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No. 1.

Edited by Harry Wharton & Co of Study 1. Greyfriars School.

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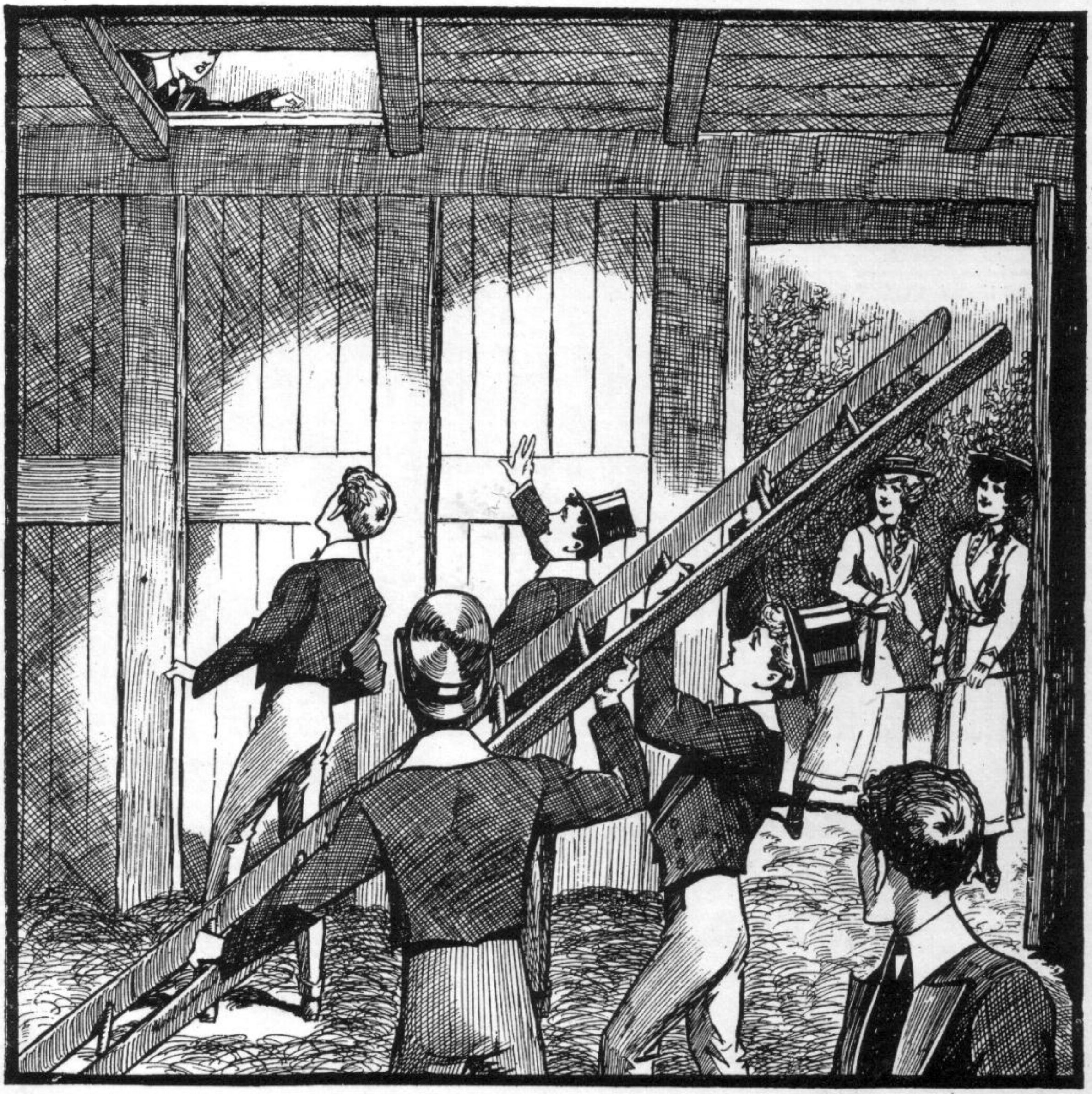

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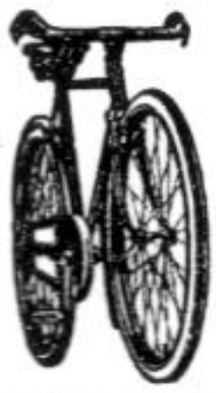

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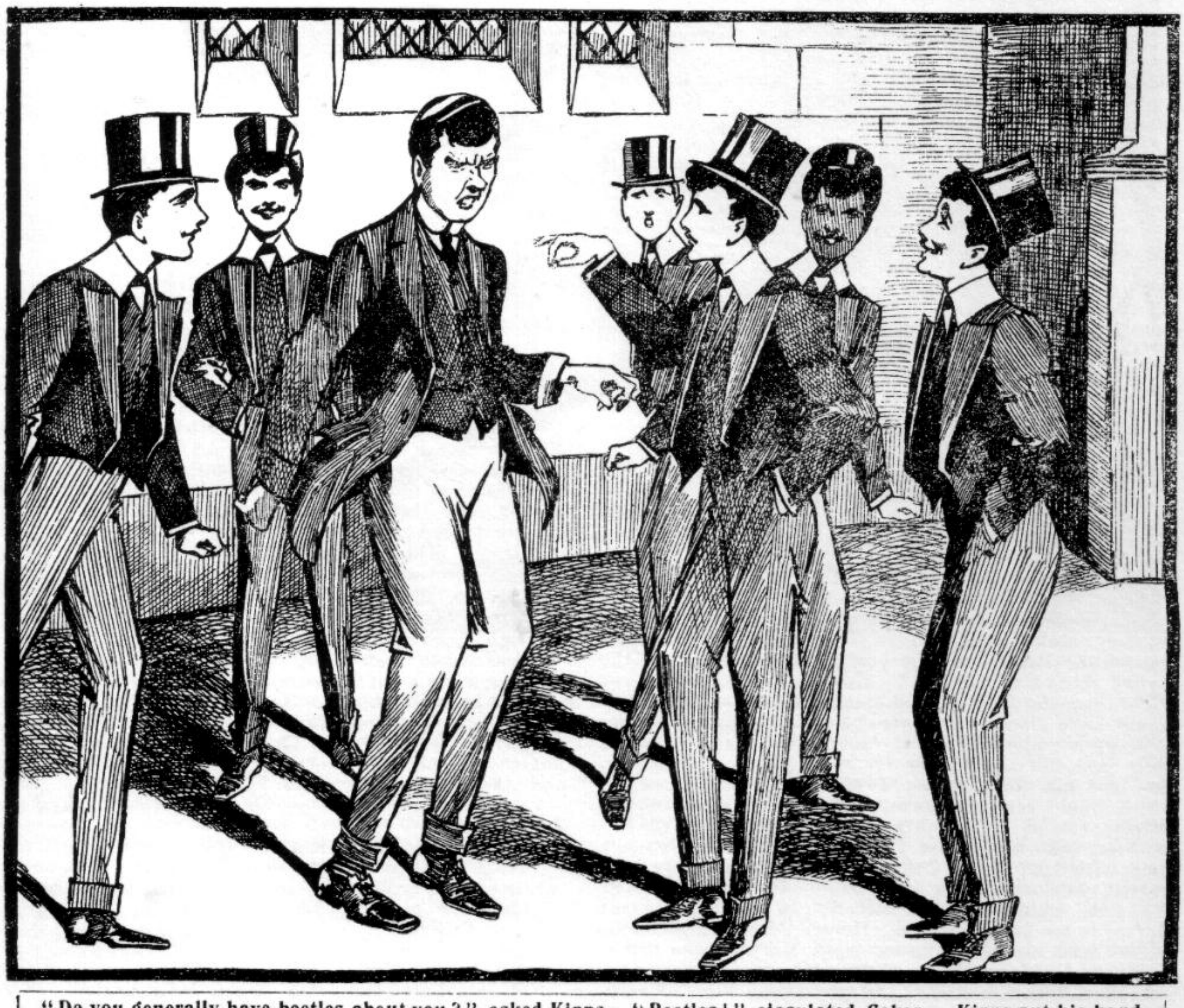

"Do you generally have beetles about you?" asked Kipps. "Beetles!" ejaculated Coker. Kipps put his hand on Coker's waistcoat, and held up a black, hideous, wriggling beetle. Coker turned almost pale. "G-great Scott!" he stuttered. "Was—was that on me? Groogh!" (*See Chapter* 1.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Kipps Saves the Situation.

"MIND, no larks!"

Bob Cherry shook his forefinger at Kipps of the Remove as he uttered that severe admonition.

And Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, chimed in:

"No larks!"

"Oh, come!" said Kipps, with a look of injured innocence. "What a blessed set of suspicious bounders!"

"We jolly well know you and your blessed conjuring tricks," said Bob. "If we take you to tea at Cliff House, you've got to chuck it for this afternoon. Honest Injun, you know"

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove had their cleanest collars and shiniest toppers on, and, generally speaking, were clad in their best bib and tucker. They were going to tea with Marjorie and Clara at Cliff House, and Kipps was going with them. It was a great honour for Kipps, and he appreciated it. And he looked pained at the suggestion that he might play some of

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his conjuring tricks upon such an auspicious occasion. But Harry Wharton & Co. knew him—well. Kipps was a born conjurer; his skill in sleight of hand was wonderful. Often and often he astounded new fellows by finding mice or beetles in their collars, or taking white rabbits out of their hats, or unwinding yards of ribbon from their ears. Even fellows who knew him well were not proof against his tricks

Kipps was the best-natured fellow in the world; but he simply couldn't help it. A fellow who found a gutta-percha frog, exactly like the live article, down his back was sure to get wrathy; and when a chap found his watch ticking in his trousers pocket, or somebody else's watch ticking in his hat, he would go for Kipps at once. Kipps was so humorous that he could never keep quiet for long, and he had been bumped, and ragged, and scragged in vain.

But Kipps really meant to "keep off the grass" this especial afternoon. He wanted very much to go over to Cliff House. So he started with the best intentions in the world.

The Famous Five eyed him rather suspiciously as they sauntered down to the gates. Kipps' skill was so uncanny that they would never have been surprised at anything he could do. Bob Cherry declared that it would not surprise him very much to find another fellow's head on his shoulders, if Kipps was around.

Coker of the Fifth was lounging in the gateway. He nodded quite affably to the chums of the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged a smile. Horace Coker was not wont to be very affable with fags. Indeed, he prided himself upon having a heavy hand with fags. It was, as he said, his system. They could guess the cause of the great Horace's sudden affability.

"Hallo!" said Coker. "Hold on a minute!"

"Well?" said Wharton, as the juniors paused.

"Going over to Cliff House—what?"

"Yes."

"I'm thinking of taking a walk as far as Pegg," said Coker. "I don't mind coming with you."

"You don't mind!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"No; not a bit."

"Well, we do! Good-bye!"

"Look here," said Coker, planting himself in the path of the smiling juniors, "I don't generally walk with fags, as you know. If you don't want me to come to Cliff House, say so plainly."

"So!" said all the juniors together.

Coker looked puzzled for a moment; his mighty brain did not work very quickly. Then he frowned.

"You cheeky young sweeps!" he exclaimed. "If you want a licking all round, you've only got to say the word!"

The Famous Five paused. At any other time they would have charged the great Coker, and strewn him, so to speak, along the dusty road But having donned their best bib and tucker for the visit to Cliff House, they did not want to begin with a rough-and-tumble, which would certainly have spoiled the elegance of the effect.

"Now, run away, Coker," said Bob Cherry. "We don't walk with kids in the Fifth. Run away and play hop-scotch! It's your game."

The Co. hadn't the least intention of taking the great Horace to tea at Cliff House. Horace Coker condescended to look with an approving eye upon Marjorie and Clara, and when they came to see the matches at Greyfriars he sometimes talked to them, and gave them a lot of valuable information about football He was rather surprised that Marjorie and Clara showed no keen desire to pursue the acquaintance. But he attributed it to shyness, and felt that he ought to encourage them. At the tea-table in the Cliff House school-room Coker would have monopolised the conversation, and would have looked daggers and gas-bombs at any junior who had ventured to interrupt him. Naturally, the Famous Five did not consider it "good enough."

"I suppose the young ladies wouldn't object to your taking a friend?" suggested Coker, taking no notice of Bob's remark.

"We're taking one," said Harry—"Kipps."

"Well, I don't mind coming," said Coker. "I've nothing special to do this afternoon. Mind, I don't want any cheek from you. I'd mop up the ground with the whole set of you as soon as look at you. I believe in keeping fags in order."

"I suppose we shall have to bump him," said Wharton meditatively.

"I've told you I don't want any cheek, Wharton."

"Would you mind getting out of the way, Coker?" asked Johnny Bull politely.

"You haven't answered me," said Coker. "What do you say?"

"Rats?"

"Eh?"

"Rats! And many of them!"

"You want a licking?" asked Coker. "All serene! I'm the chap to give you one."

Coker pushed back his cuffs, and the Famous Five prepared for war. Their nice clean collars and shiny toppers had to chance it.

"Hold on!" said Kipps suddenly.

Kipps was staring at Coker's waistcoat. Coker dropped his hands, surprised by the expression on Kipps' face. The Fifth-Former was not so well acquainted with Kipps' little ways as the Remove fellows were.

"What's the matter?" demanded Coker.

"Do you generally have beetles about you?" asked Kipps.

"Beetles!" ejaculated Coker.

"Look here!"

Kipps put his hand on Coker's waistcoat, and held up a black, hideous, wriggling beetle. Coker turned almost pale.

"G-great Scott!" he stuttered. "Was—was that on me? Groogh!"

"Keep still!" said Kipps hurriedly. "There's one on your neck!"

"Oooooch! Get it off!" gasped Coker.

Kipps made a grab at Coker's neck, and showed another beetle in his hand. He made a gesture as if throwing it into the road.

"My hat! He's simply alive with them!" ejaculated Kipps. "Look here—and here—and here!"

Coker stared at him, as if mesmerised, as Kipps took a beetle from under his arm, and then a beetle from his pocket, and then another from his collar. The great Horace turned quite green.

"Grooh! The horrid little beasts!" he gasped. "There must be beetles in the dorm. I'll complain about it! Can you see any more?"

"Here's one! Keep still, or he'll be in your ear!"

"Ugh!"

"And in your hair—here's one!"

Coker made a horrid sound, as if he were on a Channel steamer on a rough day. He gurgled wildly, and rushed away across the Close towards the School House. He had forgotten all about Cliff House and tea. He was only anxious to get to the dormitory and drag off his clothes and search them for beetles.

"How on earth did he get into that state?" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"What state?" asked Kipps.

"Why, all those beetles——"

"There was only one."

"Only one!" ejaculated Johnny.

"Yes, this one."

"Yoop! Keep the horrible thing away from me!" howled Johnny Bull.

"'Tain't horrible!" said Kipps indignantly. "My mechanical beetle is a regular ripper, and it cost a pound."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "It's his blessed conjuring again, you ass!"

"Oh!" said Johnny Bull.

Kipps grinned and restored the beetle to his pocket.

"Do you mean to say it was the same beetle all the time?" exclaimed Nugent. "I thought I saw you throwing them away."

"So did Coker!" chuckled Kipps. "Catch me throwing my mechanical beetle away! I kept it in my palm all the time, of course"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Horace Coker had disappeared into the School House.

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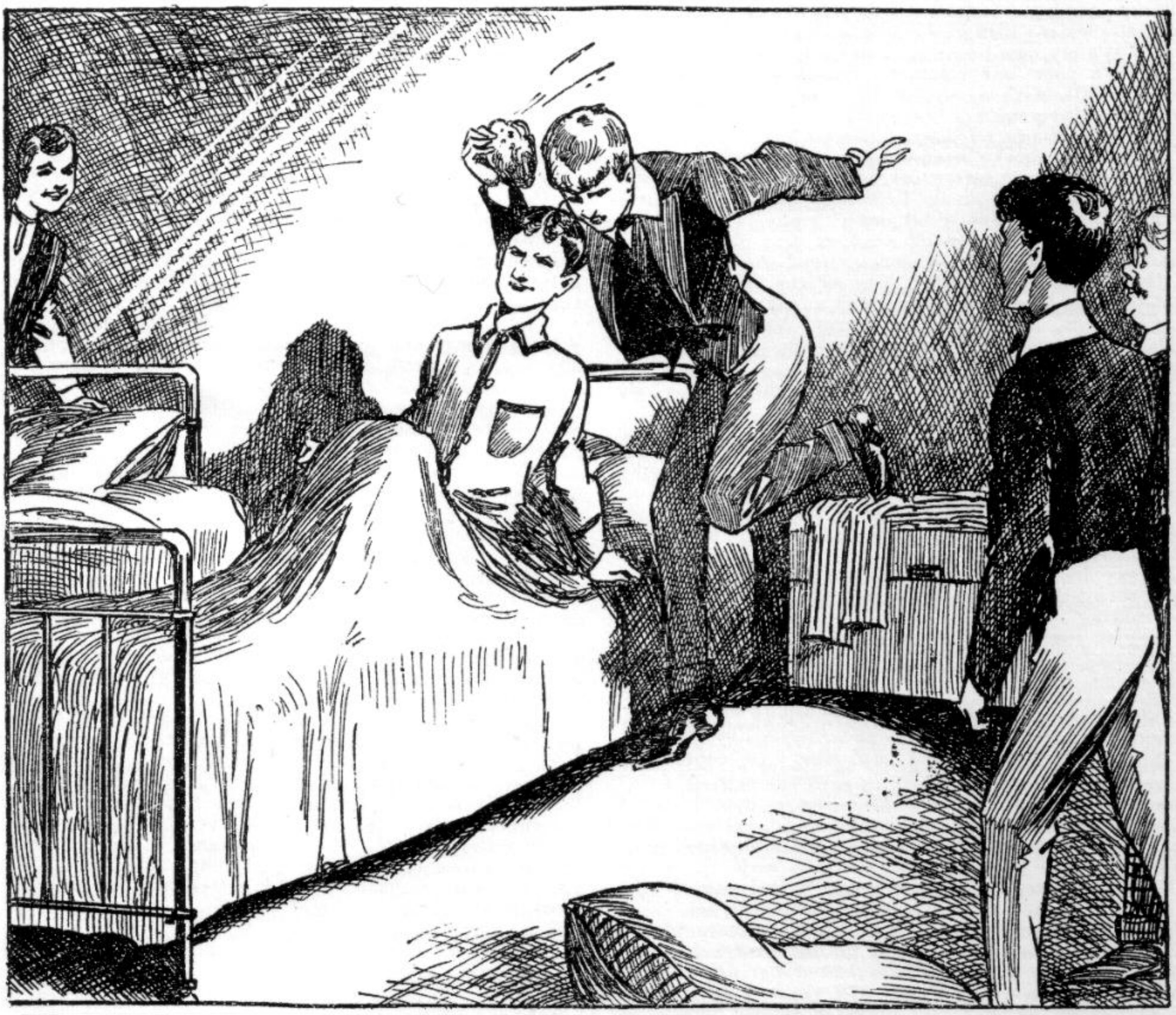

Bob cheerily squeezed the sponge over Vernon-Smith's face. There was a loud gasp from the Bounder as he started up, then a loud crack, and Bob Cherry staggered away with a howl of anguish. The Bounder's head, as he jumped up, had come into violent contact with Bob's chin. "Ow! Ow!" roared Bob. "You silly ass!" "Wow! My head!" gasped the Bounder. *(See Chapter 12.)*

Harry Wharton & Co. sauntered away down the lane, chuckling. Kipps' conjuring had come in useful for once, and they had been saved from the threatened scrap with Horace Coker, which would have had such ruinous results to their best bib and tucker.

"But no more tricks, mind!" said Bob Cherry warningly. "It's all very well for Coker, but if you begin on us you'll get it in the neck!"

Kipps snorted.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
The Black Sheep!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What's the matter with Snoopey?"

The chums of the Remove had reached the stile in the lane, which they had to cross to take the short cut to Pegg. On the stile a Remove fellow was seated. It was Sidney James Snoop of the Remove.

Snoop did not see them coming.

He was seated, with his hands thrust deep into his pockets, and his chin sunk forward, in an attitude of the deepest dejection. He had a cigarette between his lips, but he had forgotten to light it.

The chums of the Remove looked curiously at Snoop as they came up.

They were not on good terms with Sidney James. Snoop's ways were not their ways, and they took no interest whatever in the "geegees" that occupied a great part of Snoop's thoughts. The dingy blackguardism of the black sheep of the Remove was not in their line at all.

But they were a little concerned at the look on his face and his look of dejection. If Snoop had been speculating on the geegees again, it looked as if the geegees had run away with his money.

"Hallo, Snoop!" said Wharton, not unkindly.

Snoop started, and looked up, flushing.

"Oh, it's you!" he exclaimed.

It was evident that he had expected to see someone else. Apparently he was waiting for someone at the stile.

"Yes, little us," said Bob Cherry. "What's the matter, chappy?"

"Matter? Nothing."

"You don't look very chippy."

"I suppose I can look as I like without your passing remarks about it?" said Snoop surlily.

Bob knitted his brows.

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"You can give a civil answer, anyway, if you don't want to be pitched into the ditch!" he exclaimed warmly.

Snoop scowled.

"Well, let me alone," he said sullenly. "If I'm not chippy it's my own business, I suppose."

"Hasn't your last cigarette agreed with you," said Johnny Bull, with a curling lip, "or has your bookie friend diddled you?"

"Mind your own business, confound you!"

"Why, you cheeky worm——" began Johnny hotly.

Snoop gave him a bitter look.

"If I had a rich uncle to sponge on, as you have, perhaps I should look a bit more chippy!" he sneered.

"Here, let go, you beast!"

Johnny Bull, red with anger, grasped the black sheep of the Remove and yanked him off the stile. Snoop landed in the lane with a bump and a roar.

"Cheese it, Johnny!" said Harry Wharton hastily. "The poor beast is down on his luck, whatever he's done."

"You heard what he said?" bawled Johnny Bull. "Do I sponge on my uncle?"

"Of course not, fathead!"

"And I'm jolly well going to wallop him for his cheek!" howled Johnny. "Let him put up his hands, the funky cad. He's as big as I am, ain't he? And he'd be as fit if he didn't smoke filthy cigarettes! If my uncle sends me good tips I don't blue 'em on horse-racing, as he does all his money!"

Johnny Bull had Snoop by the back of the neck, and was rubbing his nose in the grass as he talked. Snoop was roaring.

"Leggo, you beast! Oh, crumbs! Dragimoff! Leggo, you rotter! Yow-ow!"

"Let go, Johnny!"

"Rot! He hasn't had half enough!"

The juniors grasped the infuriated Johnny, and fairly dragged him off Snoop. The cad of the Remove sat up in the grass, blinking, and grinding his teeth. His little narrow eyes were glittering with rage and hatred.

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton.

Johnny Bull snorted, and clambered over the stile. The rest of the juniors followed, and Snoop picked himself up slowly.

Harry Wharton lingered a moment to speak to him as the rest of the party tramped on across the field.

The sturdy, healthy captain of the Remove could not help feeling a sentiment of pity for the wretched junior whose miserable blackguardism had apparently landed him in a scrape.

"Excuse me, Snoop," said Wharton quietly. "I know it's not my business, but you look as if you're in trouble——"

"Can't you leave me alone?"

"And you seem to be waiting for somebody here," went on Wharton, still very quietly. "I guess that it's somebody you'd better not have any dealings with."

"Are you setting up as my father-confessor?" sneered Snoop.

"No; but you remember what Snaith of the Shell was sacked for. I should be sorry to see a Remove chap sacked. If you've got yourself into a scrape I'd be willing to help you if I could."

Snoop's lip curled bitterly.

"You mean that?"

"Yes."

"All serene! Lend me twenty pounds, then!"

Wharton started.

"Twenty pounds! Are you dotty?"

"Well, you said you'd help me!" sneered Snoop.

"Do you mean to say that you owe some swindling rascal twenty pounds?" exclaimed Wharton, utterly aghast.

"I don't mean to say anything!" said Snoop savagely. "I'm only asking to be let alone. We can't all be models like you, you know. One perfect character is enough for the Remove, anyway. Two would be a crowd. Can't you add minding your own business to the list of your virtues, Wharton?"

Wharton clenched his hand for a moment; then he turned away, without a word, and hurried after his chums.

Snoop, scowling after the juniors, resumed his seat on the stile.

"Well," growled Johnny Bull, as Wharton came up, "what do you want to talk to that unclean cad for?"

"He's down on his luck," said Harry.

"What can he expect, considering what he does?"

"I'm sorry for him, all the same."

"Oh, rats!" growled Johnny Bull. "He's asking for the sack, and the sooner he gets it the better it will be for Greyfriars! Why can't he be decent?"

Wharton did not reply, and he looked very thoughtful as the party walked on towards the sea. The other fellows looked less cheery now. Snoop's miserable face seemed to haunt them.

In an unfortunate moment for himself the cheery Kipps determined to cheer them up. He halted suddenly as they were passing the barn in the field.

"Hallo! Who's dropped a quid?" he exclaimed.

He stooped, and a sovereign glistened in his palms. The juniors halted, and went through their pockets.

"Not mine," said Bob Cherry.

"All my esteemed cash is presentfully in my pockets," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Sure it isn't yours, Bob?"

"Quite sure," grinned Bob. "I'm not loaded up with sovereigns."

"Then what's all that clinking in your pocket?"

"Eh? There's no cash in my pocket. I'm stony!"

"Then you've been robbing a bank," Kipps said. "Look here!"

He thrust his hand into Bob Cherry's pocket, and drew it out crammed with sovereigns.

Bob uttered a yell of surprise. The juniors stared at the money. There were nearly a dozen glistening sovereigns—more money than Bob Cherry usually had in a whole term.

"Great Scott!" gasped Bob, in bewilderment. "Who's been putting all that money in my pocket?"

There was no reply. The juniors were looking very peculiar. Bob Cherry glanced round at their faces.

"What are you blinking at me like that for?" he demanded hotly. "So you think I've pinched this tin?"

"Of course not, ass!" said Wharton. "If you've done it for a joke on the chap it belongs to, I must say you're a silly fathead! You'd better buzz off and put it where it belongs at once."

Bob Cherry turned red.

"I tell you I've never seen it before!" he howled. "It isn't mine!"

"I know it's not yours. Whose is it?"

"I don't know."

Bob Cherry's word was as good as gold, but that statement was so extraordinary that his chums might be excused for staring at him incredulously.

"By Jove, here's some more!" said Kipps.

And he drew a roll of rustling banknotes from Bob Cherry's pocket.

"Banknotes!" howled Nugent. "Oh, Bob!"

Bob Cherry's jaw dropped.

"I—I don't know where it's come from!" he gasped. "You fellows can believe me or not, but I've never seen it before."

"Of course, we believe you," said Wharton. "But what the dickens does it mean? There must be fifty pounds there."

Johnny Bull gave a sudden whoop, and pounced on the banknotes. He jerked them away from Kipps and opened them. "Bank of Elegance" was printed on the notes. They were not fivers at all. They were the "spoof" notes used in conjuring tricks.

"Spoofed!" yelled Johnny Bull. "It's that silly beast conjuring again!"

"Conjuring!" howled Bob.

"Then those sovereigns——" ejaculated Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Kipps.

Wharton grabbed at the sovereigns. At a close view they could be seen to be discs of metal covered with gold-leaf.

Bob Cherry drew a deep, deep breath of relief.

"Fatheads not to guess!" he growled. "We knew the beast was a conjurer, didn't we? And didn't we warn him that there were to be no larks? Scrag him!"

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"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Kipps, backing away in alarm. "I was only doing it to cheer you up, you know, because you were looking down in the mouth. It was only a little joke on Bob."

"Little jokes on Bob are barred!" said Bob Cherry. "Collar the silly idiot!"

"Here, cheese it! Yaroooh!"

Kipps wriggled in the grasp of the Famous Five. They did not appreciate the little joke on Bob in the least. Kipps had passed the limit.

"Yank him into the barn!" said Bob Cherry determinedly. "He's got to have a lesson. Yank the silly ass along!"

"I say—hold on—look here—yoooop!"

Kipps went headlong into the barn.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Paying the Piper!

"OH, crumbs!"

Kipps rolled on the floor of the barn, with the Famous Five glowering round him. He sat up and gasped.

"Yow-ow! Look here, you chaps, I was only doing it to——"

"Shut up!"

"I—I won't do it any more!"

"You jolly well won't!" said Bob Cherry grimly. "You'll be putting mice in the teapot, or beetles in the cake, if we take you to Cliff House. You're going to stay here, and we'll call for you coming back. Chuck him up into the loft, and I'll take the ladder away!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" gasped Kipps. "I tell you—— Leggo!"

"Kim on!"

"I won't!" roared Kipps. "I'm not going to stay in that blessed loft for two hours, you silly lunatics!"

"You jolly well are!" said Bob Cherry. "You can amuse yourself with conjuring tricks, you know. You can put beetles down your own back, and mice in your hat, and pull ribbon out of your own silly ears!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yank him up!"

There was no help for it. In the grasp of five pairs of hands, Kipps was yanked to the ladder. Twenty feet above his head was the orifice giving admittance to the loft. Kipps clung to the ladder, and refused to climb. The prospect of being imprisoned for two hours in that lonely spot was dismaying.

But he had been sentenced, and the sentence had to be executed.

"Gerrup!" roared Bob.

"Rats!"

"Anybody got a pin?"

"Here you are!"

"Now, then, Kippy——"

Kipps uttered a fiendish yell.

"Yow, you villain! Leave off! Yah! I'll go! Oh, crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Kipps clambered hastily up the ladder. Bob Cherry helped him from behind with an occasional lunge of the pin. The schoolboy conjurer disappeared into the loft, and Bob slid down.

"I say, old fellows——" pleaded Kipps, blinking down at them.

"Bow-wow!"

The five juniors grasped the ladder, and swung it away. It was laid at full length on the floor of the barn.

"Good-bye, little yellow bird!" said Bob. "Perhaps you'll think twice next time before you play a little joke on Bob. We shall be coming along in about two hours."

"Think over your next conjuring trick," advised Johnny Bull, "and think of somebody safer to play it on."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you rotters!" roared Kipps. "I'm not going to stay here!"

"Well, you can jump down if you like," said Bob. "It's over twenty feet, but it's a free country. Better

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dive. Then you may land on your head. It won't hurt you so much if you fall on a soft spot, you know."

"Or there's the window," said Wharton, laughing. "A fly could crawl down from the window. And you're so awfully fly, Kippy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't go, you rotters!" yelled Kipps, as the grinning juniors crowded out of the barn. "Look here, I won't play any more larks!"

"You jolly well won't!" agreed Bob Cherry.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left the barn, and resumed their way to Cliff House. They were quite in earnest. Kipps was a cheery fellow, and they liked him. But his conjuring proclivities simply had to be kept within bounds. He had given the chums of the Remove an extremely uncomfortable five minutes. It was only just that he should be left to meditate upon his sins in the old loft. It was a sentence of imprisonment, as Bob Cherry put it, without the option of a fine.

Leaving Kipps to his own devices, the Famous Five walked on, and came out on the road by the sea, and reached Cliff House.

Marjorie and Clara met them at the gate.

"Tea's ready," said Miss Clara severely; "and Miss Primrose has given us a whacking cake. And you're late."

"Sorry——"

"The sorrowfulness is terrific!"

"We were delayed," said Wharton. "First, Johnny Bull had to get into a scrap——"

"Oh, draw it mild!" growled Johnny Bull.

"And then we had to deal with a bounder who was too humorous. But here we are!"

"As large as life, and twice as natural," said Bob.

"It doesn't matter a bit," said Marjorie, smiling.

"Not at all," said Miss Clara loftily. "Boys never can keep appointments. Trot in!"

The juniors accepted Miss Clara's boyish invitation, and "trotted" in. In the big window alcove in the school-room the tea-table was laid, and the cake presented by Miss Penelope Primrose, the headmistress of Cliff House, looked quite imposing.

The tea-party were soon busy.

Over tea Bob Cherry related the episode of Kipps and the barn-loft, expecting to amuse his hostesses, but Miss Clara shook her head gravely.

"You have really left the poor boy in the loft?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, rather!" said Bob.

"He will be dreadfully lonely there," said Marjorie.

"Well, don't it serve him right?" said Bob, rather warmly. "He made me think for a minute that I must have burgled somebody, with his fatheaded conjuring with spoof quids and banknotes."

"It was too thickful," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But if the esteemed misses think we have been too hard on the esteemed Kipps we will let him out more soonfully."

"Oh, rot!" said Bob Cherry. "Let him stay there and have a big think. It may save him from getting a bumping some time."

Marjorie and Clara did not say that they considered it too "thickful," as Hurree Singh expressed it; but the Co. could guess their thoughts. They felt a little uncomfortable. They had not meant to be hard on the unfortunate Kipps—only to give him a much-needed lesson.

"He's an awfully clever chap, but he never knows the limit, you know," said Nugent. "We like him immensely."

Marjorie laughed. Perhaps the way the juniors had shown their liking for Kipps struck her as a little comical.

"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me downstairs?" murmured Miss Clara, as if reciting those old lines for her own amusement.

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"Suppose we have a walk after tea, and we'll let

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him out," he said. "We'll ask him to show you some of his blessed conjuring tricks. We're fed up on them ourselves."

"Good egg!" said Miss Clara. And Marjorie nodded a smiling assent.

So the tea-party broke up a little earlier than had been intended, and the chums of Cliff House and Greyfriars took the path to the fields on their way to the old barn and the unlucky schoolboy conjurer.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Kipps Makes a Discovery!

"OH, crikey!" mumbled Kipps.

He had been nearly half an hour in the loft.

There was no way of escape. From the window only a fly or perhaps a monkey could have descended. And to drop twenty feet on a stone floor was the only other way of escape—an "only way" from which Kipps naturally shrank. Kipps was an active youth, and seldom idle for a moment; he brimmed over with exuberant vitality. His enforced inactivity in the loft bored him horribly. He did not meditate upon his sins as the juniors had advised him. He growled and groused, and said things, all of them most emphatic, about the Famous Five, and their absurd lack of appreciation for really clever conjuring tricks.

From the window of the loft he could see Sidney James Snoop still seated on the stile, watching the road. But Snoop was only a speck in the distance, and far beyond the sound of shouting. There was no help for Kipps. He could only hope that somebody would come along to the barn by chance.

Fortunately for him, he bethought him of a copy of "Chuckles" in his pocket. It was a windfall at that moment. He threw himself on the hay in the loft, and devoted his attention to the adventures of Teddy Baxter.

Suddenly he heard footsteps on the stone floor far below. Someone had entered the barn.

A voice came clearly through the trap-door.

"This is safe, my young friend. No one can see us here. Now we will talk business."

Kipps started.

The voice, though it spoke in good English, had a foreign accent. Kipps did not need telling that it was a German who was speaking. To his utter amazement, a voice he knew replied—the voice of Snoop of the Remove.

"I don't want to stay here. What have you got to talk to me about? I can't pay you the money, you know that. I'm stony.'

"I do know that, mein Kind. It is not the money I want. It is your services, for which I am willing to let you keep the money you owe me."

"I can't do anything for you."

"You can, and must!"

"I can't, I tell you!"

"My young friend, you must not take that tone with me!" There was a sound of deep menace in the man's voice now, quiet and calm as it was. "You are in my hands—under my thumb! You have played cards with me——"

"You led me——"

"Tush, tush! Whether I led you or not, what would your Headmaster say to it?"

Snoop gasped.

"You—you can't mean to give me away!"

There was a laugh—an unpleasant laugh.

"It would be my ruin!" faltered Snoop. "You—you wouldn't have any proof if I hadn't given you my I.O.U. It would be a dirty trick to give me away. Besides, I—I shall raise the money and pay you somehow."

"I do not want the money, mein Kind. I want your services. I let you win the money."

"You let me!"

"Ja wohl! Because I wished to get you under my thumb by having your signature on a scrap of paper. Do you understand?"

"You German villain!"

"Tush, tush!"

Kipps sat bolt upright in the hay. His hair was standing almost on end. He had no desire whatever to learn of any of Snoop's shady secrets, and it was upon his tongue to call out that he was there. But he did not call out. It was clear now that this man—a German, and evidently a scoundrel—was the man Snoop had been waiting for on the stile.

The wretched, vicious blackguard of the Remove had fallen into the man's clutches, led there by his miserable inclination for vicious amusements and the greed of gain. What were the "services" the German demanded of him? It seemed to Kipps that he could see a black gulf of rascality opening before the wretched Snoop. The schoolboy conjurer sat silent. He did not call out.

There was a pause in the speaking below. Neither of the speakers had the slightest suspicion that there was anyone in the loft. The ladder being on the floor, and no means of access to the loft being visible, they naturally supposed that the upper room in the barn was untenanted.

Snoop broke the silence.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Help me. You can do it. It is easy, too. There is a boy in your Form at the school named Bull."

Snoop's eyes glinted.

"What about him?" he snapped.

"You do not like him?"

"I hate him!" said Snoop viciously.

There was a soft chuckle.

"All the better. I hate him, too."

"You!" exclaimed Snoop, in astonishment. "What do you know about Johnny Bull?"

"Never mind that. I know about him. I hate him! To satisfy you, I may tell you that he has caused me heavy losses, in money and other things, and ruined a plan that I had laboured upon for years. That is enough. He must suffer. That is how you are going to help me."

"I'd do anything I could to get even with Johnny Bull," said Snoop. "But I don't see anything I can do. He can lick me—he's done it, hang him!"

"I am not thinking of such childish things. I want him disgraced and ruined."

"Oh!"

"It is easy enough. You are in his Form, and you share his dormitory. Listen! If something is taken—something valuable—and placed in his box——"

"Oh!" gasped Snoop.

"You understand? But that is not all. This boy, Bull, has plenty of money——"

"Yes; he has a rich uncle in Australia, who sends him big tips."

"He has banknotes?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"Good! Is he careful with his money?"

"Not specially."

"Could you get at his pocket-book, some time when you know he has a banknote?"

"I suppose I could. I'm jolly well not going to steal his banknotes, if that's what you mean."

"Tush, tush! Suppose, when you know he has a five-pound note, you abstract it, and put another in its place—another that I will give you——"

"What on earth for?"

"Then, when Bull spends the money, he will change the note——"

"I suppose so."

"When you know that he has changed it, you raise a hue and cry for a stolen note. You prove, by the number, that the note Bull changed was yours. You will have shown it previously to several boys—for witnesses."

"Good heavens!"

"Then he will be denounced as a thief, and expelled from the school in black disgrace. He will be disgraced for life."

"Of—of course he would."

"And you hate him——"

"Yes, I do; but not enough to play him a dirty trick

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like that," said Snoop, in a trembling voice. "You filthy German villain, you ought to be in prison!"

"Calm yourself, my boy. It is his ruin or yours. You are not like the other——" The German broke off abruptly. "You will do this. When Bull is driven from Greyfriars in shame and disgrace, I will hand you your little paper and twenty pounds. Meanwhile, I will give you as much pocket-money as you choose."

"You—you will?"

"Here is a sovereign for a beginning. Every time I see you there will be another for you. You are poor. You want money."

"I've been jolly near stony ever since my pater had bad luck," muttered Snoop. "I'd like to be in funds again. But—but I can't do that. It's too beastly. If you weren't a German you'd know I couldn't do it!"

"You must! Or else——"

"I'm not so much under your thumb as you think," muttered Snoop. "You can give me away to the Head. But I can give you away, too. You're a German, and military age, too. You're not allowed to go about as you do in war-time. I shouldn't wonder if you were a spy!"

"I am not a German. I am English." Again Kipps heard the silky, unpleasant laugh. "I was German once, but now I am as English as a written paper can make me, which is enough for your kind-hearted authorities."

"Naturalised?" muttered Snoop.

"Certainly; or I should not be here. I am an Englishman." The German laughed. "Your Government is so kind. And so stupid. But that matters not. You see that you cannot harm me. As for what I ask of you, you can choose between your own ruin and that of the boy you hate. And there is money for you—as much money as you like. I have plenty."

"He went for me a while ago," said Snoop, mumbling to himself, a miserable attempt at self-justification. "He would be glad if I was sacked from the school, he said so. He went for me—the beast! I don't see why I should care for him."

"Ah, you are sensible!"

"We never liked each other," said Snoop. "I was jolly glad when he was going to Australia, but he never stayed. I'd like to see him kicked out of the school. But—but to do that—the risk——" Snoop was thinking of the risk now.

"There is no risk if you are careful."

"I—I could do it."

"Think over it. You will see that you can do nothing else. Meet me here to-morrow at the same time——"

"I can't. There's lessons to-morrow afternoon. I could get here at half-past five."

"That will do. Meanwhile, think over it. Now we will part; we must not risk being seen together. Auf wiedersehen, mein Kind."

Kipps heard footsteps leaving the barn. He rose silently, and looked from the window. Snoop, with hanging head, was tramping away across the fields towards the distant stile. Kipps saw him pause and look at the sovereign in his hand, and thrust it into his pocket. He had taken the German's money.

The man he had been speaking to had taken a different direction—following a footpath towards the sea. Kipps had a back view of him—a man of muscular frame, dressed in tweeds, with a soft Homburg hat. The man turned and glanced after Snoop for a moment, and Kipps saw his face—a blonde face, but with dark eyebrows and a dark moustache. He disappeared at last behind the trees in the distance.

Kipps stood with his hands clenched and a glitter in his eyes.

"Well!" he ejaculated. "My hat!"

— —

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
An Old Acquaintance!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry halted suddenly with that exclamation. Marjorie and Clara and the Famous Five were coming down the cliff path towards the fields. As they reached the road, a man with a blonde face and black moustache came striding round the corner, and he passed within a few yards of the juniors.

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Bob glanced at him carelessly, and then his eyes became fixed upon him with a startled expression.

The man strode on quickly, and Bob stood staring after him.

"What on earth's the matter?" exclaimed Wharton, in amazement.

"Did you see that chap?" exclaimed Bob breathlessly.

"That man? I didn't notice him." Wharton glanced after the figure disappearing by the cliff road. "What about him?"

"It's him!" said Bob energetically and ungrammatically.

"Him! He? Who?"

"Don't you remember?" exclaimed Bob excitedly. "That naturalised German scoundrel, Falke, who tried to get Johnny into trouble with his uncle, and tried to get the Bounder to help him do it."

"Falke! My hat!"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull. "That German scoundrel Falke had blonde hair, and this chap's hair is nearly black. I noticed that as he passed."

"Dyed, then," said Bob. "His features are just the same. I saw him squarely as he came round the corner. Besides, he recognised us; I could see it in his face."

"But he cleared out of England," said Nugent. "Your uncle sacked him, and Quelchy gave him the choice of leaving England or being arrested. He left."

"Well, he's come back."

"Hold on! Where are you going?" exclaimed Wharton, as Bob started up the cliff road after the stranger.

"I'm going to see him close, and make him give an account of himself," said Bob.

"But—a perfect stranger——" ejaculated Nugent.

"He isn't a stranger, I tell you. He's that villain Falke!" Bob did not stop for more. He broke into a run up the ascending path.

The juniors looked at one another blankly.

"It can't be Falke," said Nugent. "He wouldn't dare to come back here. Besides, what would he want to come for?"

"Some blessed tourist," said Johnny Bull. "Bob's discovered a mare's nest."

"What do you think, Marjorie?"

Marjorie Hazeldene was looking very grave. She knew the story of Johnny Bull's narrow escape from the machinations of his uncle's treacherous German secretary.

"It does not seem likely," she said. "But I think Bob is right in speaking to him. It will not hurt him to be asked a question, even if he is only a tourist here."

"Right-ho!" said Wharton. "Will you wait a minute while we buzz after him, then?"

"Certainly! Don't lose time."

Leaving Marjorie and Clara at the corner of the road, the juniors ran actively up the cliff path after Bob Cherry. Both the stranger and Bob Cherry had disappeared from sight, round a big rock where the path wound over the cliffs.

Harry Wharton & Co. lost no time.

They dashed round the big rock at a run, and almost ran into Bob Cherry. He was standing on the rocky path, looking about him with knitted brows and a perplexed expression.

"Hallo! Where is he?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Gone!" said Bob savagely. "I wasn't more than a minute behind him, but when I got round the rock he'd vanished. He's gone up one of the paths over the cliffs, and he's keeping out of sight. He must have taken to cover, or we should see him from here."

"Looks like it, by Jove!" said Johnny Bull. "It's queer."

"It isn't queer," said Bob. "He's Falke, and so he knows us by sight. I tell you, I'd know his face anywhere. He's got a nose you don't see every day—a regular German-sausage nose! He spotted us, and he's dodged because he knew we should be after him."

"Ahem!"

Bob Cherry snorted.

"You don't believe it was Falke?" he exclaimed.

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"Well, it isn't really likely," said Wharton. "It would be risky for him to come back here, and I don't see how it would benefit him in any way. His little game was knocked right on the head, through the Bounder showing him up."

"All the same, I'm sure it was Falke."

"Well, if it was, he's vanished, and Kipps is waiting in the blessed loft all this time," remarked Nugent.

"Blow Kipps!"

Bob Cherry cast an angry glance about him at the towering rocks. A search for the vanished pedestrian was not a hopeful prospect. Bob Cherry gave up the idea, and turned along the path again to descend to the road.

Marjorie and Clara looked at the Co. inquiringly as they rejoined them.

"He's done the vanishing trick," said Johnny Bull.

"Dodged us!" said Bob.

"Or else happened to turn off the path," said Nugent.

"Bosh!" growled Bob. "He cleared off to keep clear of us. I jolly well knew it was that German scoundrel."

"Kipps is waiting——"

"Bless Kipps!" grunted Bob.

However, the party resumed the path to the barn. It was from that direction that the blonde man with the black moustache had come.

Twenty minutes or so later they came in sight of the barn. They entered it, and Bob Cherry shouted:

"Kipps! Kippy! Kippers! Kipps!"

Kipps' face appeared in the trap immediately.

"You measly rotters!" shouted Kipps. Then he caught sight of Marjorie and Clara. "Ahem! I mean, put that ladder up here, please."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors reared the tall ladder to the trapdoor in the loft, and planted it firmly there. Kipps slid down into the barn.

"So you've come to let me out, you bounders?" he growled.

"Couldn't be helped," said Bob. "Marjorie and Clara interceded for you, or we'd have left you there a good bit longer. You ought to be scragged, and you know it."

"Thank you very much," said Kipps to the Cliff House girls. "I'm awfully obliged to you. I was getting red up with that loft. Not that I'm sorry I was shut up there, on the whole."

"My hat!" said Miss Clara. "I should think you would soon get tired of it."

Kipps coloured a little. He was thinking of what he had accidentally overheard in the loft, when he made the remark.

"Well, I had my 'Chuckles,'" he said. "That was jolly lucky."

"They're awfully keen about your rotten conjuring," said Bob. "Show 'em some of your monkey-tricks, Kipps."

"Oh, rats!" said Kipps. "I'm not thinking about conjuring now. It's wasted on you silly asses. You can't appreciate it."

"No jolly fear," grinned Bob. "Fed up, old chap!"

"It is very clever to be able to perform conjuring tricks," said Miss Clara. "Do show us one, there's a good boy!"

"Yes, do!" said Marjorie.

"Wait a minute till I've taken that beetle off your hair, Miss Hazeldene——"

Marjorie uttered a shriek.

"And that off your shoulder, Miss Trevelyn——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

Shriek!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Shriek! Shriek! Shriek! Kipps was taking horrid-looking beetles off the two girls' hair and shoulders at a great rate. They seemed to be simply alive with beetles. Kipps seemed to toss them behind him as he caught them, but the juniors knew the trick now, and they were not deceived. Marjorie and Clara had wanted to see what Kipps could do, and they were seeing it!

Shriek! Shriek! Shriek!

"Oh, dear! How horrid! Are there any more?" said Marjorie faintly.

Miss Clara was shaking out her flaxen locks in a flood.

"That's all!" said Kipps demurely.

"Oh, dear! Oh, goodness gracious! Oh, oh, oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Miss Clara almost glared at the hilarious juniors through her tangled hair.

"How horrid of you to laugh!" she exclaimed. "It is unfeeling."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. "It's only one of Kipps' idiotic tricks. They weren't real beetles, and there was only one, and the bounder's got it in his pocket now."

"Wha-a-at!"

"It—it was a trick?" gasped Marjorie.

"Yes. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You bad, wicked, absurd, unfeeling, bad-mannered boy!" exclaimed Miss Clara. "Look at my hair! You wretched boy!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Kipps, in dismay. "You asked me——"

"You horrid boy!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Marjorie and Clara left the barn with the grinning Co. Kipps was left standing there in dismay.

Having thus succeeded in demonstrating his skill as a conjurer to the satisfaction—or otherwise—of the Cliff House chums, Kipps started walking rather glumly to Greyfriars. Once more his peculiar sense of humour had been a little too strong for him, and Marjorie and Clara refused even to look at him as he started off. Which, as Kipps reflected, was just like girls!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.
A Secret for Two!

"CHEER up, sonny!"

It was an hour or two later, and the Famous Five had just come in. As they crossed the old Close of Greyfriars to the School House they spotted Kipps under the elms.

Kipps was walking to and fro amid the dead leaves, his hands deep in his pockets, and a deep and thoughtful frown upon his brow. His eyes were fixed on the ground, as if he were very interested in the fallen leaves that whisked about in the breeze He did not see the chums of the Remove till Bob Cherry bore down on him, and greeted him with a slap on the shoulder. Then he jumped.

"Cheer up, my son!" said Bob encouragingly. "What are you moping about?"

Kipps grunted.

"I'm not moping, ass!"

"Then what have you got your face tied up in a sailor's knot for?" asked Bob.

"Fathead! I was thinking."

"Oh! Of course, I couldn't guess that."

"Oh, don't be funny," said Kipps. "Buzz off, and let a fellow think!"

"I wouldn't interrupt you for worlds, if you're starting that," said Bob "If it gives you a pain anywhere——"

"Br-r-r-r!" said Kipps.

The Famous Five went on their way smiling. They had supposed, from Kipps' look, that he was feeling "down" over the events of the afternoon. Having duly "squashed" him for his exuberant sense of humour, they were generously prepared to forget and forgive. But apparently it was not that that was worrying Kipps. He was thinking.

The schoolboy conjurer was not much given to reflection, as a rule. He generally acted without thinking. It was, as Bob remarked, a new departure for Kipps, and he ought to be encouraged. So they left him to think.

Kipps was certainly thinking hard. He tramped about among the fallen leaves, his brows wrinkled, while the dusk deepened over Greyfriars.

Finally he strode off towards the School House.

Harry Wharton & Co. were chatting in the Hall, and they gave him a cheery grin; but Kipps did not grin. He was unusually serious. He went up to the Remove passage, and stopped at Vernon-Smith's study.

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was alone

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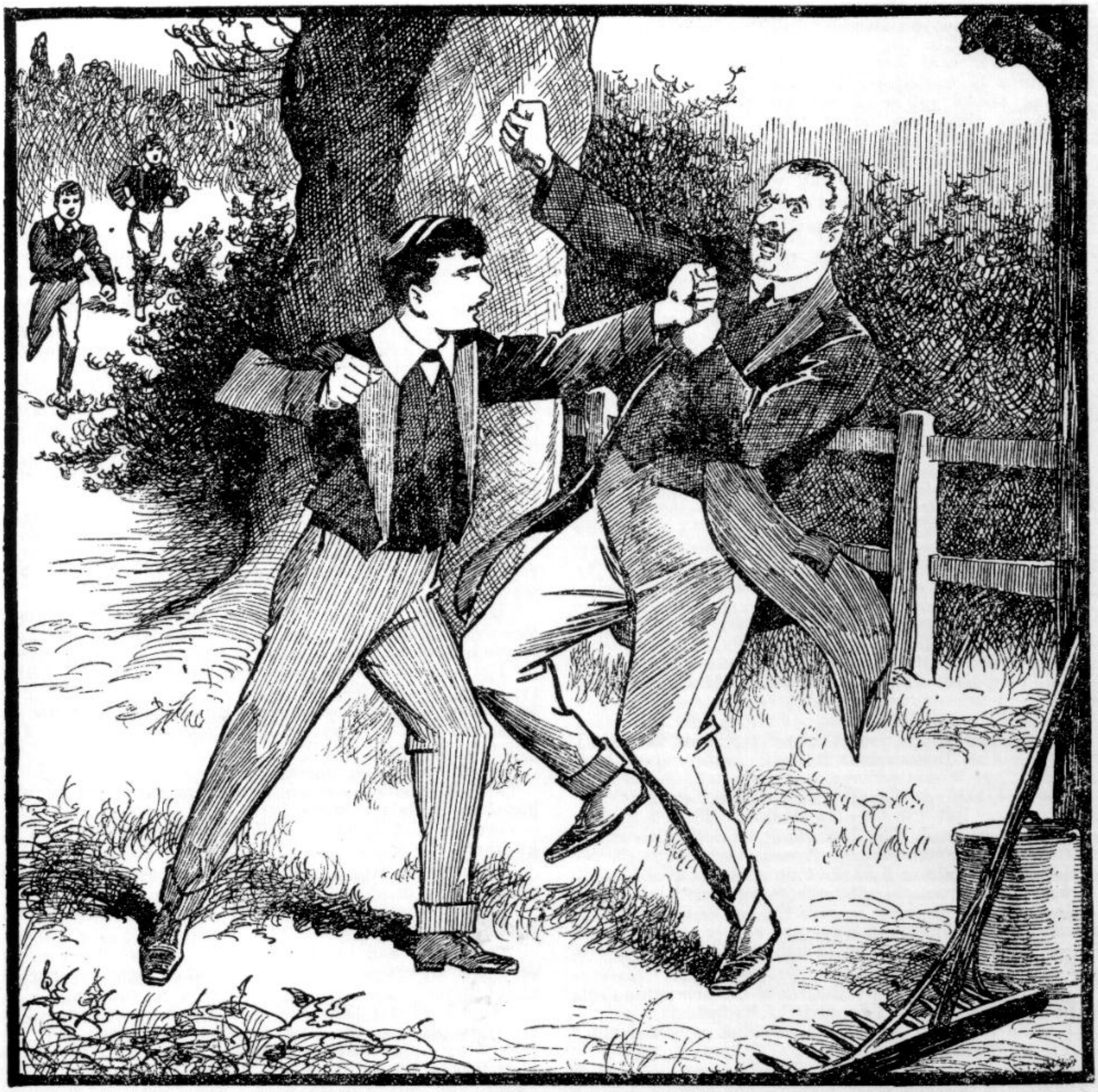

"I've come!" said a cheery voice. The German started back. "Ach! That is not Snoop——" "No, it's Johnny Bull," said Johnny, "and he's got this for you!" A heavy fist, that seemed as hard as iron, was planted full in the startled face of the German. (See Chapter 14.)

there, Skinner, his study-mate, being downstairs. The Bounder had a sovereign in his hand, which he was regarding with a peculiar expression.

"Hallo!" said Kipps "Rolling in wealth, as usual."

"More than usual," said the Bounder, laughing. "I've just recovered an old debt I never thought I should see again. Chap who owed me half-a-quid has settled up. I've changed this for him."

"Oh!" said Kipps. "Snoop, I suppose?"

"How the dooce did you know?" exclaimed the Bounder in astonishment.

Kipps did not know; but he had guessed. He grinned.

"I'm a conjurer, you know," he said. "That's one of my tricks."

"You must be a blessed thought-reader, I think!" exclaimed the Bounder, in wonder. "I never told a soul, and I know Snoop wouldn't."

"Well, Snoopey does a good bit of borrowing, up and down the Form, ever since his people had bad luck," said Kipps.

"I hear that that's pulled round a bit," said Vernon-Smith. "Snoop says affairs at home are looking up, and he expects to have a good allowance in future."

Kipps smiled grimly. He was well aware where Snoop's new allowance was to come from. He understood why Snoop had given the Bounder that information. It was to account, in advance, for the fact that he would soon be flush with money. For a whole term Snoop had been hard up, and he owed a good many little debts in his Form. When his expected affluence came, it was certain to be remarked upon, and so it had to be accounted for. Snoop had taken the bull by the horns, as it were.

"Well, I don't quite see what there is funny in that," said the Bounder, watching Kipps' face in surprise. "But you are such a humorous merchant, I dare say you see a joke in it somewhere. Some of the fellows will be jolly glad to see Snoopey in funds again, I fancy."

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"Bother Snoop," said Kipps. "I came along to you about something else, Smithy."

"Pile in!" said the Bounder. "No conjuring tricks, please—fed up!"

"Oh, rats!" said Kipps, a little crossly. "A chap with brains is wasted in this school. Perhaps those conjuring tricks you're so fed up with may come in useful some time—you never know. But never mind that. It's about Johnny Bull."

"What on earth about Johnny Bull?"

"You remember the time Bull went out to Australia with his uncle and aunt, and only stayed there for a short time?"

The Bounder's brow clouded. There were some incidents in connection with that time which it did not please him to recall.

"I remember," he said, rather abruptly.

"There was some talk at the time," said Kipps. "The story was never told right out, but there was a lot of jaw. Wasn't Johnny Bull got into some sort of trouble with his uncle, through a German cad who was the old sport's private secretary? The man came up to the school to see Bull, I remember—a blonde chap, named Falke."

The Bounder looked fixedly at Kipps.

"That's a long time past now," he said. "It's all over. I don't see what you're so jolly curious about, Kipps. Ask Johnny Bull, if you want to know the story."

"I'm asking you," said Kipps coolly. "I know you know the whole yarn, because you were mixed up in it. There was some talk about your having saved Johnny from being done in somehow by that German scoundrel."

"That's true enough," said the Bounder.

"Good! You'd do it again, I suppose?"

"Of course I would. I don't know that I get on first-rate with Johnny Bull, but I'd do him a good turn if I could, I suppose. But nothing of the sort could happen again."

"It might," said Kipps.

"Look here, Kipps, what have you got hold of?" demanded the Bounder. "You'd better speak out plainly."

"I've got hold of something, you can bet on that," said Kipps. "But I'm keeping it dark. There's a dirty trick being planned, and I'm going to deal with it my own way. For one thing, it wouldn't be much use speaking out, because I haven't an atom of proof—only my word against another fellow's, whose word is as good as mine. And I'm going to give the rotter a lesson—my own way. You know my ways are rather queer." And Kipps grinned. "I don't want you to mention that I've spoken to you about it."

"You mean that Johnny Bull is in danger again from that German villain?" exclaimed the Bounder.

"I mean that I've got reason to think so, but I can't be sure. I want to be sure."

The Bounder looked very thoughtful.

"Well, I'll tell you what I know," he said. "I know you're not talking out of your hat, Kipps, though I think you must be mistaken. That chap Falke was old Mr. Bull's private secretary. The old sport had some scheme of adopting Johnny, and taking him out to Australia, but first he wanted to know all about his character, and he sent his secretary down here to make inquiries about him—under the rose, you know. Johnny didn't know it at the time. He was waxy when he learned it afterwards."

"Just like Johnny!"

"Well, this secretary, Falke, was a naturalised German—an awful rascal. He wanted to keep Johnny out of his uncle's good books, and he played a deep game. He had a scheme to get Johnny disgraced and sacked from the school. That would have finished him with his uncle, of course. Falke stood to win a good deal if he succeeded. He was the old boy's confidential secretary, and expected to succeed him in his business out there, and to become a partner, anyway. He thought that Johnny coming in would spoil all his schemes—right enough, no doubt. He led old Bull by the nose, but he wouldn't have led Johnny."

"Johnny isn't easily led," grinned Kipps.

"Well, he tried to get a Greyfriars chap to help him down Johnny." The Bounder flushed. "I needn't go into particulars. He got me under his thumb, and tried to make me his accomplice. Instead of that, I showed him up. Old Bull sacked him on the spot, and Quelchy gave him one day to clear out of England, or to be arrested. He was pretty thoroughly done in. He cleared off, and hasn't been heard of since. If you've got any idea that he's come back, you're off-side, I think. He wouldn't be safe in England. His naturalisation papers have been cancelled."

"He must feel pretty sore about it," said Kipps.

The Bounder laughed.

"Mad as a hatter, I should think," he said. "He lost a fat berth with old Bull, and all his prospects and his brand-new nationality, and, in fact, everything. I dare say he's sneaked back to Germany before this, and is living on war-bread now!"

"I don't know," said Kipps. "A man like that, speaking English perfectly, knowing England well, and being an unscrupulous scoundrel, would be useful to the rotters here. They might make a spy of him. Suppose business of some sort, shady or otherwise, brought him to England again, he might be very likely to make another attempt to down Johnny Bull out of revenge."

"Just the thing he would do, I fancy," said the Bounder. "But——"

"And he must have learned a good deal about Greyfriars," said Kipps. "He may have spotted some fellow here who's not quite so wary and tough as you are, Smithy, and might make use of him to carry out his scheme."

"He might," said the Bounder, with a stare. "But, look here, Kipps, I've got to have the whole story. If Bull's booked for more trouble it's got to be looked into."

"I'm looking into it," said Kipps coolly, "but I'd like your help if you feel inclined to give it; only I've got to act my own way, and keep it dark till I choose to come out into the daylight. If you agree to that I'll tell you the whole yarn."

"Done!" said the Bounder.

Then, in concise sentences, Kipps related what he had heard in the loft over the barn.

Vernon-Smith listened, with growing astonishment in his face.

When Kipps had finished, the Bounder gave a low whistle.

"It's the same man," he said. "No doubt about that. It must be Falke."

"This chap had black hair and moustache——"

"Dyed, of course. He wouldn't want to be recognised about here."

"That's what I thought," said Kipps, with a nod.

"He's playing the same game with Snoop that he played with me," said the Bounder moodily. "He knows that rotten set at the Cross Keys, and he's met Snoop there, and got him to play cards, and got a signed paper from him, same as he did with me. But Snoop hasn't the nerve to round on him as I did. He's a funk and a waster. But we can jolly well nip his little game in the bud, now we know. He ought to be arrested."

"Not so jolly easy," said Kipps. "You can depend on it he's got a safe hiding-place to skulk in, and he seems to have plenty of money. We could show Snoop up, but we couldn't prove it. Then the hound might begin again in another way. Snoop's an awful rascal, but I don't want him disgraced for life. He's as weak as a rat, and that filthy German has frightened him into this. He wants a lesson, and he's going to get one—stiff. But it's the Hun we want to get at, not Snoop."

"But we can't let it go on!" exclaimed the Bounder.

"No jolly fear. But I've got a plan."

"You'd better tell me."

Kipps proceeded to explain. His explanation lasted a

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few minutes, and the Bounder's eyes opened wide as he listened. Then he burst into a laugh.

"Stunning!" he exclaimed.

"And mum's the word!" said Kipps.

"Mum as an oyster!" said the Bounder.

And no more was said.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.
Nothing for Bunter!

"SNOOPEY, old chap!"

Billy Bunter of the Remove spoke in quite affectionate tones. Snoop was chatting in the passage with Skinner and Stott when the Owl of the Remove rolled up. From the ingratiating grin on Bunter's fat face it was easy for anybody to guess that Snoop's affairs were looking up financially.

It was several days since the scene in the old barn. During those few days Snoop had been in high feather. According to his own account, which the juniors saw no reason to doubt, his family affairs were improving. The horn of plenty was flowing. Sidney James had settled up all his little debts in the Remove and the Fourth, much to the satisfaction of his creditors, who had hardly expected to see their money again. He generally had money in his pocket, and had changed several currency notes at the school shop. Just at present he was discussing with Skinner and Stott his plans for the next half-holiday, which included a trip in a motor-car and a big feed somewhere along the coast. Stott and Skinner were listening to him with great respect; they were to share in that little excursion as "passengers." Snoop was standing the whole thing.

Stott and Skinner gave Billy Bunter glances of great disfavour as he came up, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles. Bunter would have palled on with anybody who had any money. But Skinner and Stott naturally felt a strong disinclination to see him pal on with their moneyed chum. If Snoop required any assistance in expending his new wealth, they were prepared to render all the assistance required. Billy Bunter was, from their point of view, superfluous.

"Let's take a stroll in the quad, Snoopey," said Skinner, ignoring Bunter. "Come on, Stott!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Don't get in the way, Bunter!" said Stott. "Come on, Snoopey, old scout!"

"I say, there's a letter for you, Snoopey!" shouted Bunter, as Stott shoved him to one side.

"Oh, good!" said Snoop. "I was expecting a letter."

"I saw it in the rack, old chap."

"Don't you bother, Snoopey," said Skinner. "I'll get it for you."

Skinner rushed away down the passage. He was ever so willing to oblige Snoop. Billy Bunter grinned after him, and drew a letter out of his pocket.

"Here you are, Snoopey," he said affectionately. "I thought I'd bring it to you."

"He, he, he!" cackled Snoop.

"There's a fiver in it," said Bunter.

"Eh? How do you know what's in my letter?" exclaimed Snoop. "Why, it's open! You prying porpoise!"

"It came open by accident as I took it out of the rack," explained Bunter.

Snoop grunted, and drew the letter out of the envelope and a five-pound note from the letter. The letter he put into his pocket at once, without looking at it. The fiver remained on view.

"A whole giddy fiver!" exclaimed Stott.

"I say, Snoopey, old man, that's ripping!" said Bunter, in honeyed tones. "Do you remember, Snoopey, when I used to get fivers from my pater I used to whack them out with you?"

"I remember you jolly well didn't!" said Snoop.

Skinner came back along the passage, with an exasperated expression.

"It's gammon!" he growled. "There's no letter for you in the rack!"

"Bunter's brought it," said Snoop.

"And you sent me along for nothing, what, you fat bounder!" exclaimed Skinner wrathfully. "Sit down!"

"Yow-ooop!" roared Bunter, as Skinner grasped his fat shoulders, and sat him down forcibly on the floor. "Yow! Beast! Woooop!"

"So it's a fiver?" said Skinner, his eyes glistening. "That's topping! Mrs. Mimble will change it for you, if you like, Snoop."

"We'll come with you," said Stott.

Billy Bunter scrambled up, jamming his glasses straight on his fat little nose.

"I'll come with you, Snoop, old man."

"I guess I'll see you through, old pal," said Fisher T. Fish, joining them.

Snoop grinned. At this rate he was likely to have quite an imposing escort to the tuckshop for the purpose of changing the fiver.

"I'm not changing it now," he said.

"Not?" grunted Bunter. "I say, Snoopey——"

"Better change it," said Skinner persuasively. "Fivers get lost, you know. Safer to have it in change. I could do with a ginger-pop, too."

"Same here," said Stott.

"I guess you can't do better than change it, Snoopey," said Fisher T. Fish. "Suppose it should get lost, you know."

Snoop chuckled.

"It won't get lost, unless Bunter bones it!" he said. "Besides, there's a number on it, isn't there? I'll take the number. I'm keeping this for the excursion to-morrow afternoon, you fellows. I've got some change as well—over a quid."

"I guess you've struck ile, and no mistake," said Fish.

"My people are doing pretty well," said Snoop carelessly.

"That from your popper?"

"My what?"

"Popper—your pater, you know."

Snoop flushed. His pater was, as a matter of absolute fact, in a certain Government establishment reserved for gentlemen who mix other people's money with their own. That was an uncomfortable fact which Snoop found it hard to live down, though there were few fellows who were injudicious enough to remind him of it.

"From my uncle," said Snoop, after a pause—"my rich uncle."

"Never knew you had one," said Skinner.

"Well, you know now!" snapped Sidney James.

"Lucky bargee to have a rich uncle!" said Skinner cordially. "I've got half a dozen poor uncles I'd swap for him, if you liked."

Snoop opened his pocket-book, and copied down the number of the note. His chums watched him with great interest. It was seldom that they had occasion to take the numbers of five-pound notes.

"No. 0006666," said Snoop. "That's right, isn't it?"

"Correct," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Now, if Bunter is seen swanking presently with a fiver we'll ask to see the number!" grinned Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you rotters!" roared Bunter wrathfully.

"Well, you stuck to a banknote belonging to Wingate once," said Skinner. "You thought it was yours—because you wanted it, I suppose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Snoopey, considering that I used to whack out my fivers and tenners with you——" began Bunter.

"Bow-wow!"

"Besides, you owe me a quid," said Bunter. "I distinctly remember lending you a quid out of my last fiver——"

"Your memory's much more distinct than mine, then," said Snoop.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Snoop's friends. The slightest remark of a humorous nature from the happy possessor of the five-pound note was sufficient to set his dear pals in a roar.

"Well, I suppose you want me to come to-morrow?" growled Bunter.

"Not at all."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you rotter, Snoop——"

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"I guess we're not allowing you to call Snoop names, you galoot!" said Fisher T. Fish sternly. "Bump the fat mugwump!"

"Here, leggo! My hat! Yaroooooop!"

Bump!

Snoop and his dear friends walked away chuckling, leaving Billy Bunter gasping on the floor. The fat junior blinked and gasped, and gasped and blinked.

"Yow-ow! Beasts! Yow-ow-oop!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry, coming along, and pausing to stir Bunter with his boot. "Taking a rest on the floor, tubby?"

"Yow-ow! Keep your hoof away, you beast! Help me up, can't you!" howled Bunter.

"Certainly, my fat tulip."

Bob Cherry grasped Bunter's fat ears, and helped him up. That was not the kind of help Billy Bunter wanted, and he roared protestingly.

"Yah! Oh! You fathead! Leggo! I'll mop up the passage with you!" roared Bunter, rubbing his ears.

"Go ahead!" said Bob encouragingly.

"I say, Bob, old man," said Bunter, suddenly dropping the idea of mopping up the passage with Bob Cherry, "Snoop's had a fiver——"

"Lucky bargee!" said Bob.

"And he owes me two quids, and won't settle up——"

"Bow-wow!"

"I say, Bob, old fellow, you can lick him, you know. You could lick him as easy as anything," said Bunter. "Come on! I'll hold your jacket!"

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Well, I feel quite fit to lick somebody," he remarked. But I won't lick Snoop. I'll lick you, Bunter."

"Why, you silly ass—— You rotter! Help—murder—fire—help!"

Bob Cherry sauntered away, leaving Billy Bunter on the floor once more, not much hurt, but quite out of breath. Billy Bunter's luck was evidently out that afternoon.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.
The Missing Fiver!

SIDNEY JAMES SNOOP'S fiver was soon known far and wide.

Snoop had been so hard up for a long time that his new prosperity was bound to attract some attention, even if he had not "swanked" about it.

But he did swank.

More than once his fiver was brought out for inspection, and Snoop was heard talking in loud tones of the motor-car trip that was to come off on the morrow. Indeed, from Snoop's manner, as Johnny Bull remarked with disgust, it might have been supposed that nobody at Greyfriars had ever seen a fiver before.

Johnny Bull had a fiver in his pocket, a tip from his affectionate uncle in Australia, but it never occurred to him to "swank" on the subject. But he was more accustomed to money than Sidney James was.

Johnny Bull's fiver, however, was known about; Snoop had seen him take it from his uncle's letter. Snoop had been very interested of late in Johnny Bull's correspondence, and whenever Bull went near the letter-rack Snoop was sure to be hovering near. Not that Johnny observed it. The sturdy junior never wasted a thought on Snoop.

Harry Wharton & Co. heard all about Snoop's famous fiver—it would have been difficult not to hear about it. But they were more immediately concerned with Johnny Bull's fiver. The next half-holiday they were expecting a visit from Courtenay and the Caterpillar, their chums at Highcliffe School, and it was agreed that Johnny Bull, being so handsomely in funds, was to stand an extra-special feed on that occasion.

In the dormitory that night Snoop's fiver came on view once more; he showed it to Bolsover major and Bulstrode. Then he stowed it carelessly into his pocket.

"Better take care of that, with Bunter in the dorm," said Bulstrode.

"Yah! Rotter!" came from Billy Bunter.

Kipps and the Bounder exchanged a peculiar glance, but they made no remark. Wingate of the Sixth came in to turn out the lights.

The Remove turned in.

There was the usual buzz of talk from bed to bed, and then silence and slumber. But that night there were three, at least, of the Remove who did not sleep.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The rising-bell awakened the Greyfriars Remove to a new day. The wintry dawn was creeping in at the high windows.

Bob Cherry, as usual, was first out of bed. Also, as usual, he dragged the bedclothes off Billy Bunter and Lord Mauleverer. Bob was always ready to render those little services to slackers.

"Oh, begad!" mumbled his lordship.

"Beast!" howled Billy Bunter.

And they turned out.

Kipps glanced at Snoop, as the black sheep of the Remove turned out of bed. There was a peculiar gleam in the eyes of the schoolboy conjurer. Snoop was looking a little pale and unquiet. Perhaps he was troubled with a twinge of conscience.

"Not feeling fit, old chap?" asked Skinner.

"Eh! Oh, yes!" said Snoop. "I'm all right."

"You look a bit seedy."

There was a snort from Johnny Bull.

"Smoking again, I suppose," he remarked.

Snoop gave Johnny Bull a strange look.

"Can't you mind your own business?" he asked. "Can't you let me alone, Bull?"

"I wouldn't touch you with a yard-measure!" grunted Johnny Bull. "You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself, all the same. A chap has no right to make himself seedy by smoking. You look as yellow as a quid."

"I suppose I can look as I like!" growled Snoop. "It might pay you better to keep your remarks to yourself!"

"Oh, rats!"

Snoop proceeded to dress himself. His ablutions did not take him long; he was a slacker in all things.

"Going to be a fine day, I guess!" remarked Fisher T. Fish, looking from the window. "Ripping for that little run this afternoon, Snoopey."

"Yes; looks like it," said Snoop.

"Got the fiver safe?" said Stott.

"Of course." Snoop thrust his hand into his pocket. "Why—what—where—— Look here, if this is a joke of you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter?"

"My fiver's gone!"

"Gone!" howled Skinner and Stott and Fish with one voice.

"Yes, gone!"

"What rot!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Do you mean to say somebody's picked your pocket last night, Snoop?"

"I mean to say that my fiver's gone," said Snoop obstinately. "Look at my pocket." He turned out the lining. "You saw me put it in that pocket, Bulstrode?"

"Yes, I did," assented Bulstrode.

"You can see it's gone."

"Oh, dash it all, it's a silly practical joke!" growled Bob Cherry uneasily. "Nobody's taken it to keep, I jolly well know that!"

"Bunter!" exclaimed Skinner.

"Oh, really, you fellows——"

"Bunter!" said Harry Wharton, his brows contracting. "Billy, you fat silly ass, you can't have been idiot enough——"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Bunter!" roared Peter Todd. "If you've——"

"I haven't!" yelled Bunter. "Do you think I'd pinch Snoop's rotten fiver, you silly ass? I've been asleep all night."

"You're quite sure it's gone, Snoop?" asked Vernon-Smith quietly.

"You can look for yourself!" snapped Snoop.

"Better search Bunter," said Skinner. "You all know he mixes other people's money with his own. There was Wingate's banknote once——"

"Oh, that's an old story!" said Johnny Bull. "I don't see why you should fix on Bunter. Turn out your pockets, Bunty, and show that you haven't got it."

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"I don't mind doing that," said Bunter, with a snort. "Snoop owes me three pounds, but I don't know anything about his rotten fiver. Hang his fiver, and hang him!"

"I didn't say it was Bunter," said Snoop, in an unsteady voice. "I only say the fiver's gone. I don't want to make a fuss about it. I dare say it's only some fool's practical joke, and we don't want a scandal. I won't say anything about it outside this dorm until this afternoon. If the chap who's taken it likes to give it back by dinner-time, the matter drops, so far as I'm concerned."

"That's all very well," said Skinner. "But you know Bunter—he always thinks another chap's money is his own. My idea is that Bunter's got it, and he'd better shell out!"

"You frabjous ass!" roared Bunter. "I haven't got it! You can go through my pockets if you like!"

"I jolly well will!" said Skinner.

Skinner and Stott and Fish, who were very keen after that fiver, did go through Billy Bunter's pockets. The Owl of the Remove glowered at them furiously. Billy Bunter's ideas of "meum et tuum" were certainly sometimes a little mixed. But this was rather too much. However, there was no sign of the missing fiver about Bunter.

"Satisfied, you rotters?" growled Bunter at last.

"Well, I'm not!" said Skinner. "I admit we can't find it."

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

The Remove went down to breakfast, most of them in a very uncomfortable frame of mind. It certainly looked as if there was a thief in the Remove dormitory—though the juniors hoped that it would turn out to be simply a practical joke.

Snoop had made so much of his fiver that some thoughtless fellow might have taken it into his head to hide it somewhere, to give Sidney James a scare. But as Snoop had announced that if the banknote was not returned that day he would report the theft to Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, there was a time-limit on the joke, if joke it was. That remained to be seen.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.
A Surprise for Johnny Bull!

"SOMETHING extra-special!" remarked Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five were discussing, and Squiff and Mark Linley and Peter Todd were helping them to discuss. Courtenay of Highcliffe was coming over to tea, and he was bringing some of his new football eleven with him—the Caterpillar and Smithson and Benson, and two or three more. There was to be an interesting talk on football and on the winter fixtures.

Naturally, the chums of the Remove wanted to entertain their guests right royally. Equally naturally, Johnny Bull's fiver from his uncle was placed at the disposal of the Co. for the purpose.

"The extraspeciality ought to be terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh. "Let us all go and see Mrs. Mimble's shopfully, and selectfully purchase the best that money can buy—our esteemed Johnny's money."

"Ripping!"

"Good egg!"

"Come on!" said Johnny Bull. "All hands to the mill!"

Inky's idea was evidently excellent. The whole party started for the tuckshop, across the Close, to lay out a good part of Johnny Bull's tip in the most judicious manner.

Sidney James Snoop was hanging about the door of the School House, with his hands in his pockets. Kipps and Vernon-Smith were seated on the stone balustrade chatting.

"Hallo!" said Kipps. "Have you fellows come into a fortune? You look chippy."

"We're going to change Johnny's fiver," said Nugent. "Everybody's going to lend a hand. You can come and help, if you like, you slackers."

"Certainly," said Kipps. "Mine's a ginger-pop."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Right-ho," said the Bounder, sliding off the balustrade. "It seems to be raining fivers. Snoopey has fivers—so many fivers that he leaves 'em about to get lost."

Snoop gave a sniff.

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"Your banknote hasn't turned up yet, Snoop?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I've heard nothing of it. If it doesn't turn up this afternoon, I shall have to go to Quelchy about it," said Snoop. "It's pretty clear that it's been stolen."

"If you think it's been stolen, the sooner you go to Quelch the better," said Harry Wharton drily.

"I don't want to get a chap into a row if it's only a practical joke," said Snoop.

"Chap who plays practical jokes with money deserves to get into a row," said Harry. "Come on, you chaps!"

The party started across the quad. Snoop hesitated on the steps, and called to Skinner, who was in the quad. Kipps, coming down the steps with a run, ran into Snoop, and threw his arms round him to keep from falling.

"Where are you running to, you fathead?" snapped Sidney James, staggering against the stone balustrade with Kipps clinging to him.

"Sorry, dear boy! Why do you get in the way?" said Kipps affably, and he released Snoop, and followed the other fellows across the quad.

Snoop scowled, and set his collar straight. Skinner joined him as he went down the steps.

"Come and have a ginger-pop," said Snoop.

"Certainly," said Skinner, with alacrity. "You haven't found the fiver yet?"

"No. It's been stolen right enough."

"Bet you it was Bunter," said Skinner. "I suppose that little run is all off, then?"

"Can't be helped, unless the fiver turns up. It's a queer thing," added Snoop, lowering his voice, as they walked towards the tuckshop. "That fellow Bull's got a fiver. Did you know he had one?"

"I think I heard of it yesterday," said Skinner. "He often has big tips from that blessed uncle of his."

"Oh, all right, then."

"Why, what on earth have you got into your head?" asked Skinner, in astonishment. "You don't think Bull would have pinched your fiver, do you?"

"I think it's queer he should have one, when mine's just been stolen."

"Phew!"

Skinner whistled, and his eyes gleamed. Anything that was "up against" the Famous Five was sure to find favour in Skinner's eyes.

"Let's jolly well ask to see the number of it," he said eagerly. "We'll take those cads down a peg—show 'em they're not above suspicion, you know. Of course, it can't be your fiver, but we'll pull Bull's leg about it."

"I shouldn't wonder if it was my fiver," said Snoop, in an obstinate tone. "I don't see why Bull should be above suspicion, any more than another chap."

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Skinner incredulously.

"Well, we're jolly well going to see the number," said Snoop. "Fivers ain't as common as blackberries in the Lower Fourth. A chap who has a five-pound note just after one's been stolen ought to account for it."

"What-ho!" said Skinner, rubbing his hands. "We'll put 'em through it, rather. I'll call Stott and Fishy; they'll back us up. There may be a row."

Stott and Fisher T. Fish willingly joined in the scheme of "baiting" the Famous Five. They had not the slightest belief that Johnny Bull's banknote was Snoop's banknote; but they were amiably willing to give Johnny and his chums an uncomfortable five minutes, if they could.

The quartette proceeded to the tuckshop, where Harry Wharton & Co. were very busy. Extensive purchases had been made, and some of them, in the form of ginger-pop and lemonade, were being disposed of on the spot. Mrs. Mimble had made out quite a big little bill on a sheet of wrapping-paper, and was counting out the change of Johnny Bull's banknote.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry as the four came in. "Come and ginger-pop with us. It's Johnny Bull's treat."

"We haven't come here for ginger-pop," said Snoop, in a sullen tone. "There's something I've got to say to you chaps. It seems that Bull has a five-pound note. Well, I've had a five-pound note stolen."

A sudden silence fell upon the merry party in the

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school shop. There was no mistaking the meaning of Snoop's words. Johnny Bull's face grew almost purple. He could not find his voice for some moments. When he found it, it came out in a roar like the bellow of an enraged bull.

"You sneaking cad!" Johnny's voice resounded through the tuckshop. "Do you mean to say that I've loned your beastly banknote?"

"Oh, Master Snoop!" ejaculated Mrs. Mimble.

"You—you crawling worm!" howled Bob Cherry, grasping Snoop by the collar. "How dare you? You—you unspeakable cad——"

"Scrag him!" shouted Squiff.

"Hands off!" yelled Snoop fiercely. "Hands off, Bob Cherry! I haven't come here to scrap with you. I'll take the matter before the Head, if you like. I've come here for my banknote!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Wharton, dragging Johnny Bull back.

"Let go, you duffer! I'm going to smash him!" roared Johnny.

"You can smash him presently," said Harry, holding Johnny Bull back by main force. "Easy does it! We'll go into this first."

"Do you think I've stolen Snoop's filthy money?" howled Johnny.

"Don't be an ass! I want to know what Snoop means by this," said Wharton "You can punch his head afterwards. Snoop, do you mean to say that you accuse Johnny of bagging your fiver?"

"Not exactly that," said Skinner, in some alarm. "Snoop means——"

"Shut up, Skinner! Snoop can speak for himself. Do you accuse Bull, or don't you, Snoop?"

Snoop drew a quick, gasping breath.

"Yes, I do!" he said, setting his teeth.

"Hyer, I say!" muttered Fisher T. Fish. "Draw it mild, Snoop! You've no right to say anything of the sort, you galoot!"

"Don't be an idiot, Snoop!" whispered Stott.

"I mean what I say!" said Snoop, pale, and with beads of perspiration upon his brow, but sullen and obstinate. "My fiver was stolen last night. Bull is changing a fiver to-day. I believe he's changing my fiver!"

"You must be mad!" exclaimed Wharton. "Is your fiver the only fiver in the kingdom, you slandering dummy?"

"Johnny had that note from his uncle," said Rake. "I saw him take it out of the letter."

"Faith, and so did I," chimed in Micky Desmond.

Every fellow in the tuckshop had gathered round now, in breathless excitement.

Snoop's accusation was simply astounding. So far as the juniors could see, he had no evidence whatever to go upon, excepting the fact that Johnny Bull was changing a five-pound note, and he had lost one.

Snoop shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm not surprised that Bull's friends back him up," he said, with a bitter sneer. "I expect you all to hang together."

"Why, you unspeakable cad!" exclaimed Wharton. "Do you think that Johnny has stolen your banknote, and we're all in the game to help him? Have you gone potty?"

"If that banknote is Bull's, he can prove it," said Snoop, biting his lip. "Banknotes have numbers on them. I know the number of mine."

"Do you remember the number, Johnny? That will settle it; and then you can mop up that sneaking cad!"

"How should I know the number?" snorted Johnny Bull. "It began with noughts, I remember that. That's all I know."

"I know the number of mine," said Snoop. "Skinner saw me take the number down. So did Stott and Fishy. They can prove it. I've got the number here."

Snoop opened his pocket-book, and showed the number he had entered there—0006666.

"That's right," said Skinner. "But——"

"Let Mrs. Mimble show us that banknote she's changed," said Snoop. "If it's the same number, it's mine. If it isn't, I withdraw what I've said."

"Lend me the note a minute, Mrs. Mimble, please."

"Certainly, Master Wharton."

The good dame took the banknote out of the till, and passed it across the counter to the captain of the Remove. Wharton read out the number.

"Nought nought nought three five seven nine!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.
A Surprise for Snoop!

SNOOP staggered.

He almost fell against the counter of the tuckshop, his face ghastly pale, and his eyes very nearly starting from his head.

There was a deep breath of relief from the juniors. Snoop's accusation had astounded them; but it had been made so confidently, that a strange uneasiness had crept into many hearts. It seemed incredible that Snoop should make such a terrible accusation without proof.

But the number on the note, of course, settled the matter. Johnny Bull's banknote belonged to an entirely different series.

"You thundering idiot!" said Wharton. "Of course the number's different!"

Snoop tried to pull himself together.

"It's a lie!" he almost screamed.

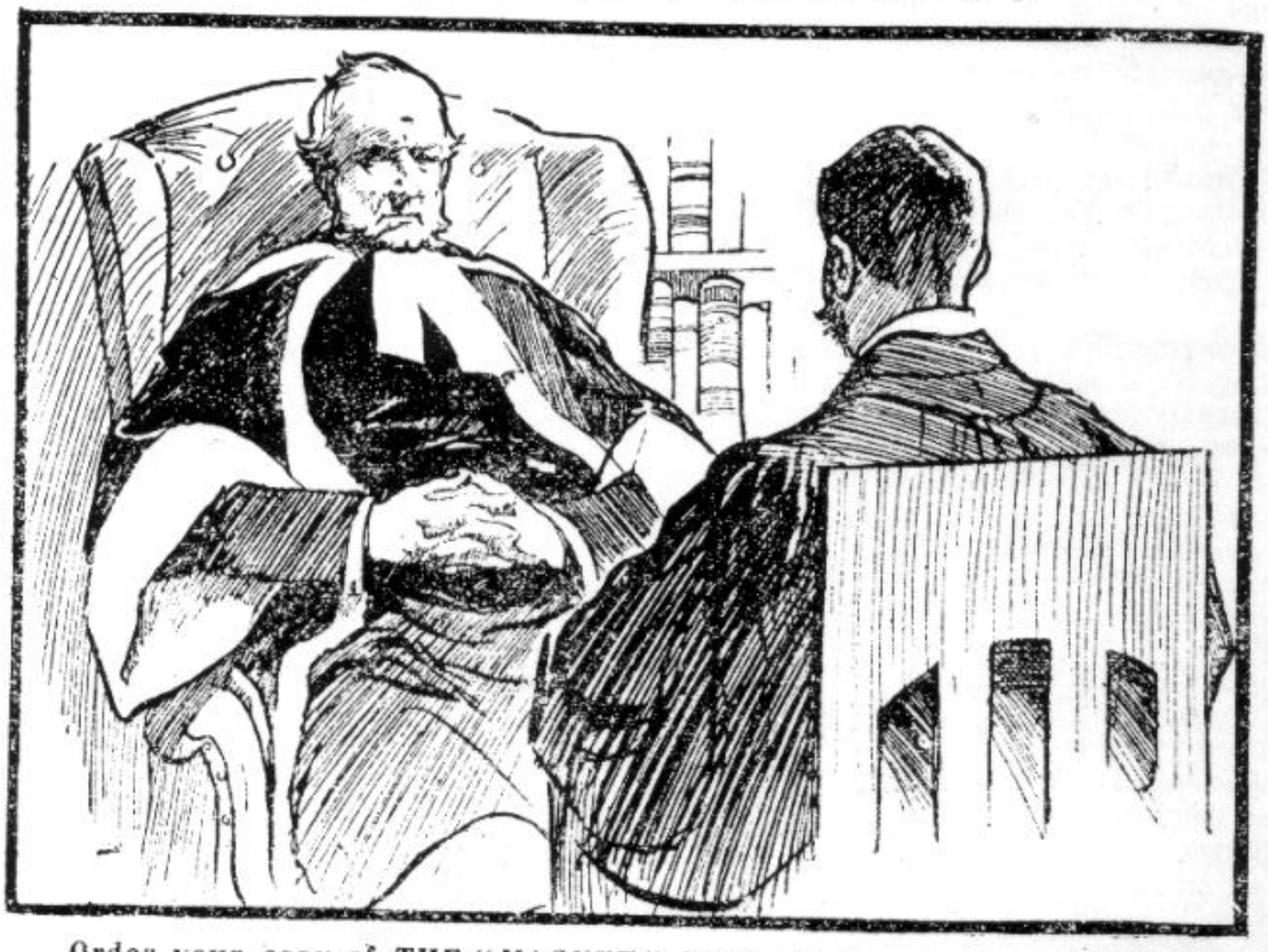
Wharton's eyes blazed.

"What's a lie, you hound?"

"You've read out a false number, to shield him!" yelled Snoop, panting. "Let me see the note. It's a lie—I know it's a lie!"

Wharton clenched his fist hard; but he held his hand. He passed the banknote to Snoop. Half a dozen fellows read the number as well as Snoop.

"The Jape of the Season!"
By FRANK RICHARDS.
NEXT MONDAY.



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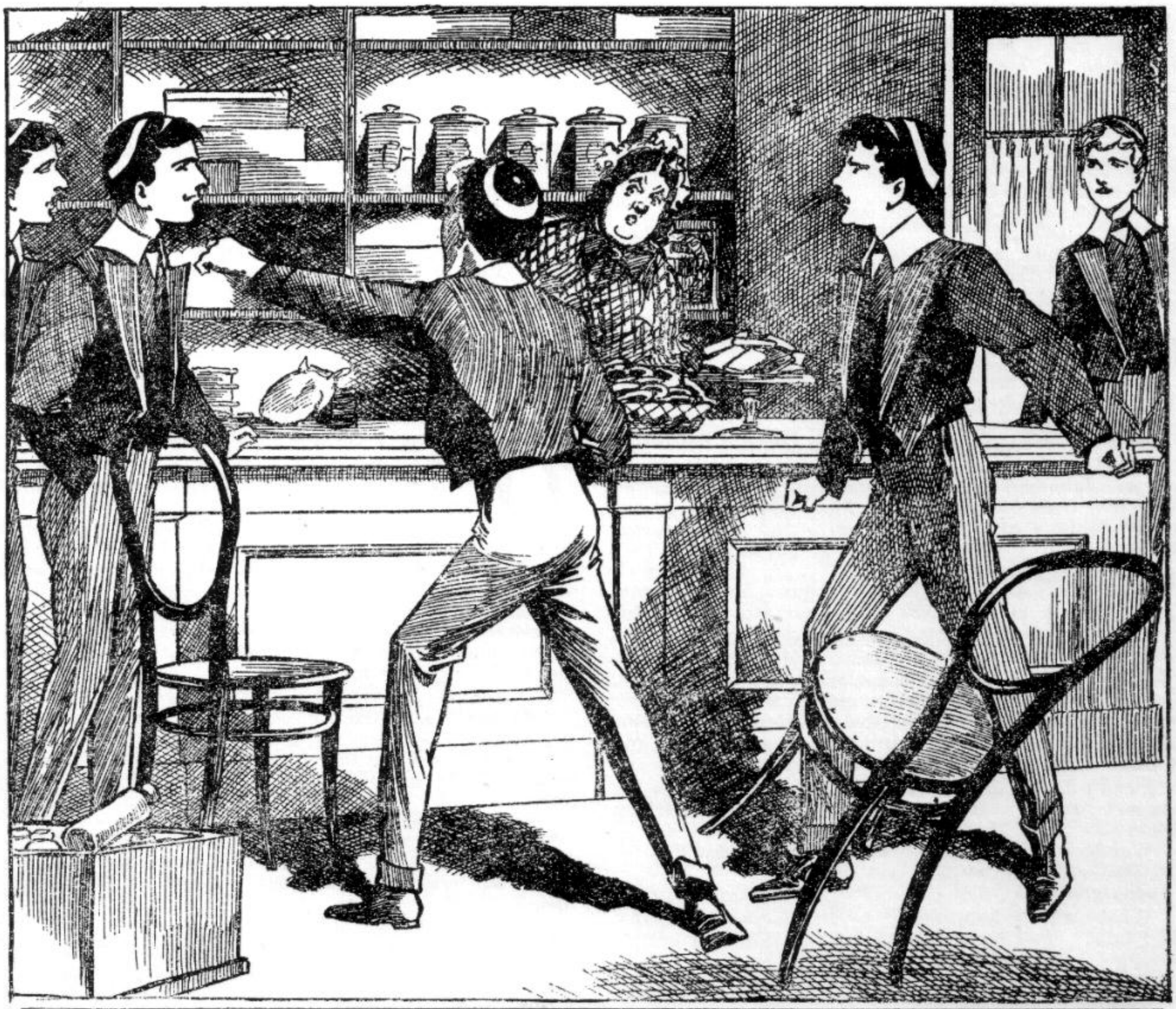

"You sneaking cad!" Johnny Bull's voice resounded through the tuck-shop. "Do you mean to say that I've boned your beastly banknote?" *(See Chapter 9.)*

"0003579."

There was no doubt about it. Snoop could not doubt the evidence of his own eyes. He gazed at the number on the note as if in a trance.

"Well," said Johnny Bull, in a voice like the rumble of thunder, "are you satisfied now, you lying cad?"

Snoop did not speak. His face was ghastly, his eyes shining with a light of hysteria. He leaned heavily on the counter. But for its support, he would have fallen to the floor.

"Speak up, you worm!" said Nugent. "Do you lay claim to that note, after telling us that your own had a different number?"

"It isn't Snoop's note," said Skinner. "I know the number of his note. This one is a different number. I think Snoop's gone potty."

"Why don't you speak, you fool?" shouted Johnny Bull.

Snoop tried to speak, but only a husky mumble came forth. His glance was almost wild. He had evidently been quite certain that the banknote Bull had passed across the counter was the stolen note. The discovery that it was a different note had knocked him completely off his balance.

"It's a trick!" he gasped at last.

"What's a trick?" said Vernon-Smith.

"I—I suppose Bull had two notes—I—I mean, I believe he's got my note about him, and this is another," stammered Snoop

"So you're keeping it up, are you?" roared Johnny Bull, in as much amazement as anger. "You measly worm, you're still saying that I've stolen your fiver?"

"Hold on!" said Kipps, pushing the excited Johnny Bull back. "Hold on! It isn't proved yet that Snoop's note isn't in his pocket all the time."

"Well, as a matter of fact, it isn't," said Wharton. "We took his word for it that it was gone."

"It is gone!" howled Snoop. "You know it. Bulstrode saw me put it in my breast-pocket, and this morning the pocket was empty."

"Let's see for ourselves," said the Bounder coolly. "Turn out that precious pocket, and let's see if there's anything in it."

"Yes, turn it out," said Kipps.

"What rot!" snarled Snoop. "I tell you it was gone ——"

"We'll satisfy ourselves about that," said Harry Wharton. "You've come here and told a beastly lie about Johnny Bull. You hadn't the faintest grounds for suspecting him, even if you were cad enough to suspect him. It looks to me as if you've got this up because he licked you the other day."

"Lies from start to finish, and the banknote in his pocket all the time!" exclaimed Rake.

"Turn out your pockets!"

Snoop, with a savage gesture, obeyed. He turned out the lining of his breast-pocket, and gave a sudden, horrified gasp as a banknote fluttered out. There was a yell from the crowd of juniors.

"There it is!"

Squiff caught the note as it fluttered to the floor. He held it up, and a dozen pairs of eyes scanned it, a dozen voices shouted out the number:

"Nought nought nought six six six six!"

"That's the number!" said Skinner. "My hat, Snoopey, I must say that was a rotten trick to play! You never lost the note at all."

Snoop looked at the note with starting eyes.

"There's your note," said Squiff. "Put it in your pocket. And then come along to the gym. I'll be your second, Johnny!"

Snoop did not move or speak. He stood gazing about him wildly. He found his voice at last.

"I—I—I think I must be going mad! I—I——"

He broke off suddenly, and lurched forward heavily.

He had fainted.

It was Johnny Bull's strong arm that caught him, and saved him from crashing on the floor. Snoop lay on the sturdy junior's arm, his face white and set, his eyes closed.

"Shamming!" said Bulstrode.

"He's not shamming," said Johnny Bull shortly. "He's fainted. I think the young ass must be off his rocker. Too much smoking, perhaps. Get some water, somebody!"

Johnny laid the insensible junior on the floor. Mrs. Mimble hurried in with water, and it was dashed over Snoop's colourless face. Wharton unfastened his collar.

In a couple of minutes Snoop's eyes opened, wildly, and he gazed round him like a hunted animal.

"I can't do it!" he muttered thickly. "Hang you! I won't—I won't! It's too vile! You filthy German villain—— Ah!" He broke off abruptly.

"Wandering in his mind," said Nugent, in wonder.

"What's the matter with you, Snoop?"

Snoop groaned.

"What—what's happened?" he stammered. "I—I—did I faint? I—I'm not feeling well. I think my brain's turning. I—I must have dreamed I did it."

"Dreamed that you did what?"

"Nothing! Help me up!"

The juniors helped Snoop to his feet. Johnny Bull was looking at him curiously, but all his anger was gone now. Snoop was not in a condition for a visit to the gym, to have the gloves on. He looked more fit for a bed in the school hospital.

"Here's your banknote," said Squiff.

"Hang the banknote!" snarled Snoop. "I—I mean, give it to me. I—I'm sorry, Bull! It—it was a mistake, of course. I—I jumped to a conclusion. I'm sorry."

"I think you ought to be," said Johnny Bull. "I think you're out of your senses, Snoop. You can't be quite sane."

Snoop muttered something under his breath, and went out of the tuckshop with unsteady steps. He left the crowd of juniors in a buzz.

"Blessed if I get on to this!" said Wharton. "He must have thought he lost the note, or he wouldn't have been so kyboshed when it turned up in his pocket. But that was no excuse for accusing Johnny, without a shred of reason. Must be going weak in the crumpet."

"You fellows like to see some conjuring tricks?" asked Kipps blandly, and the Bounder gave a chuckle.

"Blow your conjuring tricks!" howled Johnny Bull. "Do you think we feel inclined for your monkey-tricks now, you ass? Go and eat coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Kipps.

"What are you cackling at now?" snorted Johnny Bull.

"I'm cackling at a silly duffer," said Kipps cheerfully. "His name's Bull, and he's remarkably like a bull—especially about the voice and the brains. Ta-ta!"

Kipps walked out of the tuckshop with the Bounder, laughing. Vernon-Smith was laughing, too.

"They don't like my monkey-tricks!" grinned Kipps. "I call that ungrateful."

The Bounder chuckled.

In the tuckshop Harry Wharton & Co. gathered up their purchases, and then bore them away to No. 1 Study. When the Highcliffe fellows came over, there were high revels in No. 1 Study, and the chums of the Remove forgot all about Snoop and his amazing conduct.

Sidney James Snoop was in his study, alone. He was pacing restlessly to and fro. His brows were wrinkled; his eyes feverish.

"Am I going off my dot?" he muttered a dozen times. "How did it happen? It's magic—black magic! I know I did it—I'd swear I did; and yet I must have dreamed it all, I suppose. And yet I couldn't have——"

The black sheep of the Remove was in an unenviable frame of mind.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.
Marked Money!

"QUIDS, by Jove!" said Stott.

It was two or three days after the peculiar incident in the tuckshop.

Stott came into his study, which he shared with Snoop. There was a clink of metal as he came in, and Stott looked decidedly envious as he caught the gleam of gold in the hands of Sidney James Snoop.

Snoop was counting sovereigns.

As most of the fellows in the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars counted their money by shillings, it was rather a pleasant occupation for Snoop.

"Rolling in filthy lucre—what?" said Stott.

"My hat!" said Skinner, who was following Stott into the study. "Been robbing a bank, Snoopey?"

"It's only change for a banknote," said Snoop carelessly. "My uncle is shelling out rather handsomely lately."

"Noble nunky!" said Skinner.

"How many? Five, by George!" said Stott. "Five giddy quids! Not even common or garden currency notes, but real solid quidlets! Don't let Bunter see them."

"Or Johnny Bull," said Snoop.

"Bull! Don't be an ass, Snoop!" said Skinner uneasily. "You made an awful bloomer the other day. I couldn't think what had come over you. You actually accused Johnny Bull of stealing your fiver without a shred of evidence—and it was in your pocket all the time."

Snoop shook his head.

"There was some trick about it," he said. "I felt certain Bull had it, and I believe it now. Very likely his uncle in Australia doesn't hand out such big tips in these hard times, and Bull doesn't like going short of tin. My belief is that he had my fiver, and somehow planted it on me when he found he was suspected. I know it wasn't in that pocket that morning."

"You'd better not repeat that outside this study," said Stott drily. "You'd get jolly well scalped!"

"I suppose I'm entitled to my own opinion," said Snoop. "My belief is that Bull is short of money, and won't own to it, and that he'd nail anybody's cash if he could."

"Rot!"

"And I don't feel safe with these quids, either," said Snoop. "He saw them in my hand, in the passage, and I saw him look at them. A thief in the place makes a fellow feel pretty uneasy."

"Blessed if I can understand you," said Skinner, puzzled. "You seem to have got it fixed in your head that Bull is a thief, and we all know he's as straight as a die. I don't like him any more than you do, but as for calling him a thief, that's all moonshine."

"We shall see," said Stoop obstinately. "I sha'n't be spending this money just yet. I'm going to buy some footer things on Saturday. Well, I'm jolly well going to mark these quids in case they're boned."

"It's against the law to deface coins of the realm."

"Blow the law!" said Snoop.

He had a penknife in his hand, and he proceeded to mark the coins, with his chums looking on. With the keen tip of the blade he made an incision round the figure of the dragon on each of the sovereigns.

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"Look at that!" he said. "I'd know these quids again now, and so would you fellows. If I miss any of them there will be trouble for the thief, that's all. You fellows keep this dark, of course."

"Lot of trouble for nothing," said Skinner, with a yawn. "You seem to be quite off your rocker, Snoop! Why not lock your money up, if you're nervous about it."

"I can't keep it locked up all the time. Besides, my desk isn't specially strong. Anybody could get at it."

"I'll tell you what, Snoopey. Lend me one of those quids, and I'll take jolly good care of it."

"Bow-wow!" said Snoop.

"Why not come down to the tuckshop and change one of them?" said Stott. "That'll give you less to look after, you know."

"Rats!"

The door was pushed open, and Kipps looked in. He glanced at the coins on the table, and smiled.

"Smithy here?" he asked

"No, he isn't."

"Oh, all serene! Whose quids?" asked Kipps, with interest. "Who's the giddy millionaire?"

"Snoopey," said Skinner. "He's rolling in it—fairly reeking with money. And he's marking it all in case naughty boys steal it."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Kipps.

He walked on down the passage chuckling. Snoop scowled.

"I asked you to keep that dark," he growled. "I don't want to put the rotten thief on his guard."

"Oh, rot!" said Skinner. "Kipps ain't a thief, I suppose. Johnny Bull isn't, either, for that matter. It's because you never have any money that you think everybody's after your quid or two. Bow-wow!"

Skinner strolled away whistling. He regarded it as decidedly stingy of Snoop to decline to lend him one quid out of five. It relieved his mind to speak plainly for once.

Kipps sauntered out into the Close, where he found the Bounder. Vernon-Smith was looking a little sleepy, though it was still the afternoon. He blinked at Kipps.

"Feeling like a nap?" grinned Kipps.

"Well, yes," admitted Vernon-Smith. "The fact is, it's telling on me. You can't miss your beauty sleep without feeling it in the long run, though I was used to late hours once upon a time. How long is this going on, Kippy?"

"Getting near the finish," said Kipps. "Our dear pal Snoopey is on the warpath again."

"What's the little game?"

"Marked money."

The Bounder whistled.

"How did you know?"

Kipps laughed.

"I've been keeping an eye on him. He's been gathering in quids. Not so jolly easy to gather in now, you know. Nearly everybody uses currency notes. Snoopey's had to ask for them specially. He's screwed two out of Mrs. Mimble, and got the others outside the school, I suppose. The banknote dodge might look fishy, played a second time; so he's come to marked money. Marked it in the presence of Stott and Skinner, so as to have witnesses, you know!"

"The awful cad!"

"Well, he is a worm, and no mistake!" agreed Kipps. "But he's going to have his lesson."

"It would be pretty bad for Johnny Bull if you hadn't got on to this, Kippy," said the Bounder thoughtfully.

"Yes. And only this morning he chased me with a cricket-stump, because I found a lizard down his back!" said Kipps. "It's an ungrateful world."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By the way, what's the time, Smithy?"

The Bounder put his hand to his waistcoat for his watch. Then he uttered an exclamation.

"My hat! Where's my watch?"

"Isn't it in your pocket?"

"No. I looked at it ten minutes ago, or about that, too! What the thunder—— It couldn't fall out of my pocket!" exclaimed the Bounder, puzzled.

"Johnny, old scout"—Kipps called to Johnny Bull as he came out of the house, and took him by the arm—"have you seen Smithy's watch?"

"Lots of times," said Bull.

"He's lost it!"

"Careless ass!" said Johnny Bull.

"I haven't lost it!" exclaimed the Bounder. "It's been taken out of my pocket."

"Perhaps Johnny can tell you where it is."

"I!" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"Well, my impression is that you've got it about you," said Kipps, dodging behind Vernon-Smith as the sturdy junior clenched his big fists. "Don't get waxy! Hand over the watch!"

"You silly ass!" roared Johnny Bull wrathfully.

"What the dickens do you mean, Kipps?" exclaimed the Bounder. "You know jolly well that he hasn't got it."

"I know he has," said Kipps. "What's that bulging in his jacket pocket, then?"

Johnny Bull thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew out a watch. The Bounder gave a shout.

"My watch, by gum!"

"Your watch!" said Johnny Bull dazedly.

"It's mine," said the Bounder, taking it. "Look here, Bull, that's a rotten, stupid joke to play."

"Why, you frabjous ass, I didn't know——"

"Now you'd better hand Johnny Bull his watch, Smithy," said Kipps smoothly.

"'Tain't his watch; it's mine."

"I mean the one in your pocket."

"There isn't a watch in my pocket, fathead!"

"Rats! I can hear it ticking."

"My—my hat! So can I!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, in amazement. He thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew out a big silver watch.

"My watch!" roared Johnny Bull, his hand going to his own pocket. It was empty.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Kipps, in great delight.

"Oh!" gasped the Bounder. "You—you funny ass, this is some more of your dashed conjuring, is it? You've our watches!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You thumping idiot!" roared Johnny Bull. "I'll teach you to play your blithering tricks on me!"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Kipps. "Only a joke, you know. Oh, crumbs! Keep off! Lend a hand, Smithy! Why, you beast—— Oh, my hat!"

The Bounder did lend a hand, but he lent it to Johnny Bull. With the two incensed juniors grasping him, the schoolboy conjurer was swept off his feet.

Bump!

"Yah!"

"There, you funny idiot!" shouted Johnny Bull. "Now you won't be so funny again. Give him some more."

Bump! Bump! Bump!

Johnny Bull and Vernon-Smith walked off, leaving Kipps sprawling on the ground, dusty and full of pains and aches, with his cap stuffed down his back. Kipps sat up and gasped spasmodically.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Yow! Wooooooop!"

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Accused Again!

"BLOW the rising-bell!" said Frank Nugent, as he sat up in bed and yawned the next morning. "I believe Gossy gets up earlier and earlier every morning. Yaw-aw-aw!"

"Turn out, slacker!" said Bob Cherry. "I'll help you!"

"Keep that sponge away, you ass!"

Nugent was out of bed before Bob could get at him with the wet sponge. Bob Cherry looked round, and Billy Bunter and Lord Mauleverer turned out hastily, without waiting for his assistance. Kipps was crawling sleepily out of bed. But Vernon-Smith was still fast asleep. He had not even heard the rising-bell.

"Well, of all the slackers!" said Bob Cherry. "Smithy, it's time to get up. You'll be late for brekker at this rate."

And Bob cheerily squeezed the sponge over Vernon-Smith's face. There was a loud gasp from the Bounder as he started up, then a loud crack, and Bob

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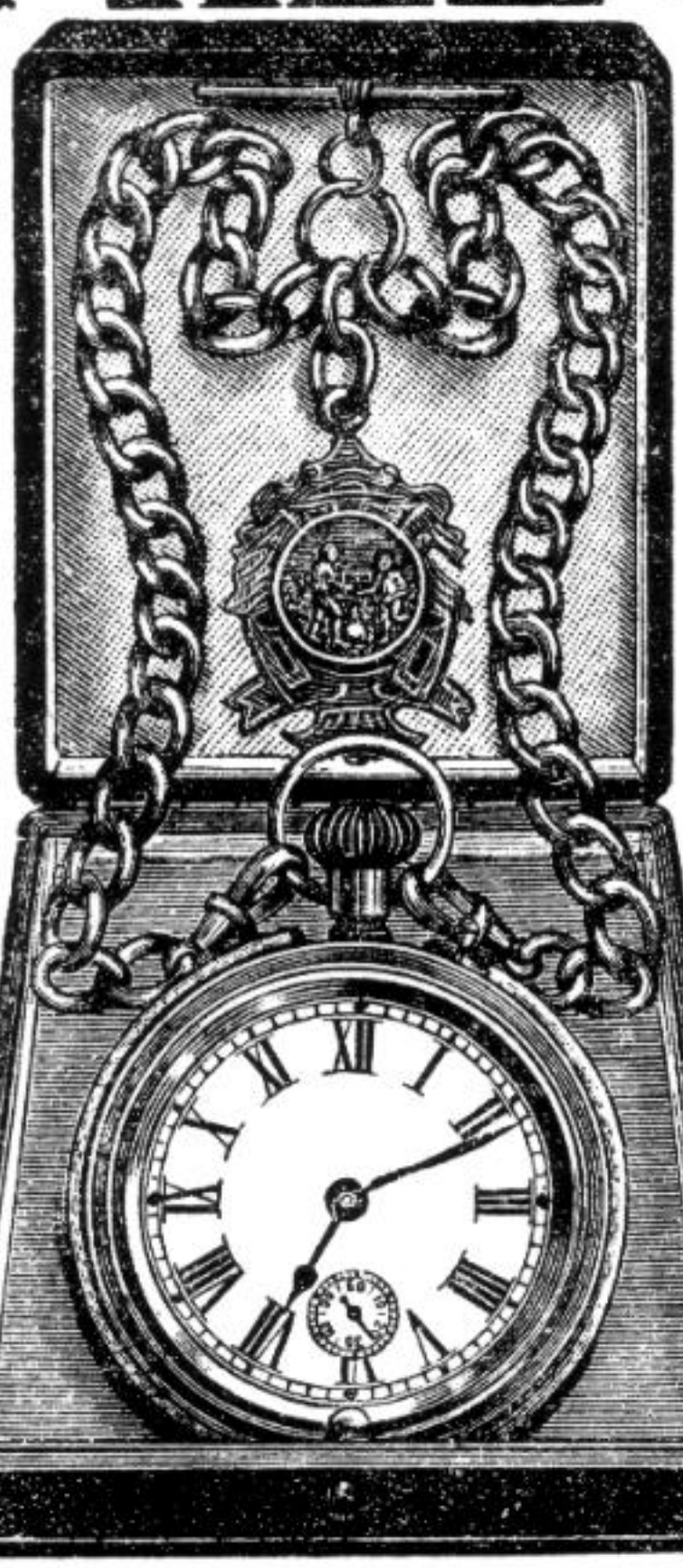

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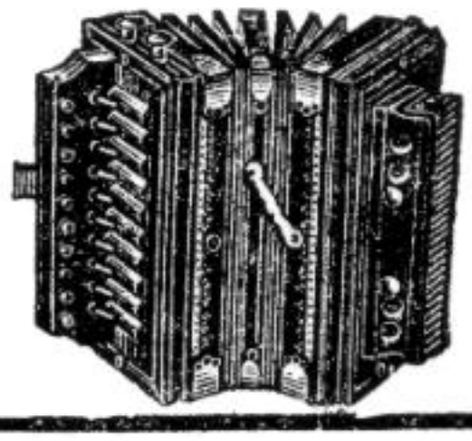

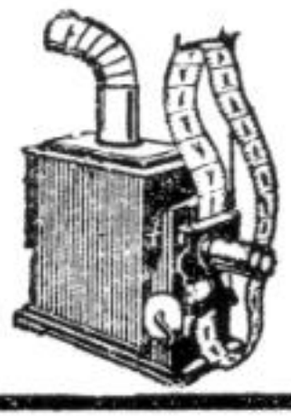

Cherry staggered away with a howl of anguish. The Bounder's head, as he jumped up, had come into violent contact with Bob's chin.

"Ow! Ow!" roared Bob. "You silly ass!"

"Wow! My head!" gasped the Bounder.

"Oh, my chin! You've busted my jaw, you fathead!" wailed Bob Cherry.

"You've nearly busted my napper with your silly chin!" growled the Bounder, rubbing his head. "'Tain't rising-bell yet, is it?"

"It's stopped," said Harry Wharton. "You're sleepy this morning."

"By Jove, I am!" said the Bounder, yawning.

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter. "Smithy's been out on the tiles again. He, he, he! I say, Smithy, how are they getting on at the Cross Keys? Yoooooop!" concluded Billy Bunter as the Bounder's pillow smote him with a mighty swipe. The Owl of the Remove curled up on the floor and roared.

"Have some more?" asked Smithy.

"Yow-ow-ow! No, you beast! Grooooh!"

Billy Bunter's cackle was heard no more. But some of the Removites looked very curiously at Vernon-Smith. The Bounder's old reputation had not been forgotten, and certainly he seemed very sleepy that morning.

He seemed sleepy again in class that morning, and once or twice Mr. Quelch looked at him rather oddly. After morning lessons the Bounder was yawning as he came out into the Close with Kipps. He was very chummy with Kipps of late, though his chumminess did not extend to showing a due appreciation of Kipps' conjuring tricks.

"Blessed if I don't feel like a boiled owl!" said the Bounder, rubbing his eyes. "I fancied that Quelchy spotted it this morning. Can't keep it up much longer, Kippy."

"I'm feeling the same myself," said Kipps, yawning, too. "But we're coming to the giddy climax. Keep an eye on Snoopey. The circus will begin soon."

The "circus," as Kipps called it, began quite suddenly. The Famous Five were chatting in the Close, when Sidney James Snoop bore down on them. Snoop was looking a little pale, but his lips were set. He strode up to Johnny Bull.

"I hear you've been talking about me again, Bull!" he exclaimed.

Johnny Bull regarded him with a look of supreme contempt.

"I don't know that I've troubled to talk about you," he said. "I don't remember. But if I've mentioned you at all it was probably to remark that you are a smoky cad."

"Well, I'm not standing it. You think I funk a scrap with you, and I'll jolly well show you that I don't!"

Snoop rushed at Johnny Bull as he spoke, and grasped him, and got his head into chancery. Johnny Bull was so astounded by the attack, from a well-known funk like Snoop, that for the moment he did not resist. The rest of the Co. looked on almost in stupefaction.

"What the merry dickens!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The worm has turned. The giddy lamb has changed into a raging lion! Mop him up, Johnny!"

Johnny Bull uttered a roar, and grasped Snoop. He had received three or four heavy punches, and he was wrathy. In the sturdy junior's powerful grasp Snoop simply crumpled up. The weedy slacker was like an infant in Johnny Bull's hands. They struggled for a few moments, and then Snoop went with a crash to the ground.

"Get up!" roared Johnny Bull. "Get up, you cad! Have some more!"

Snoop groaned.

"Buck up, Snoop!" said Harry Wharton. "You started it, you know. You can't leave off so soon. Play up!"

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"Wow-ow!" mumbled Snoop.

"Are you going to get up, you funk?" bellowed Johnny Bull.

"Yow-ow! No. I give you best. Woooop!"

Johnny Bull snorted.

"I've a jolly good mind to kick you round the quad!" he growled.

"He isn't worth it," said Harry, laughing. "Buzz off, Snoopey, and don't start in such a hurry next time. You're not a sticker, you know."

Snoop picked himself up, and limped away. He was more hurt than Johnny Bull, though Johnny had got in only one drive. That one drive had been enough to knock Sidney James completely out.

Snoop's nose looked very red, and larger than usual, when he came into the Form-room for afternoon classes. Mr. Quelch glanced at him severely

"You have been fighting, Snoop!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," mumbled Snoop

"With whom, pray?"

"Bull, sir."

"You will take a hundred lines each, Snoop and Bull!" said the Remove master.

Johnny Bull grunted. It was certainly rather hard lines on him, as he had not been by any means the aggressor. But he disdained to bandy accusations with the sneak of the Remove.

Snoop remained standing. The Form-master looked at him.

"You may take your place, Snoop."

"Please, sir, I have something to tell you."

Mr. Quelch frowned. He supposed that some tale-bearing was coming, and he did not approve in the least of tale-bearing.

"It—it's rather important, sir," said Snoop eagerly. "I—I've been robbed, sir!"

"What!"

"I—I mean some of my money has been stolen, sir."

There was a buzz in the Remove. Mr. Quelch's face was dark and frowning.

"I hope you are sure of what you say, Snoop!" he exclaimed. "Kindly tell me the particulars at once."

"I've missed a sovereign, sir," said Snoop, his voice faltering, in spite of himself, under the Form-master's penetrating glance. "I had several of them, and one has been taken."

"Indeed! I hope this is not correct, Snoop. I find it hard to believe that there is a thief in this Form."

"I—I think I know who did it, sir."

"His name, please."

"Bull!"

Johnny Bull jumped up.

"Me!" he roared. "So you're starting that again, you cad!"

"Silence, Bull!"

"Am I to be silent when I'm called a thief!" howled Johnny Bull.

"Silence, I say! I am not surprised at your indignation, Bull; but Snoop must be allowed to make his statement, which will be carefully inquired into. Snoop, tell me at once what reason you have for making this astounding accusation against your Form-fellow."

"Bull was fighting with me an hour ago, sir," said Snoop, speaking in a low but very distinct voice. "We—we struggled, and I noticed that he seemed to be groping about me; I didn't know why then."

"It's a lie!" howled Johnny Bull.

"Silence! Go on, Snoop!"

"Afterwards, sir, I missed the sovereign. Then it came into my head that he was after my money—he knew I had it."

"I didn't know anything about it!"

"Will you be silent, Bull!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I thought I ought to tell you, sir," said Snoop meekly. "I can't afford to lose a sovereign, and——"

"You did quite right to tell me, but I cannot believe that your suspicion is well founded," said Mr. Quelch. "However, we shall see. Have you any sovereigns about you, Bull?"

"Yes, sir—one. I've some currency notes, too—mine, not Snoop's," said Johnny Bull sarcastically. "Snoop knows I've got a quid—he asked me yesterday if I could give him gold for a currency note, and I mentioned it. I didn't give it to him, because I'm going to pay it in at the post-office."

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"Quite right, Bull," said Mr. Quelch approvingly. "It is everyone's duty to pay in gold at the post-office, according to the request made by the Government. I remember speaking to this Form on the subject. You are sure that you have only this one sovereign, Bull?"

"Quite sure, sir."

"If you please, sir, my sovereign was marked!" said Snoop.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.
Another Surprise for Snoop!

"MARKED!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

The Form-master fixed his eyes upon Snoop.

"Do you mean to say, Snoop, that you had marked money about you?"

"Yes, sir!"

"And for what reason?"

"I missed a banknote the other day, sir. It turned up all right, but—but I didn't feel safe about my money after that. I told Skinner and Stott. They saw me mark my money. They'd know the mark again."

"That's true, sir," said Skinner.

"It is very odd that you should have marked your money, Snoop. I do not approve of such a thing; it shows a distrust of your Form fellows, which I am certain is utterly unfounded, and is a proof of a carping, suspicious mind. However, it certainly simplifies the present matter. Bull, kindly show me your sovereign."

Johnny Bull came out before the Form, and laid his sovereign on Mr. Quelch's desk. The Form-master took it up, and adjusted his glasses, and examined it carefully.

"This coin bears no mark that I can see," he said.

"It's a scratch round the dragon, on the back, sir."

"There is no such mark here."

"But—but—but——"

"You may examine it yourself, Snoop."

Snoop came up to the desk with faltering steps. He picked up the sovereign, and examined it. There was not a trace of a scratch upon it.

"Well, Snoop?" said the Form-master, in a grinding voice.

"This—this isn't the quid, sir," panted Snoop. "Bull has another—I'm sure of it! He's got the other about him."

"Liar!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Control yourself, Bull! Snoop, your accusation is so serious that the matter must be sifted to the very bottom; but if it proves unfounded I warn you that I shall report you to the Head for a flogging," said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"Hear, hear!" came from Bob Cherry.

"Cherry, take fifty lines!"

"Oh!"

"Bull, I am sorry; but, for your own sake, this matter must be thoroughly sifted. I am sorry to say that you must be searched!"

Johnny Bull became crimson. Kipps jumped up in his place.

"May I speak, sir?" he exclaimed.

"You may speak, Kipps, if you have anything to say bearing upon this matter. Otherwise, you will be silent."

"But I have, sir," said Kipps. "The other day Snoop said he missed a banknote, and it was found in his own pocket. Very likely it's the same with the sovereign. Very likely it's in his own pocket all the time."

Mr. Quelch's brow became thunderous.

"If that is the case, Snoop, you will be flogged," he said. "How many sovereigns had you?"

"Five, sir," faltered Snoop. "Skinner knows. Now I've only got four."

"You had five sovereigns all marked?"

"Yes, sir!"

"You are aware whether that is correct, Skinner?"

"Certainly, sir!" said Skinner. "I saw Snoop marking them, and told him at the time it was all rot."

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"Same here, sir!" said Stott.

"Very well! Snoop, turn out your pockets. After making one absurd and wicked mistake, you have made another. Kindly place on my desk all the money you have!"

Snoop's manner was quite confident as he obeyed. He placed four sovereigns and several pieces of silver and some coppers on the desk.

"Is that all?"

"That is all, sir!"

"He hasn't turned out his jacket pocket, sir," came from Kipps.

"I never keep money in my jacket pocket, sir," said Snoop.

"However, turn it out."

Snoop turned out his jacket pocket.

Clink!

A sovereign fell to the floor and rolled along. Snoop started back, his face going white. It was evident that he had not known that the sovereign was in that pocket.

"Pick up that coin and hand it to me," said Mr. Quelch grimly.

Snoop obeyed like one in a dream.

Mr. Quelch examined the sovereign. Then he examined the four others. His brow was like thunder.

"This sovereign is marked in exactly the same manner as the others," he said. "This is the sovereign you stated you had lost, Snoop—the sovereign you have accused Bull of stealing."

Snoop panted. He could not speak. His eyes were starting from his head.

"You have placed the coin carelessly in the wrong pocket, and stupidly concluded that it had been stolen, and brought an utterly wicked and unfounded accusation against Bull!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "I warned you, Snoop, what would happen if your reckless accusation proved to be unfounded. You will be flogged by the Head!"

Snoop gasped for breath.

"Follow me," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall take you to Dr. Locke at once, and report the whole circumstances. I think, sir, after the lesson you will receive, you will be slower to make base accusations against honourable lads. Come!"

Snoop seemed rooted to the floor. As he did not move, the angry Form-master grasped him by the shoulder and marched him forcibly out of the Form-room.

The Remove were in a buzz. Every fellow was speaking at once. Kipps and the Bounder were grinning.

"Hark!" exclaimed Rake suddenly.

Through the open doorway, down the passage, there came the sound of a loud howl of anguish.

"Snoop's getting it," said Skinner.

"Serve him jolly well right!" said Harry Wharton. "He would have got it from us if not the Head, the measly rotter!"

"The Head's going it!" grinned Peter Todd.

"The go-fulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

It was indeed terrific. The Head's study was a good distance from the Remove Form-room: but the loud howls of the wretched Snoop could be distinctly heard. The Head was "going it" with unaccustomed vim. For a full five minutes those anguished howls were heard.

"The Head must be feeling a bit fagged," murmured Bob Cherry.

"And Snoop," said Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch came striding back into the Form-room at last. Snoop followed him. He was limping, or, rather, crawling, along, and his face was white and stained with tears. Evidently he had been through it. He sank into his place with a groan, and squirmed there incessantly. Snoop would rather have stood up just then.

But there was no sympathy for him. For a second time he had made a baseless accusation against Johnny Bull; for the second time the money he declared he had lost had been found in his own possession. That this was a "mistake" seemed a little too "steep"; it looked much more likely that Snoop had deliberately planned to set the stigma of theft upon Bull, and even Skinner was disgusted at that idea. Only scornful glances were turned upon the wriggling, squirming cad of the Remove.

The rest of the afternoon was a long-drawn-out horror to Snoop. He was fervently glad when lessons were over and he could crawl away to his study to groan to his heart's content.

He had been groaning there for about an hour, when the door opened, and Kipps and Vernon-Smith came in. Snoop looked at them with dull eyes.

"Come on!" said Kipps.

"Let me alone!" mumbled Snoop miserably.

"You're wanted. Take his arm, Smithy!"

Snoop was too dispirited to resist; and resistance would not have been of much use. Kipps and the Bounder, grasping his arms, marched him along the passage to No. 1 Study—marched him in and closed the door.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Laid by the Heels!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were in the study. They were looking puzzled and perplexed. The Bounder had told them that Snoop had a confession to make, and that they were to hear it. That was all they knew, so far.

"Here he is," said Kipps. "Lock the door, Smithy; we don't want to be interrupted. Here's the giddy criminal, you fellows!"

"Blessed if I understand——" began Johnny Bull.

"Oh, you don't understand anything!" said Kipps airily. "Snoop's got a confession to make, haven't you, Snoop?"

"No, I haven't," said Snoop savagely.

"Then I will make it for you," said Kipps calmly. "It's been an amusing little game, but it's come to the finish. You chaps will understand that there's some use in having a conjurer in the Form, when I've done. Have you ever heard of a German rascal named Falke—as big a rascal as the merry Kaiser himself?"

"Falke!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"You know all about him," said Kipps. "He's come back."

"What did I tell you fellows?" chortled Bob Cherry triumphantly. "It was Falke right enough that I saw the other day—I told you so. Falke, with his hair and moustache dyed."

"That's the johnny," said Kipps. "You remember shutting me up in the barn? Well, while I was there Snoop came in—with Falke. Falke's the man he was waiting for that day; he owes Falke money for gambling, and Falke's got the paper to prove it. He's been playing the same game with Snoop that he tried to play with Smithy once upon a time."

Snoop sank hopelessly into a chair.

"I heard all they said in the barn," resumed Kipps. "I told Smithy, and we chipped in together. We knew you fellows wouldn't be able to handle a thing like that——"

"You ass!" began Bob Cherry. "If you'd told us——"

"Bow-wow! The scheme was for the German to supply Snoop with money, and for Snoop to plant some of it on Bull, and accuse him of theft."

"What!" roared Johnny Bull.

"That's Falke's revenge for the showing-up he got last time. Snoop wriggled a bit, but he gave in. He did as he was told."

"I—I——" stammered Snoop.

"Do you mean to say that the money Snoop's had lately has come from that German?" exclaimed Nugent aghast.

"Every penny of it."

"Oh, the awful cad!"

"Yes, he is rather a worm," agreed Kipps. "But, you see, I was on the watch—and Smithy. We knew the little game, and we kept a business eye on Snoop. When he got up the other night, and put a banknote into Johnny Bull's pocket, I was wide awake—very wide. He took Johnny's banknote and put it into his own pocket—exchange no robbery, you know!"

"Wha-a-t? But——"

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"And when he was asleep again I got up," said Kipps calmly, "and took Johnny's banknote back, and replaced it, and put Snoop's note in my own pocket. The next day I planted it on Snoop—returned it to the owner, you know! That's how he came to find it in his own pocket in the tuckshop. One of my rotten conjuring tricks, you know," said Kipps, grinning.

"Oh!" gasped Snoop.

"Great Scott!"

"Yesterday he began again—Snoop's rather a sticker, you know. He had five marked quids. Last night he planted one of them in Johnny Bull's pocket in the dorm. It was Smithy's turn to keep awake and watch, and he spotted it, of course. Later on, when Snoop was sleeping the sleep of the just—ahem!—Smithy got that marked quid back from where Snoop had put it. The dear, thoughtful Snoop had taken Johnny's own quid, and put it into an inside pocket in his jacket. Smithy extracted it, and put it back where it belonged. He put Snoop's marked quid in my pocket."

"Your pocket?"

"Yes; you see, if he'd planted it back on Snoop, Snoopey would have found it very likely. This morning we waited for Snoopey to go ahead. He started a scrap with Johnny, so that he could make out that Johnny had picked his pocket when they were struggling——"

"So that was it!" howled Johnny Bull.

"That, my dear infant, was it," said Kipps. "Snoop didn't know that Johnny's quid was Johnny's own quid—and he didn't know that as we went into the Form-room I gave him back his own marked quid—dropped it into his jacket pocket."

"Oh!" gasped Snoop.

"So that's how it came to be found there," said Kipps cheerfully. "Snoopey got a flogging for making a false accusation against Johnny—not a bit more than he deserves. If Quelchy had known the facts, the rotter would have been expelled as well as flogged. But we don't want expulsions in the Remove, and my idea is that Snoopey has had enough. His feeling that time in the tuckshop must have been quite exhilarating—and again in the Form-room this afternoon, when his precious marked quid turned up in his own pocket. Must have made him think he was dotty, I should say."

"The villain ought to be sacked from the school," said Nugent. "We ought to go and tell Quelch this."

"You—you can't prove it!" stammered Snoop. "I—I——"

"Shush!" said Kipps. "We could prove it if we wanted to. Smithy and I are two good witnesses, and, besides, we'd give Quelch the tip to inquire where the money came from that you've been swanking with lately. You'd find it hard to account for it, my infant, if Quelchy asked your relations about it. You've had banknotes and quids, and told a yarn of a rich uncle. Could you produce that rich uncle, my pippin, and show him to Quelchy?"

Snoop sat dumb.

"But Snoop's had enough," said Kipps. "The flogging was the finish. He's a rascal; but, to do him justice, he would have defied that German villain if he had dared. But you know he hasn't the pluck of a white rabbit. We're letting Snoop off with this. It's the Hun we want."

Snoop's despairing face lightened a little.

"I—I was under his thumb," he whined. "He's got my I O U. He was going to show it to the Head, and get me sacked."

"We'll attend to that for you," said Kipps. "Now, my children, you see my ripping idea? We let Snoop go ahead, and played rotten conjuring tricks on him. You think my conjuring tricks are rotten, don't you?"

"Well, ahem——"

"And let him go on spending that Hun's money," said Kipps. "He must have screwed quite a lot out of the Hun in the last week. I've found the little game awfully amusing, and I'd have kept it up longer, only Smithy gets too sleepy, and he's gone on strike."

The Bounder grinned.

"I've missed a jolly lot of sleep," he said. "I'm fed-up!"

"You funny idiot!" said Johnny Bull, with a deep breath. "But—but I'm awfully obliged to you just the same. You've got me out of a scrape. Why, that blackguard would have made out that I was a thief. I might have been sacked!"

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"You jolly well would have been, but for me," said Kipps coolly. "But now Snoopey's played it out to a finish, and we want the Hun. Snoop's going to tell us where they've arranged their next meeting, and we're going instead of Snoop."

"Oh, good!" said Johnny Bull, clenching his hands.

"I—I——" muttered Snoop.

"Out with it, dear boy!" said Kipps. "Otherwise you're going to the Head—and you know what that will mean for you."

Snoop shivered.

"I—I've got to meet him to-night, in the barn," he muttered. "I've got to sneak out over the wall after dark. He'll be there at half-past seven."

"Good egg! We've done with you now, Snoop. Anybody got a boot to spare to kick a rotten cad out?" said Kipps, opening the door.

Seven boots were forthcoming at once, and they were planted behind Snoop as if the juniors were kicking for goal. Snoop disappeared into the passage with a wild howl.

* * * * * * *

"Ach! You have come, then?"

It was a muttering voice in the darkness of the barn. From the doorway a man with blonde face and black moustache was staring across the gloomy fields.

A boyish form had loomed up in the shadows before him.

"Yes, I've come!" said a cheery voice.

The German started back.

"Ach! That is not Snoop——"

"No; it's Johnny Bull," said Johnny. "And he's got this for you!"

A heavy fist, that seemed as hard as iron, was planted full in the startled face of the German. Friedrich Falke staggered back. Before he could recover himself there was a rush of feet, and a swarm of juniors were fairly clambering over him. Falke went to the ground with a crash.

"We've got him," said Kipps. "Now go through his pockets. We want Snoop's paper."

"Ach! I——"

"Shut up!"

Kipps went quickly through the German's pockets. A fat pocket-book came to light. It was full of papers, and among them Kipps soon discovered one signed "S. J. Snoop." He lighted a match, and the I O U was consumed.

"That lets Snoopey out," said Kipps. "These other papers may be useful to the police. I fancy the beast had other business in England, besides going for poor old Johnny. Hold on to his ears, and bring him along!"

A quarter of an hour later, Police-constable Tozer, making his rounds in Friardale Lane, was astonished by the sight of seven cheery juniors with a sullen-faced alien wriggling in their grasp. The juniors promptly handed the rascal over to Mr. Tozer, who, when he recovered from his astonishment, gleefully clapped handcuffs on the German, and led him away to the police-station. Friedrich Falke was safe now for a good many years to come; and Johnny Bull's danger, averted by Kipps, was never likely to recur.

* * * * * * *

Snoop was probably as relieved as anyone when the German rascal was sent to prison. To do him justice, rascal as he was, he was glad that his dastardly scheme had not succeeded—now that he was safe himself. Harry Wharton & Co. said nothing of what they knew of the scheme, and Snoop was safe; though perhaps the scorn and contempt of the juniors was a bitter enough punishment to him.

Kipps was the hero of the hour in No. 1 Study. And Johnny Bull, the next time he found his watch in his hat and his penknife in his boot, made an effort and refrained from "scragging" the Greyfriars Conjurer.

THE END.

(Do not miss "THE JAPE OF THE SEASON," next Monday's grand story of the chums of Greyfriars, by FRANK RICHARDS.)

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The Prince of Altenburg!

A Great New Serial Story dealing with the Thrilling Adventures of Two British Schoolboys.

By ANTHONY THOMAS.

THE FIRST INSTALMENTS.

Two boys of St. Dunstan's School, JACK DARRELL and TEDDY BURKE, fall into the hands of LEWIS MACKAY.

Mackay, under the impression that Jack Darrell is the Prince of Altenburg, kidnaps both him and his chum Burke.

The chums eventually find themselves on the Kielberg, a German cruiser, under the care of BARON ZELLING.

DERWENT HOOD, chief of the British Counter-Espionage Department, goes in search of the Kielberg on H.M.S. Chatswood. The German cruiser, being hard pressed, seeks refuge up the River Kunene, on the West Coast of Africa, where she runs aground.

Accompanied by two members of the Chatswood's crew named Dexter and Walters, Hood proceeds up the river in a motor-launch. They succeed in rescuing the two boys; but owing to the vigilance of their German pursuers, are forced to go into hiding.

Darrell again falls into Baron Zelling's hands, and is taken to a village in German South-West Africa.

The unexpected arrival of a British Force causes the baron to make a hurried flight with his captive in a motor-car.

They are, however, stopped, and detained by a British outpost party; and the sergeant, addressing the baron, exclaims:

"Now, sir, where is your pass? Quick! We haven't much time to waste on jobs of this kind!"

(Now go on with the story.)

Sergeant Ruffle's Mistake.

In the rough hut, ten miles or more outside Windhoek, Baron Zelling experienced one of the most awkward moments of his life.

On either side of him was a South African trooper, rifle in hand; his two companions were in practically the same position, while the chauffeur of the car had been allowed to rest on the box standing in the corner of the hut. He had been injured in the disaster which had overtaken the car, and was now too dazed and shaken to cause any serious trouble.

Jack Darrell, still bound to his guard, stood at the end of the little line; a trooper stood just in front of him, looking down the row, ready for the first sign from any of them.

The sergeant had left his chair almost as soon as Jack spoke, and he now faced Baron Zelling, repeating the question he had first asked him.

"Where's your pass?" he demanded, and the little line of prisoners and guards watched Zelling, wondering what answer he would make.

As usual Zelling did just what he was least expected to do. The question, instead of increasing the anger which he had shown since being dragged into the hut, seemed to amuse him.

He shook his head and smiled.

"No, sergeant, I have no pass," he answered. "Indeed, I was assured that there would be no need for one. However, if you are in command here and refuse to let me go without a pass"—he shrugged his shoulders as though the matter were one of complete indifference to him—"I suppose you will have a good reason to give for your action. And I hope you can make me fairly comfortable for the night?"

If Zelling had hoped to weaken the sergeant's decision, however, he failed.

"I'll answer for it!" he retorted. "Mills, Ranford! Take these two and put them in the other hut. I'll fix the guard up at once."

Two of the troopers came forward, and in no uncertain fashion indicated to Zelling and his naval companion that a quick march was required of them. Zelling made no protest, but Jack, watching him the whole time, guessed that he had no intention of accepting his lot quietly.

But for the moment he did as he was bidden, and walked out of the hut into the darkness, the trooper marching stolidly by his side. And following them came the naval officer, who had not spoken a word so far; he was also accompanied by his guard.

"Now, then," the sergeant turned to Jack, "what's your yarn? Why are you two fastened up in this pleasant way?"

"I'm the prisoner," Jack explained, feeling pretty cheerful now that Zelling had been taken off. "This chap is my guard; he's a German, and I don't believe he can speak a word of English. Try him!"

They did; but to all their questions he returned not a word. The sergeant grew tired of it at last.

"Search him, and see if he's got the key of these pleasant-looking handcuffs," he told one of the troopers, and the man went through the pockets of Jack's guard at once.

The key was quickly discovered, and the sergeant promptly released Jack Darrell and slipped the clasp on to the man's other hand.

"There you are, my beauty!" the sergeant said, apparently pleased with his work. "Now you can sit down in yonder corner, and I'll keep an eye on you."

But they had to escort the man to the corner of the hut and compel him to sit down.

"He's a square-head, right enough," was the sergeant's comment. "So is the chauffeur chap. Make him comfortable on the floor, Wilson; he's not seriously hurt, but he won't try to run away for a time. And now, youngster, what about you?"

Darrell told him as briefly as he could how he came to be in his present position.

"Well, I've had some queer experiences myself," the soldier said when Jack had finished. "But you seem to have created a record. You're not going to try to run away from us now?"

"I'm not!" Jack answered emphatically. "I'll keep with you just as long as you'll let me."

"Right!" And the sergeant rose.

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He went to the side of the hut where a telephone had been fitted, and held a fairly lengthy conversation apparently with his superior officer.

"That's good!" he said, as he hung up the receiver. "We get relieved at six in the morning, and then the whole crowd of you will be carted before our C.O. Don't suppose you'll be frightened of him, young fellow?"

"Not a bit!" Jack retorted. He was feeling quite comfortable and happy just at present, and any prospect which promised to keep him clear of Zelling's clutches was quite bright enough for him.

The sergeant and the two troopers remaining in the hut were very decent, and invited Jack to share their evening meal, which he did. Later the sergeant went out on a round of inspections.

"I'll have a look how this baron and the other square-head are going on," he remarked, and Jack almost wished he could have accompanied the soldier just for the pleasure of seeing Zelling in the position of captive.

The hut to which the two had been taken was neither so large nor so comfortable as the one the sergeant occupied. It was, in fact, the tool-shed for men working on the railway-line that ran from Windhoek to Swakopmund.

The sergeant's hut was the resting-place for the men, and where at times they had to live; when it was taken over by the South Africans it was furnished roughly but usefully. But the tool-shed, though it had a huge lock, and served admirably as a temporary lock-up for Zelling and his companion, had no other floor but the hard earth, and the sole furniture in the place was in the shape of a few odd line tools.

When the sergeant reached the hut he found two of his men on guard in such a position that they could watch the road and the bridge, and at the same time keep an eye on the door of the hut.

"All well?" asked the sergeant. "The square-heads are safe?"

"Yes, sergeant," answered one of the troopers.

"Lend me the key of this padlock," the sergeant asked. "I'll just have a look at them to make sure."

He unlocked the door and flashed his electric torch inside. Just for a moment he could not see his captives, but presently he could discern their forms lying on the ground in the corner of the hut farthest from him. Both of them were sound asleep, and their heavy breathing convinced even a doubter such as Sergeant Ruffle was.

Satisfied with his inspection, the sergeant returned to his own hut.

"Your friends are sound asleep," he told Jack, "and I think you'd better follow their example. It's bad for youngsters like you to go without a proper rest."

Jack laughed cheerfully at the parental tone the sergeant adopted. After his past experiences the loss of a few hours' sleep did not seem a very serious matter.

Nevertheless, he was quite ready and willing to follow the advice. One of the troopers, the chauffeur, and the silent man in handcuffs were all asleep. Jack sought a suitable corner and curled himself up, the sergeant throwing him a thick greatcoat for covering, for the night had turned cold.

He was asleep almost before he had made himself comfortable, and to-night neither dreams nor alarms came to disturb his slumber.

When he awakened, the sun was streaming into the hut, and there was quite a crowd of men in the place. It was the relief party who had come to take their turn in guarding the railway-bridge and the road.

"We've brought a waggon down for these prisoners you've got," one of the relief party was saying. "And there's an escort as well."

"Right!" said Sergeant Ruffle. "We'll go along and get the two most important out now. They're locked up in the tool-shed!"

Jack had risen, and as the sergeant went out of the hut he followed him.

"What's going to happen to me exactly, sergeant?" he asked. "I'm beginning to get homesick, you see, and I was wondering if there was any chance of getting down to the coast."

He had already explained about the Chatswood and his hope of getting to the battleship to report on what had happened to their launch.

"You'll be all right, sonny," the sergeant assured him. "Only you'll have to tell our officer all you know about these other chaps, and what their game is. Then he'll see you right. Here we are! We'll just waken these beggars up, and then get back to headquarters as sharp as we can."

He turned the key, and flung open the door with more violence than was really necessary. The trooper and Jack followed him into the hut a little way.

"Now then!" called the sergeant, and peered round.

At the far end a broad patch of white light showed itself near the floor. The sergeant suddenly ran forward.

"Gone!" he cried. "Got clear away! Dug under the walls. Oh, what a fool to trust a couple of square-heads!"

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He said many things, blaming himself and the men who had been on guard alternately.

As for Jack Darrell he could scarcely realise it. Zelling at liberty again! As long as he remained so Jack could not feel safe himself, though a thousand troopers were around him.

It was plain to see how the escape had been effected. The two men had simply tunnelled under the wooden wall with the tools lying ready to their hand.

In leaving two prisoners with such a ready means of escape the sergeant realised now that he had acted foolishly.

"But how was I to know?" he demanded. "They were sleeping right in this very corner when I came to see them last night. And two men on guard outside!"

"I expect they were only pretending to be asleep," Jack answered. "Zelling would never sleep while he was a prisoner; he'd be too full of plans and schemes for getting out of the trouble."

"Well, they can't have got far," was the sergeant's only consolation. "We'll scour the country for them, and if they're not safe under lock and key by this time to-night, my name's not Peter Ruffle!"

At Schlang's Farm.

Back again in the hut, Sergeant Ruffle telephoned to his headquarters, and reported what had occurred.

His instructions were to send out what men he could to hunt for the missing men, and to bring the other prisoners to Schlang's Farm, some four or five miles out of Windhoek, where an officer and a detachment of troops were being sent.

Windhoek, he learned, had surrendered, and there would be no more fighting. The whole of German South-West Africa had already passed into British hands.

But it would be safer to get these two men, who had obviously some important reason for getting away.

The sergeant sent three troopers out on the task of hunting the countryside until they recaptured the two. Then Jack himself with the two other men—the chauffeur of the car which Zelling had commandeered and the "Handcuff King"—were put into a waggon with two other troopers, to make a slow and tiresome journey up to Schlang's Farm.

They arrived here about midday, and found twenty or more other troopers already installed. Telephones had been fixed up, and tents were scattered about, while the old farmer who owned the place went in and out among them, fearful lest they should do unnecessary damage.

He was a German, but apparently the war had little or no interest for him. Once he had been assured that his occupation of his farm would not be interfered with, and that neither he nor his family would suffer more than temporary inconvenience, he was only too willing to do what he could for the strangers.

Jack Darrell was left to amuse himself as best he might. He was at perfect liberty to wander with the soldiers, and talk to them of all that had happened.

The day passed pleasantly enough, but the novelty of the situation had little charm for Jack. He had already had quite enough change, and his one big desire was to get away, with the prospect of seeing Teddy Burke and the others.

At night the farmer had prepared quite a big meal, to which all the troopers who were free were invited. For the first time Jack learned that the owner of the farm had a number of sons and daughters, and the latter were kept busy attending to the men and bringing in more refreshments.

One of them, who spoke a little English, found Jack a place near the door, and made a point of attending to his wants.

"Drink!" she commanded, and put before him a big cup filled with water apparently.

Jack gulped it down, but it was the most horrible-tasting stuff he had ever touched. He tried to hide his disgust, however, for fear of offending the girl.

As she passed him again presently she spoke once more:

"Drink!"

But Jack shook his head. Already he felt that he wanted no more food. All that he desired was some pleasanter-tasting liquid to take the memory of his last drink away.

"Not like it?" whispered the girl.

And Jack's face expressed the fact that she had grasped the situation exactly.

She touched him on the shoulder.

"Come! Nice drink!"

And she indicated that he should follow her.

He rose from his seat, and quickly slipped from the room. Neither the troopers nor the farmer noticed his movements.

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for they were too fully occupied with the business before them.

Jack was glad of that, for he disliked the idea of admitting that neither the food nor the refreshment agreed with him. Indeed, at that moment he was feeling pretty miserable, and was only too glad of an excuse to get away from the feast.

The kitchen to which he followed the girl was but dimly lighted. There were other people in it—two or three women and two men. They were doubtless the farmer's sons and daughters, and Jack did not heed them.

The girl handed Jack another huge mug.

"Better?" she asked, as he took it.

And Jack tasted it cautiously, remembering the mistake he had made before.

It was an improvement on the first cup he had taken, but it was not his ideal of what a pleasant, cooling drink should be. Still, it took away the horribly disagreeable taste that was in his mouth, and he drank again.

Then he sat down. A curious sense of weariness crept over him, and he was only too glad to rest in this corner of the ill-lighted kitchen for a while.

One of the women came and touched him on the arm. It irritated Jack, but he was too tired to make any protest, and a second woman came. Between them the two lifted Jack, and carried him outside.

Here there was a big, roughly-built cart standing, laden with the produce of the farm. Jack had seen it being filled earlier in the day, and had gathered that, despite the changes, the farmer's sons were going into Windhoek that night or the following morning, as they had always done. The officer had readily given his permission.

Into this cart Jack was dumped. He did not mind. After all, he might just as well go to the big town as stay on at the farm, though he barely thought the matter over so carefully as that. For the time all he wanted was to be allowed to rest, and almost as soon as he fell among the sacks and baskets at the bottom of the cart he fell asleep.

The waggon moved slowly out of the yard. Inside the room the farmer, hearing the rumbling of the wheels, explained again that his sons, and possibly one of his daughters, were going up to Windhoek. They always went at night: it was better so.

Through the darkness the cart rumbled along. Now and again it was called upon to halt, but the farmer's sons had been given the pass-word, and bore a slip on which was the officer's signature, in case they were asked for proof.

In the cart sat the farmer's daughter, and on the front were two men. It was not a long journey to their market-place, yet many hours passed before the horses were allowed a brief rest.

And then they were further from Windhoek than they had been at the farm.

. . . . . .

The manner in which Baron Zelling and his companion escaped from their temporary prison was simplicity itself. If the sergeant's experience with the square-heads, as he called them, had not led him to believe they were all alike in their lack of brains and initiative, he would doubtless have been more cautious.

But how was he to know that he held as prisoner one of the most cunning men the Empire of the Huns had ever produced? The two captives were free within an hour after the sergeant had visited them, and thought they were asleep.

They followed the line for some miles towards Windhoek, making detours whenever there was the slightest risk of an enemy sentry barring their progress.

In this way they came at last to Schlang's Farm, only an hour or so before the South African detachment reached it.

Zelling explained to the farmer who he was, and what a blow had been struck at the Fatherland. The farmer and his family were easily persuaded to do all they could to help their important guest, especially as big bribes and many promises were held out to them in return for their services.

Thus it came about that Zelling, his moustache shaved off, and an old bonnet hiding his lack of hair, moved about in borrowed garments as one of the women of the house. His companion discarded his uniform, and, attired in old clothes, passed as a son of the owner.

Only once was Zelling afraid, and that was when he stood in the yard, and saw a youth coming towards him. He recognised him quickly enough, as the boy who had caused him so much trouble.

The baron had already begun to doubt, in his own mind, whether, after all, the youngster was the Prince of Altenburg.

But he made up his mind that he would either return with him to Germany, or, failing that, he would take back the news that the Prince of Altenburg had been killed in Africa.

Certainly, after all the trouble he had been to Zelling, the boy should never be allowed to return to England alive.

He found it easier to arrange his plans than he had expected. One of the daughters of the house offered to concoct a simple drink that would obviate all need for force

She was ready and willing to do anything that would assist Zelling in his plans, for he had pointed out that when the war ended, Germany would again rule in her colony, and would reward those who aided her now.

And when darkness came, Zelling and his naval companion, with one of the sons of the farmer as driver, set out on their journey. The cart was filled with everything they would need for a long trek, and the baron still had his maps to decide their ultimate course.

They were resting when dawn came, and presently, as the sun's rays made themselves felt, the boy who slept so soundly at the bottom of the cart began to move.

He opened his eyes at last, and stared about him. At first he could see no one else, and he wondered just where he could be, and what had happened since he fell asleep last night.

Then a figure in woman's clothes appeared, and Darrell tried to recall why her face seemed so familiar to him.

"Well, prince, have you rested well? You see, we don't lose each other quite so easily as you imagined!"

It was Baron Zelling's voice!

Jack looked about him, but failed to recognise the place they were in. Zelling guessed what was running in his mind.

"No, prince!" he said. "This is the last time we try any experiments, or give you chances to exercise your own ingenuity. But I want to ask you an old question over again, only this time your life depends on the answer. Tell me! Are you the Prince of Altenburg?"

Jack could almost have laughed at the absurdity of it all. Here, after all these weeks of mad adventure, the baron was asking the question to which he had been given a frank reply in the very beginning.

"I am not the Prince of Altenburg!" he answered definitely. "I don't know anything about him, and never did. My name is Jack Darrell; always was and always will be. You can't make me the prince if I never was in his position, can you?"

For once in his life, Baron Zelling believed what was told him. What his thoughts were at that moment it is difficult to imagine, but Jack guessed by the scowl that came over his face, and the twist on the lips, no longer hidden by the moustache, that they were not pleasant thoughts. Nor did they promise much good for him.

"Then," the baron said at last, "I don't think I shall trouble to take you to Germany with me."

"Thanks!" Jack answered. "I never really wanted to go, did I?"

"No." Zelling was speaking in a curiously stiff, yet calm, voice. "I won't take you to Germany. On the other hand, I don't want you to go back to England to tell them all you know of me. It might be unpleasant later on. Here—no one will come to see you here!"

He had been fumbling about with the strange dress he wore, and Jack saw now that his right hand held a revolver. A tremor of fear ran through him, for he knew that Zelling had him at his mercy.

"You won't dare to kill me?" Jack asked, but his voice showed little of the fear that had suddenly entered him.

"I don't know," Zelling answered, with a sneer. "It just depends on whether we can come to terms. But for the moment we must leave it. Here come the others. I will think it over."

And for the next few days he held this threat over him. During that time they slowly progressed, and no one appeared to challenge them.

A Wayside Encounter!

The Moonbeam lay at anchor in Walfisch Bay. On shore, in the village town of Sandfontein, Lord Bassington and his party were making inquiries.

The town of Windhoek had surrendered, and in the name of Britain, General Botha had taken over the whole of German South-West Africa. Almost the first news they learned, on getting ashore, was that the formal part of the whole business was to be fixed up, and signed that very day.

"The question we want to decide," Derwent Hood told Lord Bassington, "is whether anyone knows if Zelling and young Darrell have been discovered among the town's inhabitants. I don't see how we can find out, except by going up there."

"And then, if what you say is true of this man Zelling, he

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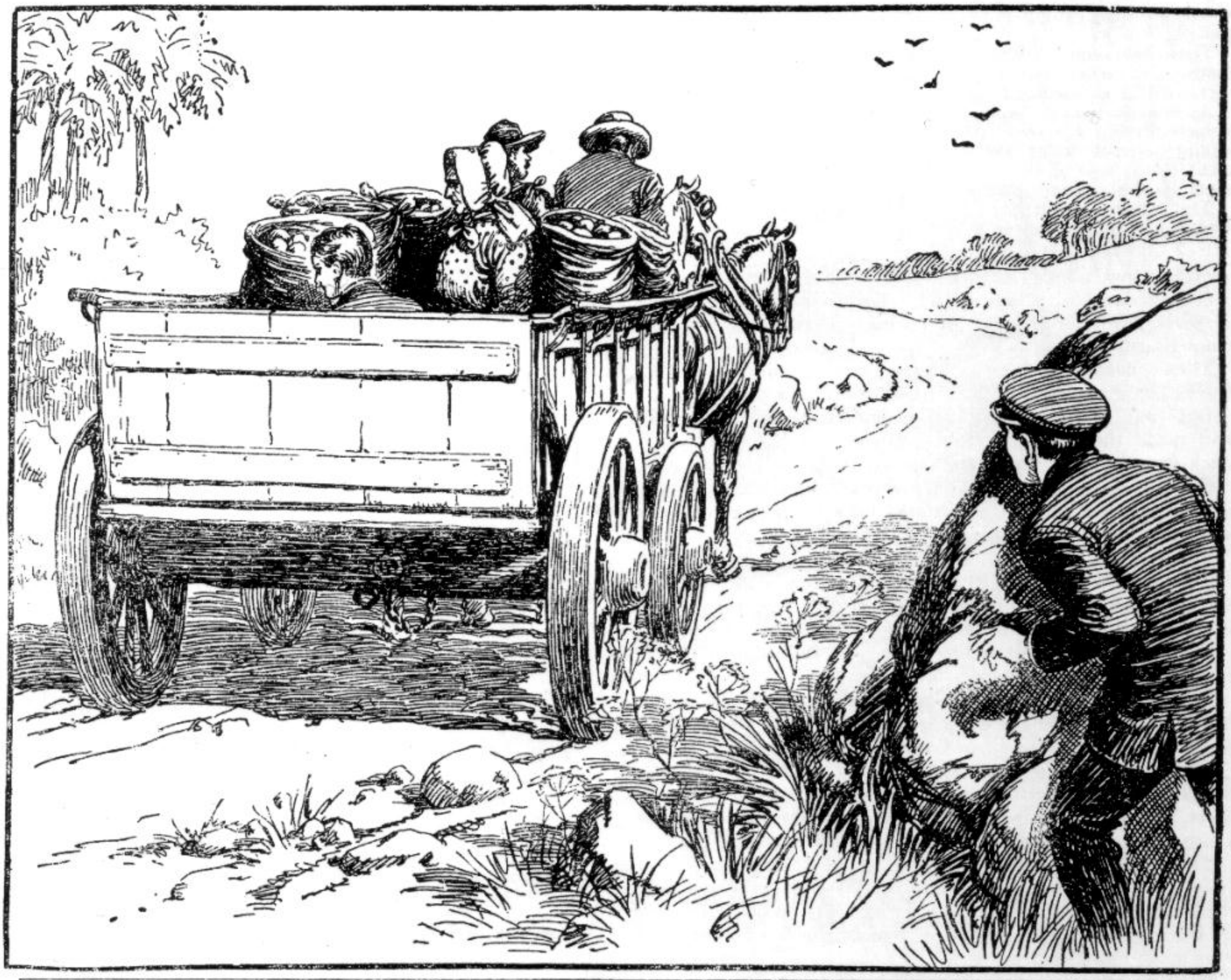

Then a head moved and another figure appeared. All that Burke could see was the back of the head and shoulders. But that was enough. He recognised them. Unless he had made the most astounding mistake of his life, it was Jack Darrell who sat with the woman at the back of the cart.—(*See page* 26.)

will doubtless have found some means of getting away?" suggested the peer.

"Highly probable," answered Hood. "It's rather like hunting a needle in a haystack. I wonder if it is possible to get a car in this benighted hole?"

"It isn't likely, but we'll try," Lord Bassington said. "We'll begin at once."

Fortune favoured them to a little extent in this, inasmuch as by the end of an hour they had discovered quite a reasonable, if somewhat antiquated, touring-car, and fixed up with its owner the terms on which they could use it.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

They told him, and he smiled.

"Better let me drive the machine," he said. "I know the best road for that journey. And just now, what with the war and all that kind of thing, it's a bit risky."

They agreed to his proposition, and after some discussion, it was decided that Lord Bassington and Dr. Margards should remain in Sandfontein, making all the inquiries they could, while Derwent Hood and Teddy Burke were to go with the driver of the ancient car.

Dr. Margards at first was opposed to the idea of Burke taking any further risks, but his objections were eventually overcome, and Teddy climbed into the car with Hood when eventually they were ready for the journey.

"Good luck!" Lord Bassington cried, as, with quite a tremendous noise, the car moved slowly forward.

It was a queer journey, and had it not been for the doubt as to their success, Teddy Burke would have enjoyed it thoroughly. Hood told him yarn after yarn of the adventures he had passed through, and somehow it gave this present journey a zest which it might otherwise have lacked.

"And you think we'll find Jack all right?" Teddy asked, at the end of one of the stories.

"I'm not going to prophesy," Derwent Hood answered. "But if this old buzz-box of ours will carry us, we'll track them down wherever they've gone. But Windhoek is the first hope."

His doubt about the capacity of the car was confirmed on the morning after they had left Sandfontein. Something went wrong with the machine, and it refused to run a yard further.

Hood and the driver got down at once. An examination proved that the damage was not serious, but it would probably take an hour or so to carry out the repair.

They pushed the car into a little glade of trees, where they would be protected from the heat of the sun, and began work immediately.

For a time Teddy Burke watched them; then, growing tired of the pastime, strolled further afield.

"Don't go too far," Derwent Hood warned him, "or we'll have to spend time in hunting for you later on."

"Very easily," the owner of the car added. "There's not many folks use this road, if you can rightly call it a road; but the farmers sometimes try it because it used to be reckoned safer."

Burke promised to keep near at hand, and wandered over the rough ground in the direction they had been going before the breakdown.

There was no sign of habitation or any human being. By the time he was fifty yards or so from the car Teddy appreciated fully the advice Hood had given him. It would be pretty awful if one got lost in this neighbourhood.

He stood for a time gazing around him. It was all so

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different from any scenery he had looked upon before that he wanted to fix it in his mind.

Just as he was turning to go back to the car again a tiny cloud of dust caught his attention, and for a moment he paused.

Then he stepped towards the centre of the road to try and distinguish what the object was, for the dust-cloud had increased, it seemed.

As it drew nearer, he made out that it was some kind of a vehicle drawn by two horses. It struck him then that it would perhaps be as well not to let them see him, and he went to the side of the road, where, from behind a boulder of rock, he could observe without being seen.

The waggon, or whatever it was, came along very slowly, and Burke began to wish that he had gone back to Hood and told him. But it was rather too late now, and he decided to wait until the waggon had passed.

It drew level with him at last. At first there was nothing of particular interest in it for Burke. Two men sat on the front board, and at the back of the cart sat a woman.

Then a head moved, and another figure appeared. All that Burke could see was the back of the head and shoulders.

But that was enough! He recognised them. Unless he had made the most astounding mistake of his life, it was Jack Darrell who sat with the woman at the back of the cart.

Experience had lessened Teddy Burke's impulsiveness. He did not rush out at once, but paused for a moment to consider what would be the best course.

There could, however, be little harm in going out and claiming Jack. It flashed through Teddy's mind that in some way his chum had escaped from Zelling, and was making his way to the coast with these curious people.

He stepped from his hiding-place and walked behind the cart until he drew practically level with it.

Until then no one in the cart had heard his approach, but as he stepped to the back, intending to lean over and call to Darrell, the woman turned and saw him.

Just for a moment a curious sense of doubt—even fear—killed all the wonderful joy which had come over Burke in these past few minutes. At first he could not understand or grasp it.

There was the woman, with a tattered sun-bonnet tied round her head, looking at him, and Burke imagined suddenly that he knew her, and the cry that was on his lips to call to Darrell was never uttered. Something in the woman's eyes made him afraid.

Then he knew. The truth flashed upon him quickly, only it was too late.

It was Zelling! No woman at all was this person who sat with Jack Darrell.

Some wild instinct entered Burke's mind the moment the truth was borne upon him. He saw Darrell turn, and heard his exclamation of surprise, but he did not answer it.

Instead, he turned swiftly and ran. Jumping and dodging erratically, he dashed to the side of the road and raced from boulder to boulder till he came to the glade of trees.

He had no clear idea of what happened in those few seconds. All he knew was that Hood must know this at once. He would decide how they must act.

They were still tinkering with the car when Burke burst upon them.

"Hallo, hallo!" Hood said as Teddy crashed towards him. "What's the excitement?"

"Zelling—dressed as a woman! And Jack Darrell with him!" Burke gasped. "They've seen me! The cart is coming along the road now!"

Derwent Hood did not speak. He simply ran hastily to the door of the car and hunted inside it for a moment. The next instant he was examining with some care a revolver.

He put it in his pocket at last, but kept his hand upon it.

"Take care of yourself, Burke," he said quietly. "I fancy we shall have some trouble this time. The last battle, you know, and it counts most."

He was smiling a little as he went to the side of the road. And Teddy Burke and the car-driver followed him.

(Look out for the conclusion of this splendid yarn next Monday. Order your "MAGNET" in advance.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 406.

A Clever Contribution by a Young Reader of The "Magnet" Library.

GRANDPA'S GOUT!

Grandpa has the painful gout
Right in his little toe;
And everywhere, when grandpa's out,
The gout is sure to go!

It followed grandpa to the links,
And put him off his stroke.
Note how the poor man scowls and shrinks;
His gout is *not* a joke!

At last the terrible disease
Ascended to his head;
It overcame him by degrees,
And drove him off to bed.

He's taken this and taken that,
And swallowed pills with zest,
But grandpa won't get well, that's flat;
No flowers, by request!

K. M.

THE PICTURES BY LEWIS R. HIGGINS.

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OUT TO-DAY!

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Art Editor.

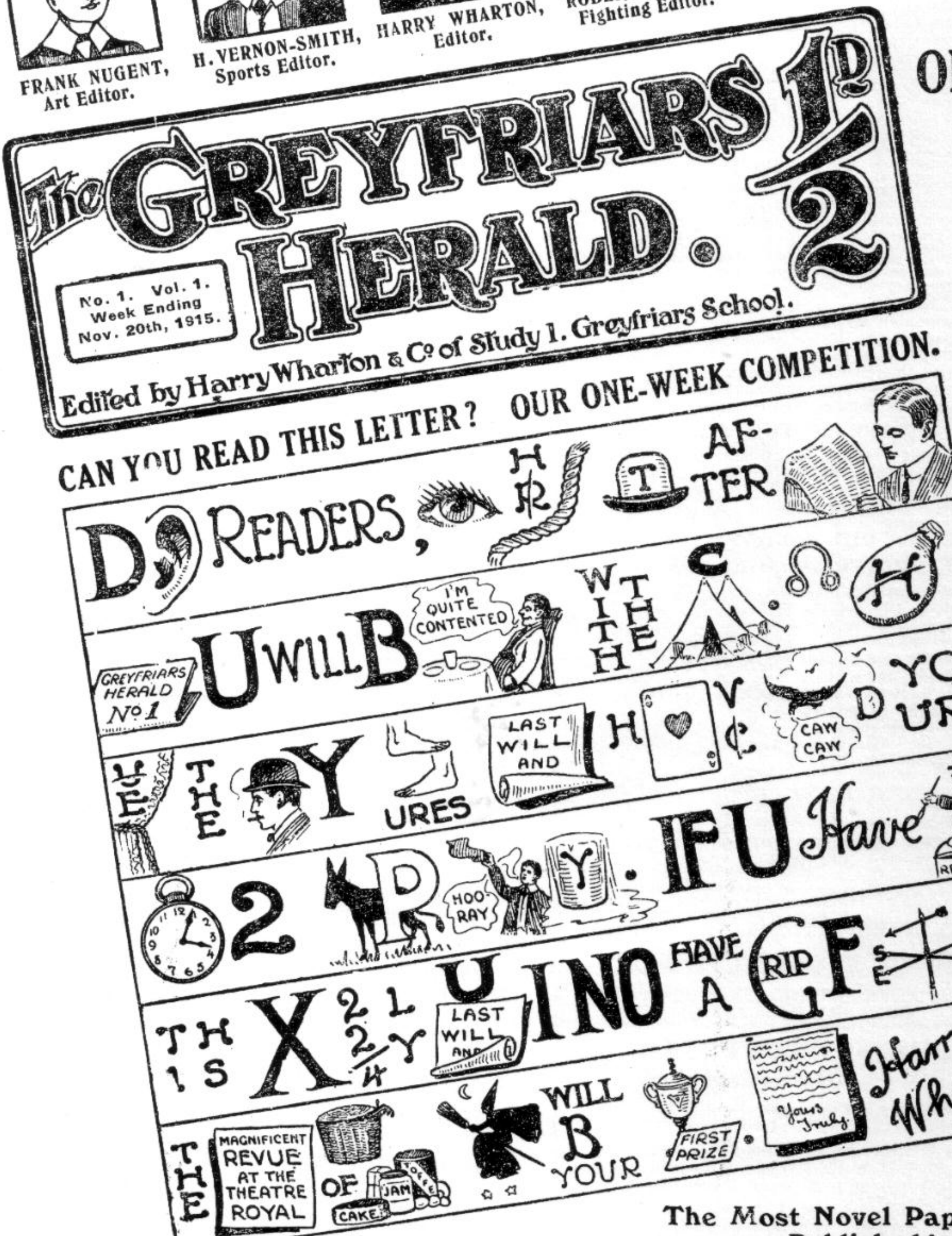
H. VERNON-SMITH,
Sports Editor.

HARRY WHARTON,
Editor.

ROBERT CHERRY,
Fighting Editor.

MARK LINLEY,
Sub-Editor.

BUY IT AT ONCE!



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The Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums, at home or abroad, and is only too willing to give his best advice to them if they are in difficulty or in trouble. . . . Whom to write to: Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

For Next Monday:

"THE JAPE OF THE SEASON!"

By Frank Richards.

Skinner of the Remove comes largely into the picture in next Monday's grand, long, complete story of Greyfriars School. He proves that he has not yet relinquished his bold, bad ways, for early in the story he is caught smoking by Mr. Quelch, and severely flogged. Burning for revenge, the cad of the Remove perpetrates a tremendous jape on his Form-master by putting a screamingly funny advertisement in the matrimonial column of the local paper, involving Mr. Quelch in a great deal of trouble. Many single ladies of uncertain age flock to Greyfriars to claim the unhappy Form-master as their betrothed, and a perfect pandemonium prevails at the old school. Eventually Skinner is brought to book by his schoolfellows for the part he has played in

"THE JAPE OF THE SEASON!"

and is brought to realise that such revengeful practices, when carried out on Form-masters, are not in the best of taste.

OUT TO-DAY!

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" (½d.).

At last the great day has arrived, and with feelings of pardonable pride I launch the "Greyfriars Herald" out into the world, hoping it will meet with the reception it undoubtedly deserves.

Number One is now on sale at all newsagents', and every boy and girl who reads these lines should at once secure a copy, for it is more than certain that Harry Wharton's great paper will sell out in next to no time.

In case any of my chums are in the dark as to the features contained in the "Greyfriars Herald," I will enumerate them briefly as under:

A MAGNIFICENT COMPETITION,
in which

CASH PRIZES AND HAMPERS OF TUCK ARE AWARDED;

A STIRRING SERIAL;

MANY SPLENDID COMPLETE STORIES;

A PAGE OF WONDERFUL PICTURES;

NUMEROUS ARTICLES DEALING WITH LIFE AT GREYFRIARS SCHOOL;

A FEAST OF FINE POEMS;

PLENTY OF GRAND ILLUSTRATIONS.

PRICE ONE HALFPENNY ONLY!

Now then, Magnetites! The time has come when your loyalty and devotion to the companion papers is put to the test. No effort has been spared in the endeavour to make the "Greyfriars Herald"

THE MOST NOVEL HALFPENNY PAPER EVER PUBLISHED!

See to it, then, that the "Herald" receives your very best support.

I shall expect my sanctum to be simply flooded with letters from loyal chums in the morning, telling me what they think of "Number One," with its grand array of features. Every boy and girl in Great Britain should send a line at once—even if it is only a postcard—stating their opinion of

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

"SCHOOL AND SPORT!"

The Great New Threepenny Book Story.

Only a matter of weeks now, and the long-promised "Boys' Friend" Threepenny Library story, dealing with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., Tom Merry & Co., Jimmy Silver & Co., Frank Courtenay & Co., Gordon Gay & Co., Dick Trumper & Co., and the girls of Cliff House will be in the hands of all my chums. It will be read by the December fireside, in the train, tram, and 'bus, in the playground, in the lunch interval—in fact, everywhere; and that it will prove a stunning, gilt-edged success there is not a shadow of doubt.

A WORD ABOUT THE STORY.

From the straightforward, telling title my many friends will guess the nature of the story. Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Rookwood, Highcliffe, Courtfield County Council School, and Rylcombe Grammar School all combine in one huge sports meeting. A magnificent silver cup, the legacy of a dying soldier, who is also an old boy of Greyfriars, is to be presented to the school which emerges "victorious, happy, and glorious"; and the story teems with thrilling tussles on river and playing-field, in swimming-bath and on rifle-range, in the gym and on the running-track.

Those who remember the tale entitled "Sportsmen All!" which made such a great hit in the "Magnet" Library a few months back, will know what to expect. Mr. Frank Richards has studied sport in all its branches, and his magnificent descriptive writing raises the reader to the very highest pitch of excitement.

WHY THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN.

The following letter, which my friend Mr. Richards addressed to me from his country home, will interest all lovers of the "Magnet" Library:

"Dear Mr. Hinton.—Doubtless my letter will cause you great surprise, as will the big batch of manuscript I enclose. You imagined, I expect, that I had gone off to Cornwall for my long-delayed holiday, as I was so well ahead with my 'Magnet' stories; but on due deliberation I decided to spend the fortnight at home, and to write another threepenny book story, so enthusiastic were your readers concerning 'The Boy Without a Name,' which appeared last January.

"The task, of course, occupied me day and night; but it is now finished, entirely to my satisfaction, and I feel confident that 'School and Sport' will prove an unrivalled success, for I have given of my very best. Every paragraph, every line, has been carefully thought out; and I shall be glad if you will conform to your usual practice and let me see a selection of your readers' letters stating what they think of the story.

"I am resting over the week-end, but hope to commence writing an extra-special Christmas Double Number story on Monday.

"With kind regards, sincerely yours,

"FRANK RICHARDS."

There you are, boys and girls! Now you can see for yourselves what a brick our famous author is. He was at liberty

(Continued on page iv of cover.)

Printed and Published by the Proprietors at The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, England. Agents for Australasia: Gordon & Gotch, Ltd., Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Wellington, N.Z.; for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd., Cape Town and Johannesburg. Subscription, 7s. per annum. Saturday, November 20th, 1915.

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The Most Welcome "Duty" amongst Our Brave Boys at the Front.

1,000,000 'HAIR-DRILL' GIFTS FREE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

IT is universally agreed by friend and foe alike that there is no soldier the world over to equal, for smartness of appearance, "Tommy," the British Soldier on whom to-day the fate of the world depends.

Whether at home in the good old times as smartest of City Clerks, Departmental Manager, Commercial Traveller—or whether now under the all-embracing word "Tommy," in Barrack Room, Wooden Hut, Tent, or by Camp Fire, or yes! in the very battle-field itself, our men have always taken a wonderful pride in their appearance.

"Tommy" at this time certainly has a hundred and one duties to perform, and undoubtedly one of the most welcome to him is the morning toilet task, when he can not only have the "clean up," as he calls it, that makes him feel fresh and ready for any call upon his energies, but can perform, as he used to at home, that wonderful and delightful task that adds so much to his smart appearance, "Harlene Hair-Drill."

ANOTHER MILLION "HARLENE" FREE GIFTS.

As readers of this journal will know, Mr. Edwards in his great plan to teach everyone how to gain beautiful hair has placed no limit to his magnificent gifts of "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfits, and to-day, so that everyone, man and woman alike, who desires to possess a rich, healthy, luxuriant head of hair may commence his rational system of hair culture, he has decided to repeat his offer of **one million parcels containing the complete "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfit, with all necessary materials to carry out a Full Week's Test Free to the public.**

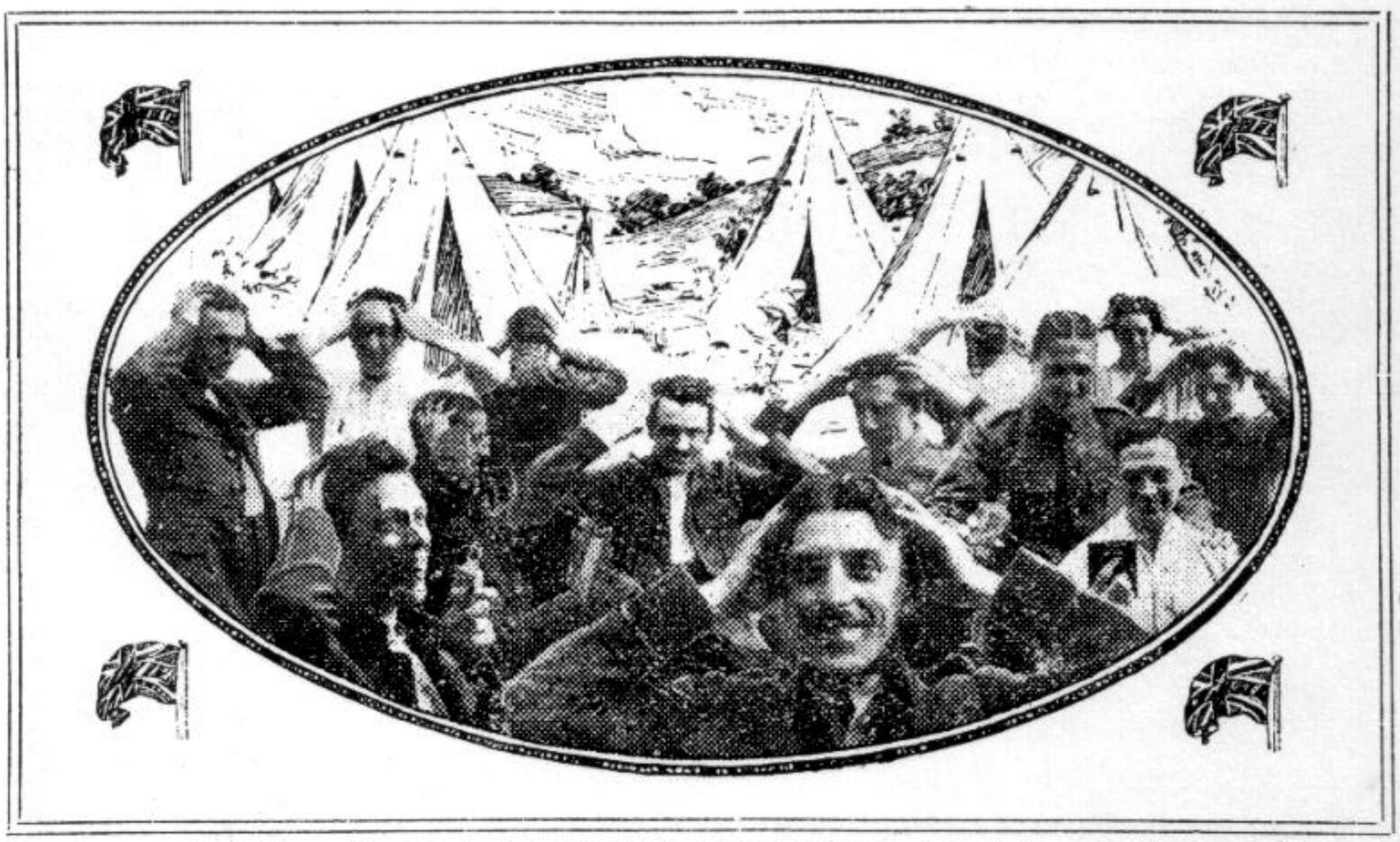
and it is to prove this that to-day he repeats his offer of a million "Harlene Hair-Drill" Gifts.

WILL YOU ACCEPT THIS GIFT?

The splendid "Harlene Hair-Drill" parcel that will be forwarded immediately you send the coupon below consists of:

1. **A Trial Bottle of "Harlene," the Wonderful Hair Grower which has been proved to grow hair at any age, in the rich and lustrous abundance of health.**
2. **A Packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, the most wonderful Hair cleanser and scalp refresher in the world, which prepares the head for "Hair-Drill."**
3. **A Bottle of Uzon Brilliantine.**
4. **A Copy of the specially written "Harlene Hair-Drill" manual, giving Full Directions for carrying out this delightful hair-growing Toilet Exercise.**

The charm and beauty of the Englishwoman lies greatly in her hair. "Harlene Hair-Drill" has given the British women a premier place for hair beauty, and the Inventor-Discoverer asks every lady to accept his Free Hair-growing Gift to prove immediately how wonderful his method adds to her attractiveness.



There is no country in the world where the fame of "Harlene Hair-Drill" has not penetrated, and it is no wonder then to find "Somewhere in France" our gallant men and their Allied chums all delighting to keep their smart appearance by adopting this hair-growing method. It gives to us at home a lesson which we may follow—men and women alike—by accepting this splendid "Harlene Hair-Drill" Gift offered here.

There is just that pleasure and delight in "Harlene Hair-Drill" that "Tommy" fully appreciates. He has taught this secret of smartness to many an Allied soldier companion. "Tommy" sets a good example which you can follow without cost by accepting the absolutely Free Gift offered in the Coupon in this page.

Mr. Edwards says definitely, "There is no reason why anyone should remain with weak, impoverished hair," and it is to prove this that he repeats his offer of a million Free Gifts. Everyone writing for the free Harlene Hair-Drill Gift will receive particulars of a great £10,000 Profit-Sharing Distribution of Toilet Dressing-Cases, which will enable them to practise beauty culture of the complexion and hair at home free of cost.

GREAT FREE "HARLENE HAIR-DRILL" GIFT.

Fill in and post to Edwards' Harlene Co., 20-26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.

Dear Sirs,—Please forward me, free of all charge your "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfit, and all materials for a Seven-Day Trial. I enclose 3d. stamps to pay postage to any address in the world. (Foreign stamps accepted.)

Name .....

Address .....

.....

MAGNET. Nov. 20th, 1915.

"SCHOOL AND SPORT" (*continued*).

to spend a peaceful fortnight by the silvery sea, instead of which he devoted the time to writing another ripping threepenny book, knowing how popular they were among British boys and girls.

Show Mr. Richards how you appreciate his unselfish efforts, then, by ordering your copy of "School and Sport" now. And while you are about it, *don't* forget your soldier-chum in the trenches. *He* will want a copy.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Victor R. D. (Liverool).—As you will observe, "The Prince of Altenburg" ends in our next issue. Look out for the grand opening instalment of our new serial!

L. J. Wilkinson (Clapham).—Very many thanks for your loyal letter.

Frank B. (Wakefield).—Your suggestion is a very good one, and shall be duly acted upon.

Robert Weekes and Gerald Tyrrell (East Ham).—Thanks very much for your letter and loyal remarks. "The Boy Without a Name," by Frank Richards, will be supplied to you from this office on receipt of four penny stamps.

Robert McC. (Port Glasgow).—You will see that your suggestion has been duly carried out. Many thanks!

W. F. Torrance (Chorley).—Guess again, old chap! You are quite off the track.

C. H. P. (Chesterfield).—Messrs. W. & G. Foyle, Charing Cross Road, London, S.W., will probably be able to get you the book you mention, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope for their reply.

T. Billington (Manchester).—The gentleman you name is Frank Nugent's uncle.

"Two Staunch Supporters" (Birmingham).—No; there are no grumblers in your famous town. The citizens of Birmingham are extremely loyal to the companion papers, and I admire them for it.

Harry J. Thomas, of 18, Downs Road, Walmer, Kent, is desirous of forming a "Maguet" League in his district. Intending members should enclose a stamped, addressed envelope when writing to Master Thomas for particulars.

P. Robinson (Netherfield).—The previous reply to your letter was made in error, and I am sorry if it has caused you annoyance. Show this paragraph to your chums, and they will understand. We have so many letters at this office awaiting replies that it is quite possible yours has been overlooked. If you will write me once again, I will be happy to give the matter my personal attention, and reply through the post by return.

"The Terrible Three", (Streatham). The feature you mention was published merely as a bit of fun, and I feel sure you will take it in good part. The article was intended to give a greater air of reality to the "Magnet" and "Gem" stories.

E. Goodum, 89, Hadyn Road, Nottingham, England, has a copy of "The Race to the Tuckshop," if W. G., of Melbourne, cares to have it.

The Heather Football Club desires home and away matches for the season. Average age, 16. Teams in and around London preferred. Hon. Sec., J. F. Shardlow, 29, Tantallon Road, Balham, S.W.

Clifford Newman, 4, Lyme Terrace, Camden Road, London, N.W., is a collector of tramway tickets, pictures of cars and of men's uniforms, etc., and would be glad if readers at home and abroad would send him tickets and pictures concerning their local tram service. He will pay the necessary postage, and an additional sum for acceptable articles.

D. H. (Renfrew).—The usual length of the stories you mention is 30,000 words. You failed to hit the nail on the head in predicting the coming surprise, which is the threepenny book story mentioned in this week's Chat. I am deeply indebted to you for your loyal promise to give the "Greyfriars Herald" your unwavering support. Best wishes.

"Irishman" (Co. Durham). Your story is good, but not quite up to the standard required for publication. Try again.

E. Morris ((Dover).—Many thanks for your letter and photograph. Your best plan would be to send the books you mention to one of the big hospitals for wounded soldiers, where they would be highly appreciated.

"A Loyal Reader."—You appear to forget that "Tom Brown's Schooldays" was written donkeys years ago, and appealed to quite a different generation of boys. At the time it was published it was considered a standard work on school life; but some of our more modern school tales, such as "The Hill", and "The Bending of a Twig", knock it into a cocked hat, in my opinion.

Ernest J. (East Ham).—My hands are full at present with editorial duties, and it would be impossible for me to bring out a Tuesday companion paper—just now, at any rate. Many thanks for a most interesting letter.

A. Powell (Leyton).—You will see by the "Penny Popular" that everything has turned out all right in the case you mention.

"A Loyal Scottish Reader" (Kirkcaldy) and many others. Thank you very much for stating your approval of the proposed scheme in connection with the "Penny Popular." Things will begin to move before long.

"A True Girl Reader" (Manchester). Harold Skinner breaks out again in next Monday's story, as you will see. His reformation was merely a "flash in the pan."

W. Gordon (Radcliffe).—I feel deeply indebted to you for the loyal sentiments expressed in your letter. The companion papers will always weather the storm with the aid of such gallant supporters as yourself.

John T. B. Young (Cumbernauld).—If your parents expressly state that you should not read the "Magnet" Library, then you must abide by their wishes. It is only fair to state, however, that when "The Sunday Crusaders" was published a short time back, I received dozens of commendatory letters from clergymen in the British Isles, who spoke of the "Magnet" as being an ideal paper for British boys and girls. If the gentlemen who wear the cloth are satisfied with this journal, I see no reason why even the most discriminating parent should not hold the same view.

D. Anson (Birmingham).—I shall be happy to do as you suggest. Most of the prefects at Greyfriars and St. Jim's are seventeen years of age.

"A Well-wisher," (Lichfield).—I note all your remarks, and will do my best to see that your desires are gratified.

E. le B. (Jersey).—Sorry to hear you are crocked. I am afraid we are too much overworked at present to be able to supply you with a complete list of the Greyfriars characters. There will be a special feature in our forthcoming Christmas Double Number on this important subject. Some of the names you require are as follows: David Morgan, Dick Rake, Herbert Trevor, James Treluce, William Fry, Claude Hoskins, James Hobson, Gerald de Vere Vavasour, Phil Drury, and Rupert de Courcy.

"Mab" (Rewsbury).—Many thanks for your nice letter. The eleven New Cross readers have now written me a very sportsmanlike letter, and the affair has ended very satisfactorily for all parties. You shall hear more of Wun Lung in the near future. Best wishes.

Bernard C. (Loughborough).—Thank you for your loyal letter, and for voicing the sentiments of all my Loughborough readers. They seldom write, but I can readily forgive them, the modern boy having very little time on his hands. Shall be delighted to hear from you again when you can spare the time.

"Herbert" (near Brighton). Your suggestion is good, but impracticable just at present.

"Two Suggestors" (Walthamstow). So you didn't know Mr. Richards had another threepenny book surprise up his sleeve—what? It was very good of you both to send me such a nice letter.

R. W. C. (Birmingham).—Congratulations upon having solved the great secret. Can I rely upon you to spread the fame of "School and Sport"?

Mrs. S. Hibberd (Hull).—I hope to publish at least an extract from your kind letter next week.

F. C. (Newfoundland).—Many thanks for your letter and suggestion. I will approach Mr. Frank Richards in connection with the latter.

A. A. Farnsworth (Holloway).—Send along your contribution, by all means, and I shall be pleased to give you my opinion of same.

W. Smith and H. Pittam (Northampton). I am not at liberty to divulge the name of the poet responsible for "Favourite Friends in Fiction." It may interest you to know, however, that the same individual wrote "The Greyfriars Lyrics" and "St. Jim's Jingles," which appeared a year or two ago. You guessed the great secret accurately, and I congratulate you.

John Phillips (Stoke-on-Trent). Very many thanks for your loyal letter.

"Automatic" (Scarborough). Glad to hear how greatly you enjoyed "The Sunday Crusaders." Many readers have written to me on the same subject.

Harry T. (Fulham).—The numbers you mention are long since out of print, and I am sorry I cannot obtain them for you.

"A Chum" (Salterton). — The best way of writing your story will be to use exercise-books. Handwriting is quite permissible.

May Burgess (Brighton).—Congratulations on solving the great secret! I am much obliged to you for your letter and good wishes.

Your Editor

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