormously fat compasses. Ching-Lung slowed down until Prout and his companions reached him, and then the Eskimo became the target for a shower of snowballs.

He seemed to suddenly lose his balance, as a snowball, hurled with deadly accuracy by Ching-Lung, hit him on the chest. Gan-Waga toppled backwards, and, with a shrill scream of horror, vanished over the edge of the cliff.

They stopped dead, trembling and aghast, and deathly white. Gan-Waga would be battered into a shapeless mass on the jagged ice below.

Their horseplay had ended in a terrible tragedy. Ching-Lung reeled forward, and peered over the edge, dreading to see the mangled body below.

"Den up! came wid my little lot!" gurgled a husky voice.

And Ching-Lung saw the grinning face of Gan-Waga about a foot from his own.

"You bounder!" roared the prince. "You nearly frightened the life out of us! We thought you'd got bashed into mincemeat. You want murdering! Here the villain is, boys!"

Shaking with laughter, Gan-Waga scrambled up. They called him all sorts of insulting names, and the more they tried to insult him, the more he giggled.

"Made you feel funny, hunk? Ha, ha, ha! You not tink ole Gan chumphead 'nough to fall over cliff, and not have tight hold of rope, hunk? Not much. Make ole Thomas's face go white, like suet. Ha, ha, ha! Joe Suetface, too! Oh, butterful—butterful! I laugh a lot. Ho, ho, ho, ho—ow!"

Prout kicked him, and, amid yells of mirth, Gan-Waga suddenly stopped laughing, and danced about, clutching the injured part. Then he howled "Ow!" again, as Ching-Lung planted another good-natured but painful kick on the same spot. The men relieved their overstrained feelings in the same manner, and told him that he ought to be ashamed of himself. Gan-Waga wanted to fight Joe, the carpenter. He said he did not mind being kicked with feet of the usual size, but he objected strongly to being hammered with boots the size of Joe's, which were as big as a young canoe.

"Why, you insulting candle-chewer!" roared the indignant Joe.

"They're only number twelve!"

"He means he could get twelve ordinary feet into them," said Ching-Lung. "What do they say—'three feet one yard'? In Joe's case, it's two feet one cricket-ground. Anyone who wants to fight has got to fight me. Shake hands, and be friends. 'Birds in their little nests agree,' as the bard remarks, and it is a shameful sight when children of one familee yank off their coats and fight. How wicked 'tis to come to blows, and bash each other on the nose! Oh, better far the gentle kiss——"

"Draw it mild, old chap!" drawled Van Witter. "I guess we don't want any of that sweetstuff round here. Turn it off at the meter, and spare our reason. We can't stand it."

"Sir," grinned Ching-Lung, "your soul is too small to appreciate poetry. Go home! Now, lads, get that drill moving. We want a pot-shot and water. Co-pe!"

Ferrers Lord emerged from the cave, and looked up at them with a smile as he leaned on his rifle. He was greeted with ringing cheers. Thurston scrambled down the ropes, and the others followed.

The cheering encouraged the dogs to bark their loudest. In the delirium of the moment Gan-Waga and Joe buried the hatchet by dividing a plug of tobacco between them, and swore everlasting friendship.

Prout worked the foot-drill he had brought with him, and another iron bar was slipped in beside the first. To this a short rope ladder was fastened. Then Ching-Lung and Prout descended.

Four carried out the prisoners one by one in his powerful arms, and one by one they were drawn up, and placed side by side on the sledge. All except Jose was absolutely livid with terror. They had given no mercy, and they expected none from Ferrers Lord.

"I reckon," said the Yankee, as he shook hands with the millionaire, "you've pulled off about the biggest scoop on record. Yes, sir, you've scooped the pool!"

"Not I, old friend. We must thank Ching-Lung."

"Ching-Lung! Why, the little hypocrite led us to think it was all your work."

"That's Ching's way!" laughed Ferrers Lord. "The laddie is a poor hand at blowing his own trumpet. All the credit is due to him. Of course, chance helped us, or a foolish blunder, rather. I must say Ching-Lung seldom makes mistakes; but if all his mistakes were to turn out like this, I should be sorry to see him do anything properly!"

"Well, that's kind of cautious!" drawled the Yankee. "You must spin us the yarn to-night, for I mean to write that book. Now, lad, give me that camera!"

Van Witter dived below the tarpaulin-cloth of his camera, and secured a couple of photographs of captors and captives. He was full of the great book he was going to write, and could talk of little else.

The whip cracked, and the sledge advanced. They found the half-breed still deep in slumber beside the fire. There was a slight delay, for Van Witter insisted in photographing him also. They went on and reached the shingle beach, which was only lightly sprinkled with snow.

The sledge was useless here, except as a litter. It was very light, and they used it for that purpose, and carried the prisoners to the launch. The little vessel churned away with Joe at the helm. The men on the Lord of the Deep watched them eagerly.

"And now for the Cloud King," said the millionaire.

They were standing below the four ice pillars which sustained the queer table-like rock. The men had gone to the launch vessel by means of a number of iron ladders, fastened together by ropes.

Ching-Lung was the first to ascend the ropes. He ran up in such a reckless way that some of the men turned giddy. But he gained the summit in safety and disappeared. Ferrers Lord followed him, and then came Thurston. Van Witter followed with his precious camera strapped to his back.

One tent still stood on the flat rock. Ching-Lung stepped out of it, and silently beckoned the millionaire.

"Don't come Rupert!" said the millionaire, who had seen Ching-Lung's face.

Ching-Lung held up the flap of the tent.

"Look!" he whispered.

Ferrers Lord raised his hat and entered the tent. The cold was terrible, and the light dim. On the two beds lay the bodies of Gomez Paraira and Estebian Gacchio. Their faces were set and rigid, and their eyes glared up at the canvas with empty, idiocy glassiness.

"Dead!" murmured Ferrers Lord. "Frozen to death!"

Ching-Lung sighed, and gently drew the blankets over the haggard faces.

"Poor fellows!" he said. "But it is not a hard death, is it, Lord?"

"They say not. I do not know. Tell Thurston he may come in."

Ching-Lung slipped away, and Rupert joined the millionaire.

"They are both dead!" said Ferrers Lord.

"Both?"

"Yes. The grim hand of eternal ice has strangled the life out of them.

Thurston nodded.

"It is better perhaps," he said slowly. "What would you have done to them?"

Their eyes met

"This is hardly the time to ask such a question," drawled the millionaire with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I will give you a truthful answer, Rupert. I should have taken the law into my own hands, and hanged them both. We had better bury them. Whatever they have been, we cannot leave them here for the seabirds to tear and devour. Yes, I think it was better, after all."

He turned away, and began to walk up and down outside with his hands clasped behind him

Meanwhile, Ching-Lung had boarded the Cloud King. The shell he had fired had practically wrecked her. The explosion had absolutely torn away the deckhouse, and the ironwork, twisted into strange shapes lay strewn about. A jagged hole gaped in the deck, and through it could be seen the engines. The Cloud King would never fly again—that he knew. The companion was so utterly choked with rubbish that it was impassable. A rope tied to a stanchion, and dangling in the gangway, showed how the men had managed to reach the deck. Ching-Lung went down it hand-over-hand. Empty bottles lay everywhere. It was the same in the corridor as in the elegant state-room. Cards covered the floor, mingled with silver and gold coins. Evidently they had been gambling heavily as well as drinking heavily. The beautiful carpet was stained with brandy and wine, and many of the valuable pictures hang ng on the walls were scratched, showing that matches had been struck on them.

It was a scene of wanton ruin and destruction, pitiful and ghastly.

"Wild beasts!" muttered Ching-Lung "The vessel must have been accursed! Poor little chap!"

He had glanced into a birdcage. A little ball of yellow feathers lay rolled up in the bottom. The poor canary had died of hunger and thirst, for it had neither a grain of seed nor a drop of water.

"I'll see the last of this," muttered Ching-Lung, "before this day is out. I'll blow you up!"

"What's that, Ching?" drawled the millionaire's voice.

"I said I'd blow this accursed vessel up!"

"And so you shall," said Ferrers Lord; "but not yet. Her voyage is finished. Still, we had better take the store out of her, and waste nothing. I must also make a plan of her, and find out her great secret—her motive power. I have been looking her over. The idea of her construction is similar to my own, but it is crudely worked out. I can improve upon it easily, and build an aeronef that will be practically perfect. I have a shrewd idea that she is propelled

by air compressed into a liquid state. Will you come with me?"

"No, old chap. The place chokes me. I only want to find her explosives."

"Very well, then," said Ferrers Lord. "I will have her cleared at once."

Pzout obtained a flag and signalled to the Lord of the Deep for a light crane and more help. In three hours the work was done, and the Cloud King's stores were safe on board the Lord of the Deep.

Two graves were dug side by side near the sea. Gomez Ferraris and Estebian Gacchio were laid there to sleep their last sleep. Ferrers Lord was not present.

As the burial party turned away, Ching-Lung's heart smote him.

"It seems like burying a couple of dogs, Rupert," he said.

"That's true, Ching."

"I don't like it, old chap. I hate it! Whatever they were, they were both soldiers. Right about there, lads, and bring your rifles!"

The men obeyed.

"Line up!" said Ching-Lung.

Six men formed up in a row, and three volleys were fired over the grave.

"Now get aboard," said the prince, "and wait for me."

He ran back towards the ladder and struck a match. A long fuse dangled down. It began to hiss and splutter. Ching-Lung sped back, and sprang into the launch.

"Full speed, Tom!"

The little vessel darted over the blue sea. They gazed back with eager eyes. A mighty wave of white flame burst out among the peaks, and a column of smoke rushed up towards the sky. Then a wild, thunderous roar went crashing and bellowing among the cliff, and fragments of steel hissed down into the sea.

"She's gone!" said Thurston.

"And luck go with her," said Ching-Lung. "She has wrought mischief enough."

There was silence until they reached the Lord of the Deep. Then an injured voice drawled.

"Waal, of all the cankerous pack of ill-natured galoots I ever stuck in my natural existence in this vale of tears, you're the worst!"

"What's the matter, Mr. Van Witter?" asked Thurston.

The Yankee was tearing his hair.

"Wrong! Waal, that's a pretty question, or I'm durned! Why didn't you tell me you were going to blow the thing up? Why, I've missed the snapshot photograph of a lifetime!"

Then everybody laughed.

"Never mind, old chap!" grinned Ching-Lung. "Keep your fur down, and don't worry. Jupiter, I'm glad to get back!"

How Ching-Lung Became a Knight-Errant, and Gan-Waga Became His Trusty Squire.

"Lotari! Lotari!"

The loud shrill cries of the warriors of Shazana rudely awakened the crew of the Lord of the Deep the night of the destruction of the airship.

"Lotari! Lotari!"

As the cry was repeated, headed by Ching-Lung, they rushed on deck. All Shazana was awake, for the foe was at her gates.

Ching-Lung and the crew of the Lord of the Deep hurried ashore. Through the gloom came the sound of hurrying feet, the rattle of spears, the twanging of bowstrings, and, above all, the shrill cry that called her sons to battle.

"Lotari! Lotari!"

The shouts lessened, and the gates were shut. Lights appeared behind them, and sandals rattled upon the flags. In the glare of a hundred torches, Vathmoor, King of Shazana, descended some steps, battleaxe in hand, followed by his bodyguard of men, two hundred of the pick of Shazana warriors.

"Stand back, lads!" shouted Ching-Lung.

The gates opened, and the troops marched through, keeping step and time perfectly.

"A neat-looking lot," said Van Witter. "Hallo, Sir Clement! I've hardly seen you all the evening. What a fellow you are to hide yourself! Ching, have you ever thought of guessing how many people there are in this island?"

"Not more than fifty thousand."

"And how many women and children out of that. I want to get at fighting strength."

"You must reckon old men, too, then, my son," said Ching-Lung. "I think Vathmoor ought to be able to put twelve thousand warriors into the stricken field. They've stopped their yelling, it seems. Where, then, are our friends, the dwarfs? Is it a false alarm or not? There go the last of the pretty sodgers. Now, lads, move your leather feet-

cases, and let us discover what it's all about. I'm dying for a fight. The doctor says it's the one and only thing to save me being planted beneath the daisy roots."

"The onion roots, you mean," said Thurston. "We could sit on your grave peeling them, then we'd be certain to weep for you. By Jove! Is the place on fire?"

They paused on the quay. The whole sky shone crimson in the glare of a hundred blazing beacons. Ferrers Lord sprang from the deck of the submarine.

"This looks exciting," he said.

The men saluted.

"It does look exciting," said Van Witter. "But what is it all about? Is it the real thing, or only a kind of fire-drill to keep them in training?"

"The real thing, I fancy. I was on deck just now, when a galley passed me, and then the alarm was given. Vathmoor always has several galleys patrolling the mouth of the cavern, like little cruisers, in case the dwarfs should break out. Get aboard, lads! Look after the vessel, Thurston!"

He walked towards the square, accompanied by Van Witter and Ching-Lung. Sir Clement Morwith elected to go with Rupert. Gan-Waga, the most favoured member of the crew, decided that the order to embark did not include himself, and limped along behind Ching-Lung.

The square, lighted by an enormous bonfire, was packed with warriors. Vathmoor stood in the centre, surrounded by his officers. As his orders were given, small bodies of men detached themselves and marched away in different directions. Galleys were sweeping down the channel.

Ferrers Lord lifted his cap, and bowed to the king. Vathmoor extended his mailed hand gravely.

"Welcome, Chief of the Strangers!" he said proudly.

"What think you of my warrior people?"

The millionaire glanced at the dense row of soldierly figures, the glistening shields and flashing spearheads. The men were not tall, but they looked hard and muscular. They were well-drilled. He smiled.

"A gallant army, king," he said.

"By Jove, old chap," said Ching-Lung, "are we going to see fighting of the old-fashioned sort?"

"I suppose so. The kind of fighting that took place at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. First empty your quiver, shoot your last shaft, and then shield to shield and spear to spear!" Again he turned to the king, who was muttering to an officer. "Vathmoor, my friend, why all these preparations?"

Vathmoor's eyes sparkled.

"The dwarfs are hungry, Chief of the Strangers. There is a famine in their dark dens. The shoals of fish are late in coming to our seas, and so they starve. They are leaving their pits to attack us, as the bears have before now. My swiftest galley brought the news. They are, perhaps, two leagues away, in a thousand canoes. Ah, chief, you shall see us fight!"

"Are we to help you, Vathmoor?"

"No, chief, though I thank you for your offer. You are my guests, and it is not fitting that guests should fight. If it goes hard with us, I will ask your aid. You shall watch the fight."

"As you wish, king."

"What does he say?" asked Ching-Lung eagerly. "Are we going to see some scrapping?"

"My friend," said Ferrers Lord, "please try and break yourself of that hideous slang."

"Sorry, old chap! I didn't mean to say 'scrapping.' I mean are we going to join in the mill, to engage in the giddy dust-up, to share the thinning of the barney, to give the fierce foe socks? I wouldn't use slang for worlds. Shall we also put up our dukes and tap the claret of these coming light-weights? Speak!"

"Turn it off at the tap!" said Van Witter.

"What—the claret?" grinned Ching-Lung. "That's just what I want to turn on. Speak, oh silent one!"

"As a matter of fact," answered the millionaire, smiling, "our valuable services are declined, with thanks. You may accompany the troops as a war correspondent, but not otherwise. Vathmoor does not like our guns or thunder-sticks, and he prefers his own methods of fighting. You are thankfully but firmly declined."

"Oh, pip!" answered Ching. "He doesn't know what he has missed. By Jove, I'll go to the war like the minstrel boy! Look at all these bounders in coats of mail and steel helmets—like a lot of supers in a pantomime! And this is the twentieth century! And bows and arrows and tin trousers! Oh, Gan, seize me and hold me tight while I giggle! It's too howlingly funny! Gan, my ton of dripping, dost not thou crave to be a doughty knight of old, with an iron saucepan on thy head, a tin dish-cover on thy chest,

and tin trousers on thy knightly knees? Dost thou not pine to wear thy spurs upon the stricken field, thou fat cater of tallow, and couch a lance for honour and beauty? Does thou not?"

"Like butter best," grinned Gan-Waga, utterly bewildered by Ching-Lung's flow of eloquence.

"Yea, verily; and butter shalt thou have, and my trusty squire thou shalt be. Say, Lord, old chap, ask Vathmoor if he has a suit of mail to lend that would fit me."

The millionaire and Van Witter laughed in chorus.

"I'm not joking," said Ching-Lung. "Do ask him, like a brick. I pine to be a knight!"

Ferrers Lord smiled as he spoke to the king. Vathmoor looked at Ching-Lung, and smiled, too. Then he wrote something on a tablet, which he handed to the millionaire.

"Translate, caitiff, and despatch, or woe unto thee!" said Ching-Lung. "What saith my liege the king?"

"You may go to the armoury in the palace and take what you like. Here is a written permission."

"By my lance and spurs!" giggled the prince. "A goodly king! Gan-Waga, let us hie to the curiosity-shop, and gird on our armour! Deeds of valour shall we do, in sooth! A murrain on thy revolvers, maxims, rifles, and pom-poms! What-ho, without there! Bring me a bowl of sack! Richard is himself again!"

"The hare-brained little rascal!" laughed the millionaire. "Always wild for more folly."

Van Witter lighted a cigar thoughtfully.

"Wal, that's so, Lord," he drawled; "but he generally manages to come out on top."

Ching-Lung hurried to the palace, Gan-Waga, like a faithful and corpulent dog, keeping close to his heels. No sentry guarded either step or doors. All the women and children of Shazana had taken refuge in the temple, where strong walls and sturdy towers would have defied anything except excellent shell fire.

"They seem to have gone out to see a man about a dog," said the prince. "There isn't even a policeman asleep at his post. The question is, where's the armoury? Can you find a finger-post or a guide-book?"

"What's an armoury, Ching?" asked Gan-Waga.

"A place where they keep weapons—pea-shooters, penny squibs, and things."

"Don't know him," said the Eskimo.

"Then I'll introduce him to you when I see him. Good biz! Here comes a two-legged billygoat, with chin whiskers on his face and a tablecloth on. Ho, bearded valet, whither wayest? Approach, thou chin-whiskered caitiff, for I would have a word with thee! How do!"

An old, venerable-looking man approached them. Ching-Lung raised his hand, upon his heart, and bowed low. Gan-Waga imitated him, and the old man answered the salute.

"Chin-whiskers," said Ching-Lung, "what-ho!"

The patriarch bowed again, but not understanding the greeting, remained silent.

"What would you do to a face like that, Gan?"

"Clean knives on it, Ching," said Gan-Waga, with deep gravity.

"Or break coals on it. Here, nut-cracker face, is a sup-ticket. Lead us to the soup."

The old man glanced at the tablet, bowed almost to the ground, and beckoned them to follow. He opened a door, bowed again, and waved his hand around him.

"This is the ironmonger's shop, is it?" said Ching-Lung. "Varlet, thou hast our thanks! We would give thee twopence for lemonade, but, alas, we have the brokers in our house and the rate-collector is waiting for us with a gun. Would that we could give thee a penny for a shave, for I like not thy chin-whiskers!"

Swinging lamps lighted the long room. It was stored with suits of mail, steel caps, with nose-pieces and bars, spears, battle-axes, swords, arrows, and lances. Rows of heart-shaped, square, and circular shields hung from the walls. A few men were arming themselves.

"This is a nice tailor's shop, Gan," said Ching-Lung.

"What we going to do now?"

"Get into a couple of tin suits, my fat one. Look, there's the very boy for me! It will fit like a sausage-skin fits a sausage. What are you smacking your lips for?"

"Sausage!" gurgled the Eskimo. "Sausage butterful 'nough! Love it! Feel hungry."

"Never mind about feeling hungry, tallow factory. Help me on with these kicksies."

(This grand story will be concluded in next Tuesday's number of "THE MAGNET" Library, when the opening instalment of a thrilling new serial story, entitled "Across Trackless Tibet; or, Ching Lung in the Forbidden Land," by Sidney Drew, will appear. Please order this special issue of "THE MAGNET" Library in advance. Price 1d.)

My Readers' Column

NEXT WEEK'S STORY.

The long complete tale of the chums of Greyfriars for next Tuesday will appear under the title of

"THE SCHOOLBOY MONEYMAKER."

By Frank Richards,

and will deal with the exciting events arising from the ingenious schemes put into operation by Fisher T. Fish, the cute American junior, in his energetic pursuit after the nimble dollar. While admitting the Yankee boy's smartness, the juniors of the Remove do not hesitate to show their disapproval of his business methods in the most emphatic manner, and by the time his schoolfellows have finished with him

"THE SCHOOLBOY MONEYMAKER"

is forced to realise that they are quite evens with him, after all.

From This Week's Postbag.

A LETTER FROM ABERDEEN.

My numerous Scots readers have always been particularly helpful and generous in the criticism of their favourite MAGNET LIBRARY. The letter published below is a fair sample of those to which I am becoming accustomed to receiving from loyal chums across the border.

"Aberdeen.

"Dear Editor,—Although knowing that you are a pretty busy man, I have taken the liberty of writing a few lines to you about the good old MAGNET. I have been a constant reader, never having missed a copy, and, although it is years since I left school, I intend to remain so as long as the high quality of its literature is kept up. The moral tone of THE MAGNET is high, and I defy any, though it be a minister himself, to find fault with it. I suppose you will be thinking I have said enough; but I would like to say a few words regarding the author. What has struck me forcibly every week is the wonderful knowledge of human nature Mr. Frank Richards must have. For what a variety of different natures, tempers, moods, and characteristics are shown, in such a lifelike manner, in all the various characters, from Dr. Locke, the dignified Head of Greyfriars, down to Gosling, the porter. May Harry Wharton & Co., Bulstrode & Co., Marjorie & Co., and last, but not least, Alonzo Todd and Billy Bunter, continue to delight the hearts of hundreds of your readers the wide world over.—I remain, yours sincerely,

"J. G."

Thank you, J. G.! I am sure your wish will be echoed by many a reader of our little paper of world-wide fame.

A READER'S PROMISE.

One of my London readers writes me a pleasant little note, in which he tells me how much he has helped me—and incidentally introduced sight of his friends to a source of much enjoyment. In addition, he makes a most generous promise for the future. This is his little note:

"Shepherd's Bush,
"London, W.

"Dear Editor,—I have now been reading THE MAGNET for four years, and I think it is my duty to express my best thanks for all the pleasure I receive from reading your grand school tales. It gives me great pleasure in informing you that in different periods I have lent friends of mine THE MAGNET, and now no fewer than eight of them are constant readers. I promise you, dear Editor, to do my utmost in trying to enlarge the sale of your libraries.—Yours truly,

"G. F."

Many thanks for your help, Master G. G. F.! I have no doubt that you will carry out your promise to the letter, as many another loyal reader is also doing.

THE EDITOR.

Printed and published by the Proprietors at 23, Bouverie Street, London, England. Agents for Australia: Gordon & Gotch, Ltd., Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Wellington, N.Z.; for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd., Cape Town and Johannesburg; Canada: 371, Queen Street West, Toronto. Subscription, 7s. per annum. Saturday, January 20th, 1912.

"THE LANCASHIRE LAD'S INVENTION!"

A Grand, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. By Martin Clifford.

"WINGS OF GOLD!" By Sidney Drew. | A SIMPLE "PRESENT" COMPETITION. Choose Your Own Prizes! | AND A SPLENDID NEW FEATURE!

"The GEM" is a companion paper to "The MAGNET." BUY IT TO-DAY!

The GEM LIBRARY 1D

VOL. 6. No. 206.

1.—THE SCHOOLBOY INVENTOR'S WORKSHOP. 2.—JACK BLAKE & CO.'S STUDY.

NEW BOOKS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Three New Additions to the "BOYS' FRIEND" 3d. Library

NOW ON SALE!

No. 178: "Pete's Emigrants."
A Splendid, New, Long Complete Tale dealing with the thrilling adventures of the famous comrades—Jack, Sam, and Pete. By S. CLARKE HOOK.

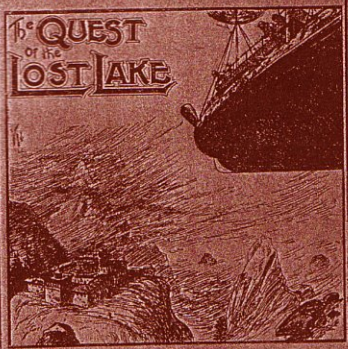
No. 179: "Under the Southern Cross."
A Grand, Complete Adventure Tale, introducing "The Three R's." By REGINALD WRAY.

No. 180: "Paddy Leary's Schooldays."
A Splendid, Complete Tale of School Life. By T. C. BRIDGES.

ASK ALWAYS FOR **"THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3D. COMPLETE LIBRARY.**

REGINALD WRAY'S

GREAT NEW AIRSHIP SERIAL.



Just starting in

THE BOYS' HERALD—1D.

GET YOUR COPY TO-DAY!

£100

will be

GIVEN AWAY

to Readers of This Week's

FUN AND FICTION

ONE PENNY EVERYWHERE

YOU should be "on to" this!!