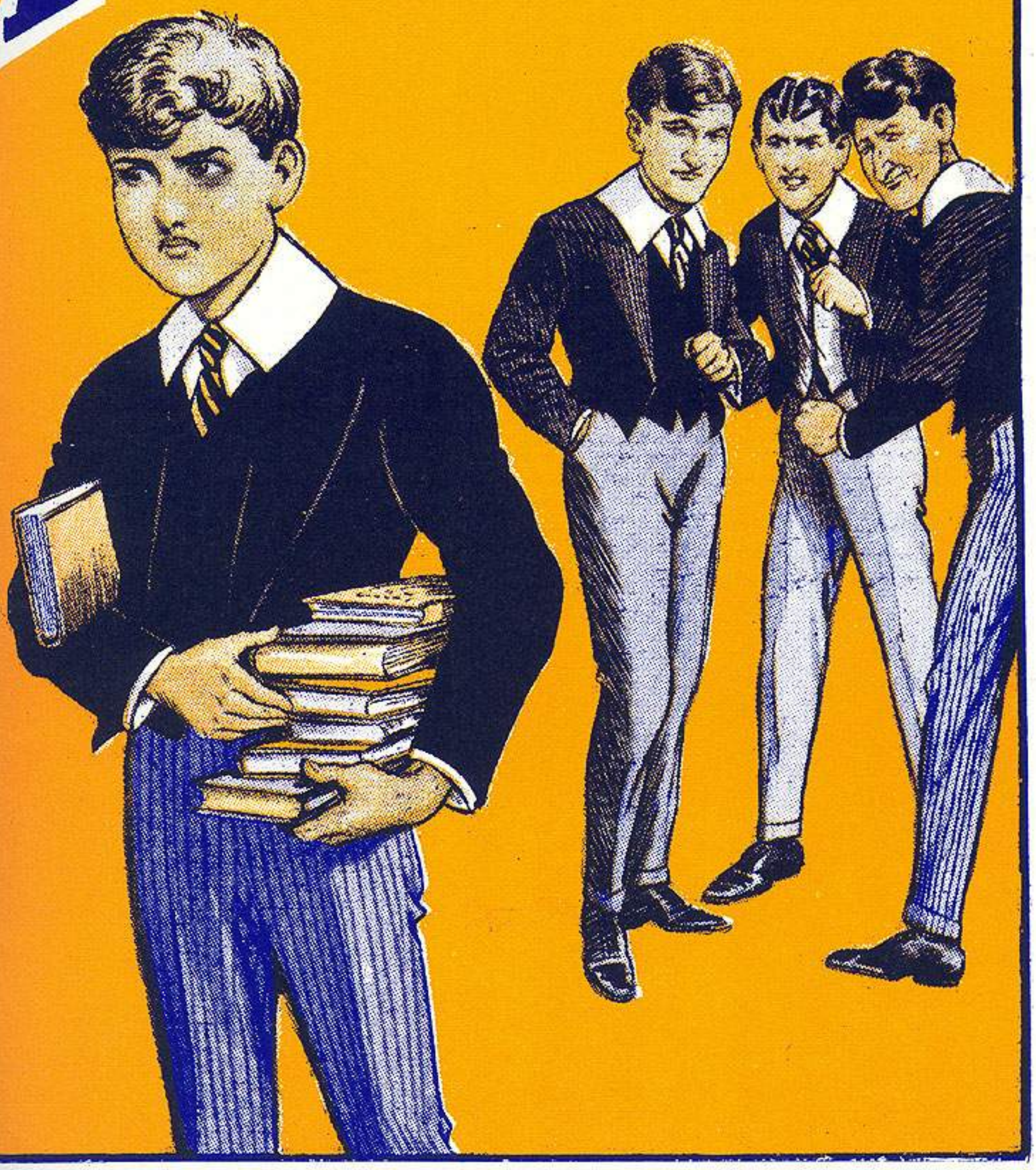
The CHILDREN'S TREASURE HOUSE PART 1 NOW ON SALE 1s/3d

No. 978. Vol. XXX. Week Ending November 13th, 1926.

The Magnet 2d Library

EVERY MONDAY.



NOBODY'S CHUM!

(Once the most popular fellow in the Remove, Bob Cherry is now a regular outcast. Read the powerful school story inside.)

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums. Write to him when you are in trouble or need advice. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a speedy reply. Letters should be addressed: The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HIS VOICE HAS BROKEN!

A FIFTEEN years old reader from Liverpool who used to sing in his church choir writes and tells me that his voice has become very hoarse, and that he now has the greatest difficulty even to sing a note. I don't think there is very much to worry about, my chum. Your voice is in the breaking stage, common to most boys of your age. But I would advise you not to strain your vocal chords unnecessarily. In time your singing voice will come back to you, but don't try and hasten nature—it never pays.

PRESS CUTTINGS!

A studious chum in Norfolk tells me that he clips out from his father's paper every morning any article of educational interest he finds therein, and files it for further reference. He says that these articles are usually wrapped up in a certain amount of fiction which makes the facts all the more "palatable to his studious turn of mind." I think there's something in the idea for other studious Magnetites to copy. These cuttings should be arranged alphabetically when they are filed, but, and here's a point to remember, don't get cutting father's paper about until he has given you permission to do so.

THE TREASURE HOUSE!

A book that will explain the World.

One of the very finest books for boys and girls ever published, has just appeared. Its title is "The Children's Treasure House." It is edited by Arthur Mee, and is being issued in fortnightly parts.

It will describe in simple language all the things most beautiful and most wonderful in Nature, history, and art. It will give little lives of famous men and their work, tales of distant lands and past ages, miracles of science and secrets of Nature, and will include the most remarkable collection of "explaining pictures," running to over 20,000, that have ever been brought together.

Butterflies, moths, birds, fish, flowers, fruit, etc., will all be superbly illustrated in their full natural colours, and many pages will be richly printed in photogravure. A more inspiring or more instructive book to put into the hands of boys and girls, it would be impossible to find.

Part 1, packed with fascinating reading and containing 750 pictures, is on sale everywhere to-day, price 1s. 3d.

Next Monday's Programme:

"BOB CHERRY WINS THROUGH!"

By Frank Richards.

This story for next week will relieve the feelings of you fellows who are getting anxious about poor old Bob, for as the title suggests, Bob reinstates himself in everyone's good graces. I'll say no more.

"UNDER FALSE CULLERS!"

By Dicky Nugent.

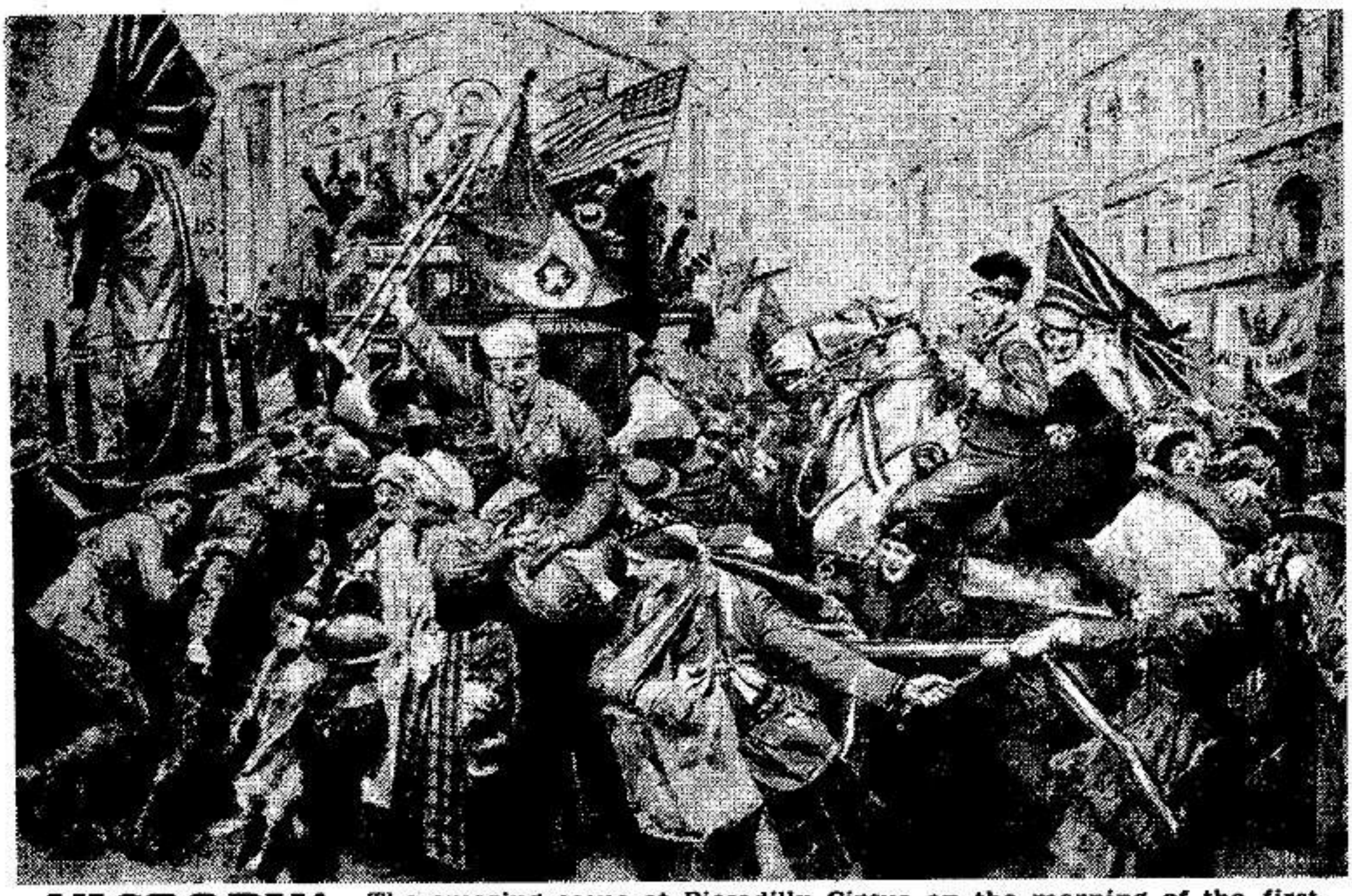
There's little need for me to "boost" this story for next week, as I have been rubbing in the revival of these popular Dicky Nugent "shockers" for weeks past, and the quality of them is known to you all. You'll enjoy this one no end.

"THE BOY WITH THE MILLION-POUND SECRET!"

By David Goodwin.

Look out, too, for another fine instalment of this amazing adventure yarn. It's great! Chin, chin, chums,

YOUR EDITOR.



VICTORY! The amazing scene at Piccadilly Circus on the morning of the first Armistice Day. A remarkable reproduction in full colours, after the original black and white sketch by F. Matania, is presented Free with every copy of this week's *UNION JACK* 2d.

***DOWN AND OUT!* Swotting has brought Bob Cherry to a pretty pass; not wanted in his own Form, not wanted in any other Form, this once popular Removite realises with great bitterness that he is . . . .**

Nobody's Chum!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., featuring the fall of Robert Cherry.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Cecil Reginald Asks For It!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE, captain of the Fourth Form at Greyfriars, stopped at the door of Study No. 5 and looked in.

Study No. 5 belonged to Wilkinson of the Fourth. But Teddy Wilkinson was not there when Temple looked in. It was a Remove fellow who sat at the study table, working.

Bob Cherry, of the Remove, was apparently busy.

Five or six Latin books lay open on the table round him, and Bob, pen in hand, wrinkle in brow, was bent over a block of impot paper, writing laboriously.

He was so deeply engrossed in his task that he did not hear Temple arrive at the doorway, and did not look up as the captain of the Fourth glanced in.

A slightly sarcastic smile appeared on Cecil Reginald's face.

Bob Cherry was "swotting." He was swotting in a Fourth Form study. And he looked worried and anxious.

All these circumstances provoked Cecil Reginald Temple to smile sarcastically.

He despised "swots"; he felt disdain for a fellow who was an outcast from his own Form; and he was disgusted with worried, anxious looks. Such looks were not in keeping with the lofty nonchalance which Cecil Reginald cultivated as a fine art.

Also he was a little annoyed at not being observed. Cecil Reginald was a great man, and with the kindness of a truly great man, he had generously taken the outcast of the Remove under his lofty protection. The least that this Lower Fourth fellow could have done, in Temple's opinion, was to give him the respectful attention that was his due. When so great a man condescended to look into the study to speak to him, it was time for Bob Cherry to sit up and take notice.

And Bob didn't.

He was working at Livy; and Titus Livius was rather a strain. Bob was the reverse of a swot by nature, and he had to concentrate all his mental powers to make head or tail of Titus Livius. Really, Titus was rather beyond the average Remove fellow; and in the scholastic line Bob was not above the average in his Form. At football, there was nobody in the Upper or Lower Fourth who could have taught him anything. But plenty of fellows in both the Fourths could have walked over him in Latin.

With all his intellectual powers concentrated on Livy, and the difficult task of extracting some meaning from the works of that great classic author, Bob remained totally unconscious of the arrival of Cecil Reginald Temple.

For a full minute Temple lounged in the doorway looking at him, smiling sarcastically. But sarcastic smiles had no effect on the top of a bent head. So Temple spoke at last.

"Goin' it, what?"

Bob started.

"Don't bother," he said, without looking up even then.

"Eh?"

"Busy."

Cecil Reginald Temple breathed hard and deep.

This Remove fellow—this fag—this outsider who was turned down by his own Form, and allowed to work in a Fourth-Form study—this cheeky sweep told him not to bother—him, Cecil Reginald Temple, son and heir of Sir Reginald Temple, Baronet, captain of the Fourth Form—great gun in every possible respect.

No wonder Temple waxed wroth. No wonder he decided that it was too thick, altogether too thick.

But Temple did not lose his polished politeness. Temple of the Fourth was always polished and polite; especially when he intended to be offensive.

"Sorry," he said.

"All right; buzz off!"

"Sorry," repeated Temple agreeably. "But I happen to have dropped in to speak to you, Cherry."

"Another time, old bean."

Temple smiled sweetly.

"Would you mind cuttin' out the 'old bean'?" he asked. "I don't exactly like it from a Lower Fourth fag."

Bob looked up at last. He looked up impatiently.

"Look here, Temple, I'm swotting," he said. "Give a fellow a rest when he's trying to work."

"It happens to be a rather particular matter," said Temple calmly. "I've no doubt your time's of value, Cherry. I have one or two occupations myself, as it happens!"

Bob laid down his pen.

Obviously, Temple's back was up. After breaking with all his old friends, and all the Remove, Bob did not want trouble with the Fourth, if he could help it. Also, a quarrel with Temple would make matters difficult for Teddy Wilkinson, who had so kindly taken the outcast of the Remove into his study.

"Well," said Bob. "What is it, Temple?"

"So sorry to interrupt the swottin'," said Temple satirically.

"The exam for the Head's Latin prize comes off this week," said Bob. "I've not much time to waste."

"Other fellows don't seem to be goin' it quite so strong," said Temple. "You never used to swot—or to work at all, I fancy. But you seem to have taken to it like a duck to water. Where's the charm in it?"

"I've got to do it," said Bob shortly. "I've promised my father."

"Very creditable, an' all that," yawned Temple. "They don't seem to like it in your own Form."

Bob's brow darkened.

He was very keenly conscious of his hapless position, an outcast from his Form, on the worst of terms with all the fellows who had been his friends. He did not want to discuss that with Cecil Reginald Temple.

"You said you had something particular to say," he said.

[Copyright in the United States of America.]

Temple coloured a little. It was a snub! This Remove fag was snubbing him.

"About the football," he said rather tartly. "You were turned out of the Remove eleven, and you seem to have been turned out of the Form, too, so far as the Remove men can turn you out."

That was putting it unpleasantly. Bob made no answer, he waited for the captain of the Fourth to go on.

"Chiefly owin' to Wilkinson botherin' me, I played you in my team the other day," went on Temple. "You were rather useful in the Form match with the Remove."

Bob repressed a grin.

He was quite well aware how useful he had been in the match between the Upper Fourth and the Remove. He had played against his own Form; and for the first time in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, the Upper Fourth had beaten Harry Wharton & Co. at football. That was the measure of Bob's usefulness; which Temple was not in the least disposed to admit. The utmost that he would acknowledge was, that the new recruit had been "rather" useful.

"We play the Shell on Wednesday," said Temple.

"Yes."

"I'm putting your name down."

"Oh!"

"The fellows think I ought to give you a chance," said Temple. "And as, properly speakin', we are the junior eleven of Greyfriars, it's only right to let a Remove man, or two, into the eleven. You're down to play—an' I want you to put in all the practice you can. Playin' the Shell is rather different from the fag matches you've been accustomed to."

"Oh, cut it out!" said Bob, losing patience for a moment. "The Remove have played the Shell and beaten them, and your crowd has never beaten the Shell, that I've heard of."

Temple compressed his lips. His polished politeness came near failing him.

Home truths like these did not agree with Cecil Reginald.

"I didn't come here for any fag cheek," he remarked. "I came to mention that you're down to play on Wednesday, and you're expected to put in every bit of practice you can. That's all!"

Temple turned away with that.

"You see, I'm swotting for the Head's prize, and I was thinking of putting in Wednesday afternoon at it," said Bob in dismay.

"You don't want to play football for the Fourth?"

"I do. I'm barred from Remove footer this season, and I don't want to give up the game. I'm jolly glad to play for the Fourth," said Bob Cherry honestly. "After the exam's over you can count on me every time."

Temple's lip curled.

"I'm afraid I can't arrange matches to fit in with your swottin' arrangements," he said sarcastically. "You're down to play on Wednesday. I'm not keen on playin' you. It's chiefly because the fellows have been urgin' me to give you a chance. Please yourself!"

"You—you see——"

"I understand that you were turned out of the Remove football because you let them down on a match day, preferrin' to swot," said the captain of the Fourth. "I may as well say that you can't treat us like that. If I play you at all I shall play you when I want you. If that's not good enough, say so, and I'll scratch your name out—for good!"

Bob Cherry sat and stared at Temple.

For the sake of swotting for the Head's prize, the only way of keeping his promise to his father, Bob had broken with his own Form and his own friends. Owing to the circumstances of the case he had been unable to do anything else, though his conscience was not quite at ease on the subject. He was painfully aware that the unaccustomed stress of swotting had told on his nerves and his temper, and that he had been unusually quick to take offence—even, possibly, on occasions when offence was not intended. He was barred by his Form now—for the sake of "swotting." And now he was called upon by Temple to give up, at Cecil Reginald's lofty behest, what he had refused to give up to keep the friendship of his old chums.

He shook his head.

"Can't be done," he said. "I've got to do my best in the Latin exam. It's rotten hard work for me, anyhow. After it's over——"

"I've answered that already."

"Well, I'm booked for Wednesday afternoon, anyhow," said Bob shortly.

"That's final?"

"Yes."

"Just as you like," said Temple airily. "We sha'n't miss a Remove fag, I assure you. Only—you don't play for the Fourth again."

Bob compressed his lips.

"Very well," he said.

"I mean it," said Temple, hesitating in the doorway.

As a matter of absolute fact, Cecil Reginald had counted very much on his new half-back. With all his lofty swank, Temple was aware of the very great usefulness of Bob Cherry in the Fourth Form team. He did not admit it, even to himself; but all his hopes of beating the Shell were based upon the fact that Bob would be playing for the Fourth.

"So do I," said Bob, turning to his work again. "I'm sorry, but there's nothing doing."

Temple gave him a far from pleasant look.

"I'm not surprised that the Remove have turned you down," he remarked. "I can't say I'm pleased to see a fellow who's kicked out of his own quarters plantin' himself in this passage. You've nothin' more to say?"

"Only that I wish you'd clear."

"What?"

"Clear!" said Bob.

"You cheeky young cad!" roared Temple, his polished politeness and lofty nonchalance deserting him simultaneously. "I've a jolly good mind to come in and mop up the study with you."

Bob Cherry laughed involuntarily. Had Temple carried out that threat, the mopping up would certainly have proved what Hurree Jamset Ram Singh called a boot on the other leg.

"Oh, hook it, old chap!" said Bob. "What's the good of rowin'? You say you don't care a button whether I play for the Fourth or not, so what is there to rag about? Shut the door after you."

"You cheeky fag——"

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here——"

"For goodness' sake give us a rest!" exclaimed Bob. "I've got enough to do with this beastly Livy, without listening to your burbling."

The Remove fellows had found that Titus Livius had a disturbing effect on Bob Cherry's nervous system. Temple made the same discovery now. And he was still less disposed than the Removites to stand it.

"Burblin'!" he stuttered.

"Yes; hook it, and shut up!"

That tore it, so to speak.

Cecil Reginald Temple strode into the study, grasped Bob Cherry by the collar, and dragged him off his chair.

"Now, you cheeky cad!" he exclaimed.

In his just wrath Temple had decided on the "mopping-up" as the only way of dealing with this cheeky Remove fag. In his excitement he did not remember that Bob Cherry was good for at least two of him when it came to scrapping. That undoubted fact was, however, immediately recalled to his remembrance.

Bob came rolling off his chair. And then an earthquake happened. At least, it seemed like an earthquake to Cecil Reginald Temple—two or three earthquakes, all happening at once, with a hurricane and a tornado thrown in. Exactly what happened Cecil Reginald never know. But he knew, a minute later, that he was sprawling in the Fourth Form passage, with a door slammed after him. He knew that he had a collection of aches and pains all over his elegant person, that his nose felt twice its usual size, and his chin felt as if it wasn't there at all.

"Great gad!" gasped Temple. "Great gad!"

He struggled to his feet and turned breathlessly and furiously to the closed door of Study No. 5. But he stopped before his hand was on the door. It was no use provoking another earthquake—Cecil Reginald couldn't deal with earthquakes. On second thoughts—proverbially the best—Cecil Reginald walked away down the Fourth Form passage and Bob Cherry was left to "swot" undisturbed.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Bump for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter was grinning as he looked into Study No. 1 in the Remove.

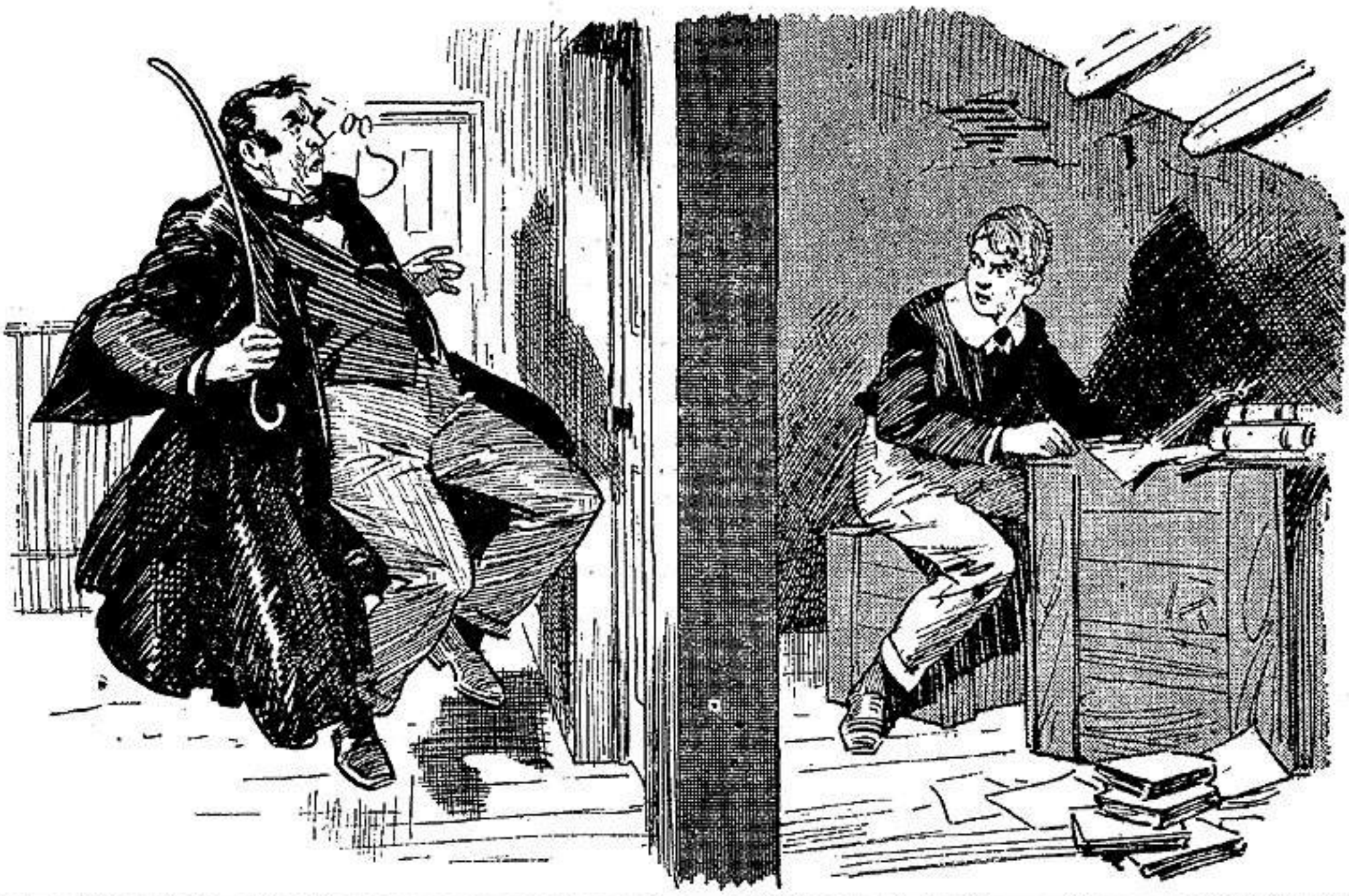
Four juniors were at tea there—Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. It was a long time since Bob Cherry had "tea'd" with the Famous Five. The Co. was broken up now, and it seemed very unlikely indeed that it would ever be re-united.

What Bob Cherry felt about the hapless division in the Co. and whether he gave it any thought at all the other members did not know. No word was ever exchanged now between them and their former chum.

But the four missed the cheery face that had been wont to beam with careless good humour at the study tea-table.

They hardly understood the change that had come over Bob Cherry in these days.

There had been faults on both sides—they admitted that. But the balance of the fault was on Bob's side; of that they had no doubt. No doubt what he was doing was right in his own eyes; but it was right in no one else's. The whole of the Remove had turned against him; he had not a friend left in the Form. That fact might have made the outcast reflect if he placed the blame for the break on his old friends. And Bob Cherry's chief fault was that he showed no desire whatever for a reconciliation. It was unlike—utterly unlike—the cheery, hearty Bob to nurse a grievance, and hug a wrong. But that was what he seemed to be doing now; and matters had gone steadily from bad to worse. And it was hard to forgive or forget



Mr. Quelch reached the box-room and turned the handle of the door. Finding the door locked, he rapped sharply on the panels. "Oh, clear off!" exclaimed a voice from within. It was the voice of Bob Cherry. Mr. Quelch jumped. "Wha-a-at?" he ejaculated in amazement. (*See Chapter 5.*)

the fight in the Rag, when Johnny Bull had stood up to his estranged chum, and had been licked. It had come to that, and that seemed like the final blow to the old friendship.

The blame was mostly Bob's; and yet if——

None of the four felt easy on the subject. Even Wharton, proud as he certainly was, lofty as some of the Remove fellows supposed him to be, would have welcomed a sign of reconciliation. But from Bob Cherry there came no sign.

"I say, you fellows, that rotter Cherry——"

Four glares were fixed on the fat face of William George Bunter.

As Bob was no longer a pal of Study No. 1, and as one member of the Co. had had a fight with him, and as the captain of the Remove had scratched his name from the football list, there really seemed no reason why they should be annoyed at hearing him called a "rotter."

But they looked annoyed.

"Shut up, you fat idiot!" said Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"Buzz off!" snapped Wharton.

"I say——"

"Get out, before I kick you, Bunter," growled Johnny Bull.

"The kickfulness is the proper caper," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bunter blinked at the four through his big spectacles. He seemed surprised.

"I say, you fellows, I thought you were down on that cad Cherry——"

"Think again, fathead!"

"But you've rowed with him——" said Bunter, mystified.

"Hook it!"

"He gave you a jolly good licking, Bull——"

Johnny Bull coloured. He glanced about him, apparently for something to throw at Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, I suppose you're joining up?" said Bunter. "We're all down on that rotten outsider Cherry, you know. We're going to make him sit up. I hope you fellows are not going to funk."

"You fat dummy!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Is Skinner up to something again?" asked the captain of the Remove, with a frowning brow.

Bunter chuckled.

"It's a rag," he explained. "You fellows know that the examination for the Head's prize is on Saturday?"

"Yes, ass!"

"Lot of fellows in for it, as well as Cherry. I don't know who'll bag it. But Cherry won't!"

"He might!"

"We're not going to let him," grinned Bunter. "He's let down the Form, and played the ox generally, on account of swotting for that prize. He's mugging up Latin in a Fourth Form study every evening. Filthy swot, you know. Well, we're going to raid Wilkinson's study, and rag all Cherry's books and exercises, see?"

"You're not!"

"We jolly well are," said Bunter. "Skinner, and Bolsover major, and Micky Desmond, and half a dozen more are going. I'm going, if I'm sure Cherry isn't there—I—I mean, I'm going. Aren't you fellows going to lend a hand? It's Skinner's wheeze——"

Whiz!

Crash!

Johnny Bull had found something to throw. It was a cushion, and it landed on Bunter's ample person with a crash.

Bunter flew.

There was a heavy bump in the passage, and a fiendish yell floated back into Study No. 1.

"Goal!" chuckled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh!" came from the Remove passage. "Ow! Wow! Yow! I'll give you a licking just like Bob Cherry did, you beast! Wow! Ow!"

"Come in again!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Yah! Beast!"

"I'm waiting!"

"I refuse to have anything to do with you, you rotter."

Bunter, evidently, did not care to enter the study again.

Frank Nugent picked up the cushion and shut the door. The howl of William George Bunter died away down the Remove passage.

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

"This won't do," he said. "They're not going to rag Bob's study. There's a limit."

"No business of ours," said Johnny Bull.

"My esteemed Johnny——" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Cherry's chummed up with the Fourth now. They can help him out, if they like," said Johnny Bull. "He backs them up in everything now—in rows with the Remove, in football matches—all along the line. The only time Temple and his crew beat us at footer was when Cherry was playing for them. We lost the St. Jim's match through his letting us down. Let him rip!"

"That's all very well——" said Frank.

"Then let it drop!"

"We were to blame in the first place," said Nugent very quietly.

"Oh, were we?" snapped Johnny. Probably that fight and that licking in the Rag had made Johnny feel a little more irreconcilable than his comrades. Bunter's reminder of that unfortunate episode had helped.

"Yes. We thought Bob had let us down over the Highcliffe match, and it turned out that he was kept away by his father coming down to Greyfriars, and he sent us a message that never reached us. We were all down on him—for nothing—after his pater had been ragging him, too, and making him promise to work for the Head's prize."

"We owned up we were wrong; we couldn't do more than that."

"I know. But that started it."

Johnny Bull grunted.

"Man shouldn't bear grudges over nothing, or next to nothing. It wasn't his pater coming here that made him let us down over the St. Jim's match."

"But it's turned out since that he had special toot with Mr. Quelch that afternoon—most likely he couldn't get away."

"And why did he play for the Fourth and help to beat us at footer?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"I don't see why he shouldn't, as he was dropped from the Remove eleven. I don't see why he should chuck up footer."

"Oh, rats! And why did he pick a row with me, and make me fight him in the Rag?" demanded Johnny Bull hotly. "I can take a fair licking, in a fair fight as well as any other chap, I hope; but I never wanted to fight him, and he pushed it on me."

"I know," said Frank. "But you chipped in when he was shoving Hazeldene's head under the tap in the changing-room——"

"Is he going to bully Remove chaps as he pleases, now that he's chummed up with the Fourth?"

"I'm pretty certain Hazel asked for it. I know I should have punched Hazel's head lots of times if he wasn't Marjorie's brother."

Another grunt from Johnny Bull.

"Well, don't let's argue," said Wharton mildly. "I feel bound to admit that we didn't make enough allowance for Bob taking to swotting. He never wanted to, and he was ragged by his pater, and had to—and it told on him more than it would on another chap. It's not in his line at all. I've thought several times that we might have been a bit more tactful about it."

"Oh! You have, have you?" exclaimed Johnny Bull, staring at the captain of the Remove. "Blessed if I expected that from you."

Harry Wharton coloured.

"I don't see why I shouldn't own up to it when it's true," he said tartly. "Cherry's taken the bit between his teeth and bolted—but it might never have happened if we'd been a bit more careful. We thought he'd let us down, and so he did—but I shouldn't wonder if he thinks that we let him down. He was up against it, and very likely expected his friends to back him up, instead of finding fault with him."

"Nugent's soft, and he's talked you into being soft, too," grunted Johnny Bull. "I'm fed-up with the chap. Still, I certainly shouldn't take any hand in ragging him. That's a dirty trick when a man's working for an exam. Just what a cad like Skinner would think of."

"I think we ought to chip in," said Harry.

"The chip-infulness is our game," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let's frustrate the knavish tricks of the esteemed and disgusting Skinner."

"Let's!" said Nugent.

Johnny Bull hesitated. But Johnny's bark was always worse than his bite. He gave a grunt of assent.

"Come on, then!" said Harry Wharton, rising from the tea-table.

The study door opened.

Bolsover major stepped in, and stood just within the study, with a grim, frowning look at the four chums.

"You fellows joining up or not?" he demanded. "It's a rag on that rank outsider, Cherry. Are you with us?"

"No; we're against you."

"You mean that you're going to chip in?"

"Just that."

"I thought so!" sneered Bolsover major. "Well, you jolly well won't—see? You won't be allowed."

"You cheeky ass!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "I can jolly well tell you——"

"Rats! Ready, Skinner?" asked Bolsover

Skinner had stepped in behind Bolsover major, screened by the bulky form of the Bully of the Remove.

"Yes, old bean!" grinned Skinner.

Bolsover major stepped back into the passage and pulled the study door shut after him with a slam.

For a second the chums of the Remove were puzzled. Then they heard a click.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

He sprang to the door and grasped the handle. The key had been turned on the outside.

"Why, the—the—the——"

Wharton almost stuttered with wrath.

"Locked in!" exclaimed Nugent.

"That cheeky cad, Skinner——"

Evidently Skinner had slyly changed the key to the outside of the lock, while Bolsover major was talking to the chums of the Remove. Now the door was locked on Harry Wharton & Co. They were prisoners in Study No. 1.

Wharton thumped on the panels angrily.

"Bolsover, you cheeky cad——"

"Hallo!" chuckled Bolsover major outside.

"Unlock this door at once!"

"No fear! After the rag, if you like."

"I tell you——"

"Oh, can it!" said Bolsover major. "You're dead in this act. Now then, you men, if you're ready——"

There was a sound of laughter, and of retreating feet. Wharton thumped on the study door again, but no reply came from the passage. The raggers were gone, and Harry Wharton & Co. were indubitably, as Bolsover had declared, "dead" in that act.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Marching Orders!

"YOU'VE torn it now!"

Wilkinson of the Fourth made that observation, in a rueful tone, with a rueful look.

Bob Cherry nodded. His rugged face was rueful, too.

"You've heard?" he asked.

"I've had it from Temple," said Teddy Wilkinson. "Dash it all, Cherry, you might have kept your hands off the chap."

"He collared me," said Bob. "I tried hard not to row with him, Wilkinson—really hard. But he was begging for it."

"That's all very well," said Wilkinson, with a touch of impatience. "But according to all accounts you're mighty ready to meet trouble half way. Your temper doesn't seem to be improving."

"Doesn't it?" said Bob, very quietly.

"You've quarrelled with every man in the Lower Fourth," said Wilkinson tartly. "That's all very well. They're a scrubby lot of little beasts, I dare say. But if you're going on the same tack in this passage it will really be rather too thick, you know."

"I know," said Bob in the same quiet tone.

Wilkinson's manner was not agreeable, but Bob was determined not to notice that.

He understood the unpleasantness of Teddy Wilkinson's position.

An outcast from his own Form, Bob had been taken hospitably into Wilkinson's study. He had worked there in peace and quiet, and put in much more steady work than would have been possible in the Remove passage. It was all the more decent of Wilkinson as he was an entrant, also, for the Head's Latin prize, and in helping Bob he was helping a rival. Temple, Dabney & Co. had been generally civil to the newcomer in the passage. They had raised their eyebrows a little at him, perhaps, but they had been civil and raised no objection, even if they raised their eyebrows. On the whole, Bob had been lucky to get to such quarters in his present circumstances, and he had realised that it was up to him to walk warily and keep the peace with all the Fourth.

And he had failed.

After the row with Cecil Reginald Temple it was scarcely possible for him to continue to "dig" in a Fourth Form study. In fact, it was pretty certain that Temple would take active measures to prevent him from doing so.

The great Cecil Reginald was not likely to forget or to forgive his mode of exit from the study after his talk with Bob.

Bob realised it, and obviously, from Wilkinson's manner, Teddy realised it, too. Bob was far from desiring to put Wilkinson on bad terms with his Form captain and Form fellows. He had already made up his mind that Study No. 5 was no longer a refuge for him.

He did not see that he was to blame for the quarrel with Temple. He might, perhaps, have been a little more patient, a little more tactful. Teddy Wilkinson obviously thought so.

"Temple's simply fuming with rage," went on Wilkinson. "You actually chucked him out of my study!"

Bob coloured.

"Yes; you see——"

"So far as I can gather he offered you a place in our team for the Shell match on Wednesday, and you turned it down."

"With the exam on Saturday, you know——"

"I'm booked for the exam on Saturday," said Wilkinson acidly. "But I'm keeping goal on Wednesday, all the same."

Bob Cherry sighed.

He seemed fated to put himself in the wrong.

"You see, it's different, old man," he said. "You can handle this stuff, and I can't—really! You could play football every day, and still beat me for the prize on Saturday. I've no expectation of coming out on top of the list. You'll beat me, Mark Linley will beat me, Hoskins of the Shell will beat me, so will Stewart and Scott. The hardest I do, half a dozen fellows will come out ahead

of me. I know that. But somehow or other I've got to put up a show. If I'm at the tail end of the list I simply dare not face my father. He's put me in for this exam as a sort of test; if I don't get a decent number of marks I may have to leave the school. The pater's got his rag out over my last report from Mr. Quelch. I've got to pull up."

Wilkinson nodded.

"I understand. But dash it all! You were put into the Form eleven after the Remove had dropped you out of football. I had to hammer at Temple to get him to agree. You turned out to be a useful man. You can't please yourself all along the line. Temple had a right to expect you to play on Wednesday, exam or no exam, pater or no pater."

"I dare say," said Bob wearily. "I know I've had all that in the Remove; now I'm getting it from you. I suppose I ought really to have chucked up games altogether till after the exam. Anyhow, I can't play on Wednesday, and I thought Temple would take it civilly. He didn't."

Wilkinson shrugged his shoulders.

"No question of your playing now," he said. "Temple wouldn't play you for your weight in gold. And the fact is——"

Wilkinson hesitated.

"I know—I know," said Bob. "I'm taking my books away, and I'm going to tea in Hall. I sha'n't come back. That's all right, I suppose?"

"I'm sorry, of course," said Wilkinson uncomfortably, "I daresay you're right, and it isn't your fault that you keep on getting into rows with one fellow after another. But it's very unfortunate. Don't think I'm turning you out of the study. I asked you here, and so far as I'm concerned, you're welcome. We've got on well together. I like you personally. But——"

Bob smiled faintly.

Teddy was putting it as nicely as he could. But it was quite clear that a Fourth Form study was no longer the place for the outsider of the Remove.

"The fact is," said Wilkinson, "if you hang on here, you'll get a Fourth Form ragging. You've handled the captain of the Form, and Temple thinks it's rather beneath his dignity to scrap with a Remove fag——"

Bob grinned involuntarily.

Wilkinson grinned, too. In point of fact, he did not entertain a very high opinion of that great man, Cecil Reginald Temple.

"Well, for whatever reason, Temple doesn't intend to take you on with the gloves," said Teddy. "But there's going to be a ragging if you're found in the Fourth Form passage at tea-time. I really wish you could have kept your hands off Temple. He's rather an irritatin' ass, I know—but—— Well, it's no good talking."

"None," agreed Bob. "I'm much obliged to you, Wilkinson; you've treated me jolly decently, and I'm not going to get you into trouble with your Form. I'll clear."

"I'm really sorry," said Wilkinson awkwardly.

"Not your fault, old man. It's all right. I—I daresay it's a bit my own fault," said Bob, with an effort. "My temper isn't what it was, I know that. I've rowed with no end of fellows, and I suppose they can't all be in the wrong. Can't be helped, though."

"I'll help you with your books," said Wilkinson. "Where are you taking them? Back to No. 13 in the Remove?"

Bob shook his head.

"No; I should be ragged bald-headed if I tried swotting in the Remove passage, after what's happened."

"But you'll have to work somewhere."

"Oh, I'll manage all right," said Bob cheerfully. He was not feeling very cheerful, but it was not Bob's way to wear his heart on his sleeve, for daws to peck at. Whatever he felt like, he would succeed somehow or other in keeping a stiff upper lip.

Wilkinson helped him to pack his books and other property together—there was not much of it. He looked rather shamefaced, as he saw Bob out of the study. But he really had no choice in the matter—Cecil Reginald Temple was wrathful and implacable, and he was supported by his Form, and it would have been futile for Wilkinson to set himself up in opposition to the whole of the Fourth. Neither was Teddy Wilkinson inclined to do so, if it had been practicable. His view was that he had been hospitable to a fellow who had quarrelled with all his own Form, and, as a result, the fellow was proceeding to quarrel with his, Wilkinson's, Form. That, in Teddy's opinion, was not good enough.

Bob Cherry departed, and Wilkinson sat down to tea by himself. He rather missed Bob's company; but he had his tea with a Latin book propped open against the tea-pot, absorbing Latin, so he did not want company very much. He had not finished tea, when the door opened without a knock, and Cecil Reginald Temple marched in, with a grim brow, followed by Dabney and Fry, and five or six more of the Fourth.

Wilkinson grinned. He knew why they had come, and he was glad that Bob was no longer on the scene.

Temple glanced round the study.

"Gone?" he asked.

"Just that!" grinned Wilkinson.

"For good?"

"Yes."

"Oh!" said Cecil Reginald.

"Sensible chap," said Fry. "He's gone while the going was good."

"Oh, rather," said Dabney.

Cecil Reginald gave Wilkinson a rather doubting glance.

"You're not pullin' our leg, Wilkinson?" he demanded. "The cheeky rotter's really gone?"

"Really gone!" assented Wilkinson.

"The Remove will make it warm for him, in his own passage," grinned Kenney.

"He's not gone there, I think," said Teddy.

"Nowhere else for him to go," said

"You cheeky cad, Cherry!" said Bunter, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles. "Yah! Not a man at Greyfriars will speak to you—you're turned down by everybody! I take pity on you, but—— Yah! I despise you! Sickening cad!" The Owl of the Remove, screwing up his fat face into an expression of withering scorn, turned his back on Bob Cherry, contemptuously. *(See Chapter 8.)*

Cecil Reginald. "Nobody but you, outside his own Form, would be ass enough to take him in."

"Has he really cleared for good, though?" said Fry.

"That's what we're jolly well goin' to see," said Cecil Reginald Temple grimly, and he sat down on the chair lately occupied by Bob Cherry. "We'll wait a bit! If that hooligan's seen in the Fourth Form passage again, he's goin' to have such a raggin', that he'll think his own Form gentle cooin' doves in comparison. I can't understand him takin' it so quietly as this. We'll see."

"Oh, rather!"

"Have some of this cake, you chaps," said Wilkinson, with a grin. And Temple, Dabney & Co. discussed cake, while Wilkinson devoted his attention to Titus Livius, propped against the tea-pot.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not a Success!

"ALL clear!" grinned Skinner.

"Good! Come on," said Bolsover major.

Skinner of the Remove had scouted along into the Fourth Form passage, while the raggers waited on the landing. Bolsover major and his comrades knew nothing of the change of affairs in Study No. 5 in the Fourth—they were blissfully ignorant of the trouble between Bob Cherry and Cecil Reginald Temple, and its outcome. Hitherto, the outcast of the Remove had had the support of the Fourth against the hostility of his own Form, especially since he had helped Temple & Co. to beat the Remove at football. In the belief that the same state of affairs still obtained, Bolsover major was proceeding cautiously. The scheme was to rag Bob Cherry and his books and exercises in Wilkinson's study—not to enter into a general shindy with the Upper Fourth.

But Skinner reported all clear.

"Not a man in the passage," said Skinner. "Some of them are at tea in their studies, that's all!"

"Good egg! Step lightly," grinned Bolsover major. "We don't want to have the Fourth on us like a swarm of bees, if we can help it. We're after Cherry, not those Fourth Form cads."

"Lead on, Macduff!" said Ogilvy.

"Not a word till we get to No. 5—and then rush in after me," said Bolsover major. "Collar Cherry at once and then get him on the floor and sit on him—Wilkinson, too, if he's there. Then it won't take us five minutes to wreck the show."

"We're after you, old man," said Stott.

Bolsover major led the way, and seven or eight fellows went after him along the Fourth Form passage.

Fortune seemed to favour them; the passage was clear, and there was no alarm raised of a Remove raid, which would have brought the Fourth swarming out of their studies.

The raggers reached the door of No. 5, and there Bolsover major halted, and glanced back at his followers.

"Ready, you men!"

"What-ho!"

"Follow on, then."

And Bolsover major hurled open the door of the study and rushed in, with the raggers at his heels.

"What the thump——"

"Great gad!"

"What——"

There was surprise on both sides. The raggers had expected to find one, or at most two fellows, in the study. There were eight—and it was rather a crowd for a small study; and Bolsover major & Co. rushed right into them before they knew that they were there.

There was a collision, and loud and wrathful exclamations on all sides.

Cecil Reginald Temple sat down, suddenly and violently, as Bolsover major collided with him. Bolsover major stumbled over him, and Dabney grabbed him by the collar and dragged him over. The next moment Bolsover was grasping Dabney, and they were struggling. Temple staggered to his feet, red with wrath.

"Kick them out!" he shouted. "Remove cads—great gad! Kick them out!"

The raggers had come there for Bob Cherry, but they had no time to think of Bob now. They had their hands full, as the Fourth-Formers tackled them. Why they had come Temple & Co. did not know, but they knew it was a Remove raid, and that was enough for them. In a few seconds a battle royal was raging in Wilkinson's study. Teddy Wilkinson jumped up, with Titus Livius in his hand, and he used that great author as a weapon, dealing smites on all sides with the hefty volume.

There were loud crashes as chairs went flying to right and left, and a terrific crash as the table rocked and went over into the fender. Study No. 5 was not a large room—and more than a dozen fellows overcrowded it. There was hardly room for a scrap—and the two parties were mingled and mixed at very close quarters.

Bolsover major & Co., however, began to gain the upper hand—Bolsover was a giant in himself. The Fourth Form fellows sprawled about the floor, or backed against the walls. But the alarm had gone forth now; the din from Study No. 5 rang the length of the passage. Fellows came out of all the studies and came along to investigate.

Then the tables were turned on the Remove raiders.

Between Temple, Dabney & Co. on one side, and the new arrivals on the other, Bolsover and his men were taken between two fires.

"Kick them out!" yelled Temple.

And the Removites, fairly overwhelmed by the heavy odds, were kicked or pitched out of Wilkinson's study into the Fourth Form passage, one after another.

Skinner set the example of running for it, and he vanished at top speed. Snoop was a good second, and Stott a good third.

But the other fellows were still resisting, especially Bolsover major, who was in a towering rage, and careless of the damages he received.

Bolsover resisted every step of the way, but he had to retreat, and his comrades retreated with him.

The victorious Fourth drove the raiders back to the landing at the end of the passage, and drove them across it into the Remove quarters.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry came up the Remove staircase, and he stared in amazement at the wild and whirling scene.

But he did not intervene.

It was no concern of his. He was turned down by the Fourth now, as well as by the Remove, and neither party had any claim on him. He sat down on the landing balustrade and looked on.

"Give 'em socks!" shouted Wilkinson, still brandishing Titus Livius. "Boot 'em home!"

A Book that will explain the World!

Tens of Thousands of PICTURES

The CHILDREN'S TREASURE HOUSE is the most fascinating book imaginable. It is *not* an encyclopedia or text book. From cover to cover it thrills with interest—it deals with nature and her kingdom, famous men and their work, the great sights of all countries and the peoples of all times, and science and its secrets. In addition there is a great collection of beautiful stories, poems, songs and plays, and a wonderful gallery of superb pictures—many of the latter in gorgeous colour.

THE CHILDREN'S TREASURE HOUSE

Fortnightly Parts. *Buy Part 1 TO-DAY* **1/3**

"Oh, rather!"

"Back up, Cherry, you rotter!" shouted Bolsover major, catching sight of the onlooker seated on the balustrade.

That request was rather cool, considering that Bolsover had gone to Study No. 5 especially to rag the "outsider."

Bob shrugged his shoulders, and did not stir.

"Back up, Cherry!" called out Wilkinson, on his side.

Bob did not heed.

He was done with both parties, and he sat and swung his legs on the balustrade, heedless of both sides.

The Removites were driven back into their passage, but now more Remove fellows were coming on the scene, and the Fourth had to halt. Temple, Dabney & Co. retreated into their own passage.

Bolsover major mopped a crimson stream from his nose.

"There's that outsider, you fellows!" he gasped. "Collar him!"

Bob Cherry slipped off the balustrade.

"Here I am," he said. "Collar away, anybody who's looking for trouble."

But the raiders were feeling too spent for more trouble. Even Bolsover had had enough. He moved back as Bob made a step towards him, gasping and mopping his damaged nose.

"Any offers?" asked Bob sarcastically, looking round at the gasping, panting array of Removites.

There were no offers apparently.

Bob gave another shrug of the shoulders and walked along the Remove passage. As he passed Study No. 1, there was a loud hammering on the inside of the door, and Wharton's voice shouted:

"Open this door, you silly owls!"

Bob passed on unheeding.

The hammering in Study No. 1 continued. Harry Wharton & Co. were still locked in, and apparently tired of their imprisonment.

Bob Cherry turned from the Remove passage into the little staircase that led up to the Remove box-room. Several Removites watched him go, and wondered what it meant. It was the first time that Bob had been seen in the Remove passage since his break with his Form. The thumping on the door went on in Study No. 1; the four juniors seemed to be getting excited. The key was turned at last by Bolsover major, and Harry Wharton jerked the door open.

The captain of the Remove came striding out, his face red with anger. Johnny Bull and Nugent and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh followed him. The four looked excited and vengeful; but they stopped and stared at the sight of the dishevelled, panting crowd in the passage. Evidently the "rag" on Bob Cherry had not gone as planned.

"What on earth's happened?" asked Wharton. "Have you been ragging in Wilkinson's study?"

"Ow! Yes," gasped Bolsover major. "My hat! I suppose Bob didn't handle the lot of you and knock you all out, did he?" asked Nugent, with a laugh. "You look as if you'd been through trouble."

"Ow! He wasn't there," groaned Bolsover. "We rushed into a mob of the Fourth—the brute wasn't there, but the study was crammed with Fourth Form rotters. Blessed if I know why—and—and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hence these tears!" chuckled Nugent.

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Harry Wharton. "You've got what you asked for."

"The askfulness was terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The lickfulness appears to have been also great."

Bolsover major stamped away savagely to bathe his nose. It needed it. The hapless raggers dispersed, leaving the Co. chuckling. The rag had not been a success

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Rooted Out!

MR. QUELCH frowned.

The master of the Remove was taking an evening stroll in the quadrangle of Greyfriars when his glance, happening to turn skyward, was arrested by the gleam of a light from a little dormer window.

The window belonged to the Remove box-room, as Mr. Quelch was very well aware; and the light was a proof that the box-room was occupied. At that hour—supposed to be devoted to prep in the studies—the box-room certainly ought not to have been occupied. Wherefore the master of the Lower Fourth frowned.

That particular box-room was accessible only from the Remove passage.

Obviously a Remove fellow was there.

Mr. Quelch stood and stared up at the light.

It burned steadily from the uncurtained window, gleaming out into the darkness of the winter night.

Mr. Quelch's frown deepened.

Plainly it was not some fellow who had gone to the box-room to fetch something; whoever was there was staying there. Fellows were not supposed to haunt the box-rooms after dark, especially in prep time. Mr. Quelch remembered an occasion when he had detected a smoking party in that box-room, on which occasion Skinner, and Snoop, and Stott, had had reason to remember it also.

"Upon my word!" murmured Mr. Quelch.

He was quite unwilling to give up his stroll and mount the stairs to the Remove passage on a voyage of investigation. But the light did not disappear. It continued to burn steadily, and Mr. Quelch made up his mind that it was his duty to investigate.

He went back into the House, and stepped into his study for a cane to take with him.

It was his duty to ascertain what was going on in the box-room—and Mr. Quelch was a master who never neglected a duty, however troublesome or unpleasant. So, naturally, he intended to make this matter unpleasant also for the delinquent, or delinquents, who had given him the task of mounting a long staircase. At Mr. Quelch's time of life stairs were a rather serious consideration. He had reached an age when he would really have preferred public schools to be built on the bungalow system.

With the cane under his arm, and a frown on his brow, Mr. Quelch went up the big staircase, and then up the Remove staircase. He walked along the Remove passage to the spot where the next stair led up to the box-room. At the top of that stair were several disused garrets and attics, that being one of the oldest parts of the ancient building of Greyfriars. Some of the rooms were kept locked, but the largest one was used as a lumber-room and box-room by the Remove fellows. That was the apartment for which Mr. Quelch was now heading.

Billy Bunter, blinking out of the doorway of Study No. 7, grinned as he spotted the Remove master making for the box-room stair.

He turned back into Study No. 7, with a fat chuckle, when Mr. Quelch had passed him.

"I say, Peter——"

Peter Todd waved a pen at him.

"Shut up! Prep."

"But, I say, old Quelch has come up!" grinned Bunter. "He's spotted somebody in the box-room. Cherry will get turned out! He, he, he!"

"Nothing to cackle at, fathead!"

"Oh, really, Peter——"

"Dry up!"

Billy Bunter rolled along the Remove passage to apprise the other fellows of Mr. Quelch's visit. Meanwhile, the Remove master had reached the box-room, and he turned the handle of the door, and was not surprised to find that it did not open. If there was a smoking-party going on in the room the door would naturally be locked.

He rapped sharply on the panels.

"Oh, clear off!" exclaimed a voice within. It was the voice of Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch jumped.

"Wha-a-at?" he ejaculated.

"Clear off, you silly idiot!" called out Bob. "Can't you leave a fellow alone? Get out of it!"

"Bless my soul! Cherry, how dare you!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

There was a sound of a quick movement in the room, and a dismayed exclamation.

"Oh, my hat! Is that you, Mr. Quelch?"

"Open the door at once!"

"Certainly, sir!"

The door was immediately unlocked and opened. Mr. Quelch strode in.

"I—I didn't know it was you, sir!" stammered Bob Cherry.

"I imagine so, Cherry, from the way you answered my knock," said the Remove master dryly.

He stood and looked round the room. The gas was burning brightly, and it revealed a scene quite unlike what the Form master had expected to behold. There was no smoking-party going on in the box-room. Bob Cherry was alone there. A box had been arranged as a table, and it was covered with books and papers. The swot of the Remove had evidently been interrupted at work.

Mr. Quelch turned a very curious glance upon him.

"What does this mean, Cherry?" he asked.

Bob's face was crimson.

"Wha-a-at, sir?" he stammered.

"What are you doing here?"

"Prep, sir."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"I am already aware, Cherry, that you have found some difficulties in working for the examination in your own study. I understood that for this reason you were working in a Fourth Form study, and I gave you my permission to do so."

"That's fallen through, sir."

"And why?"

"I—I——" Bob stammered again. "I've had a little trouble with some of the Fourth, sir, and I thought I'd better leave Wilkinson's study."

Mr. Quelch's brow grew grimmer.

"I am quite aware, Cherry, that a boy who works hard for an examination is likely to be considered what the juniors call a swot, and that a swot is not popular. But it is very odd that you should find so much trouble. At least a dozen other boys are working for the Head's prize, but not one of them seems to meet with the same difficulties."

Bob did not answer that.

"I cannot allow this, Cherry," went on the Remove master. "I am willing to believe that by no fault of your own you were unable to work in peace in the Remove passage, and I allowed you to work in a Fourth Form study. Now it seems that you have found trouble there. Some of the fault, at least, must be on your side, Cherry."

Bob's face grew rather dogged.

So far as he could see he had not been to blame. But evidently Mr. Quelch took another view.

"You have chosen this box-room to work in!" said Mr. Quelch.

"It—it's quiet here, sir," said Bob.

"Quite so. But nothing of the kind can be allowed," said the Remove master decisively. "I was very doubtful about allowing a Remove boy to work in a Fourth Form study; and now it appears that that arrangement has ended in a quarrel. I hope, Cherry, that you are not becoming a quarrelsome character."

"I hope not, sir," said Bob gruffly.

"But it would appear to be the case, Cherry," said the Remove master rather sharply.

"Indeed, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave him a very quick look. It was not like Bob Cherry to be impertinent; but certainly that answer sounded very much like impertinence to the ears of the Remove master.

"You will take your books to your own study, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall speak to your study-mates on the subject; the authority of your Form master will be enough to protect you from disturbance. I shall speak also to the head boy of the Remove—Wharton."

"No need, sir——" began Bob.

"I am the best judge of that, Cherry."

Bob bit his lip hard.

"I have been very gratified, Cherry, with your recent progress in your studies," said Mr. Quelch in a kinder tone. "But you must not allow your devotion to study to make you quarrelsome, or unsociable. I have observed that you seem to be on bad terms with very many other members of your Form, and I am sorry to see it. Now, take up your books, Cherry, and I will turn out the light."

"If—if you please, sir——"

"There is nothing more to be said, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch in a tone that admitted of no further argument.

Bob Cherry was silent. With a clouded brow he gathered up his books and papers.

Mr. Quelch watched him descend the box-room stair, and then turned out the light and followed him.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Home Again!

"HERE he comes!"

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

Quite a crowd of Remove fellows were in the passage, or looking out of their study doorways, as Bob Cherry came down from the box-room, laden with books and papers.

There was a general grin as he was sighted. Bob, with burning cheeks, made for Study No. 13—the room he had shared with Mark Linley and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and little Wun Lung, but which he had not entered for weeks.

All the Remove fellows knew by this time that Bob's trouble with his own Form had been followed by trouble with the Fourth, and that he was now excluded from Wilkinson's study. As Skinner remarked, the outsider of the Remove seemed to spend his time now chiefly in hunting for trouble and finding it. Bunter had spread the news along the passage that Mr. Quelch had already spotted the swot in the box-room, and the juniors were quite interested to see what the result would be. Bob's departure from his new quarters was the result. They watched him tramp along to Study No. 13, with grinning faces.

"Rooted out again," grinned Bolsover major.

"No rest for the wicked!" sighed Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch came down the box-room stairs with a severe face. He glanced along at the fellows in the passage or lounging in the doorways, with a very stern glance.

"Why are you boys not at preparation?" he snapped.

"Oh!"

The juniors retreated into their studies at once. In their interest in the "outsider's" proceedings, they had left prep and, in fact, forgotten it. Mr. Quelch reminded them of it quite unpleasantly.

The Form master followed Bob to Study No. 13.

Bob Cherry had reached the door of his old study, but had not opened it. Both his arms were full of books and papers. Had he been on his old footing with his study-mates, he would have jammed his boot on the door with a crash as a signal for it to be opened. Now he stood hesitating, extremely unwilling to enter the study he had abandoned; though there was now no choice in the matter.

Mr. Quelch came up and opened the door. He stepped into the study, with Bob behind him.

Mark Linley and Hurree Singh, who were working at the study table, jumped to attention at once. Little Wun Lung, who was curled up in the armchair, squirmed out of it immediately, and tried to look as if he had also been at work.

"You will come in, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch.

Bob Cherry came in. His face was crimson with annoyance and mortification, and he did not look at the Removites.

"You will work here from now as usual, Cherry," said the Form master.

"Very well, sir," said Bob, in a low voice.

"Linley! Hurree Singh! You are aware that Cherry is working for the Head's examination on Saturday."

"Yes, sir," said Mark.

"The awarefulness is terrific, esteemed sahib," murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Some difficulty seems to have arisen," said Mr. Quelch. "I wish to make it quite clear that Cherry's work is not to be interrupted in any way. It is quite a new thing for Cherry to be devoting himself to his lessons, and it is very much to his credit. No doubt he is somewhat misunderstood in his Form in consequence. I am sorry to see it. I trust that there will be no fresh difficulty in the matter."

"Nobody here has made any difficulties for Cherry, sir, that I know of," said Mark Linley quietly.

"The esteemed Cherry is as welcome as the flowers in merry month of May, sir," said Hurree Singh.

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"Velly glad Chelly comee back," said Wun Lung politely. "Me likee olc Chelly velly muchee."

"Well, well, I am glad there will be no more difficulty," said Mr. Quelch. "Doubtless there were faults on both sides."

And the Remove master quitted Study No. 13, leaving Bob Cherry there. He walked along to Study No 1, knocked at the door, and opened it. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent rose respectfully to their feet, wondering what the Remove master's unexpected visit portended.

"Wharton."

"Yes, sir," said the captain of the Remove.

"I have taken Cherry back to his study. He appears to have found some extraordinary difficulties in working for the Head's examination. I do not intend to inquire into the matter; but these difficulties, whatever they are, must come to an end."

"Oh!" said Harry, setting his lips a little.

From Wharton's point of view, all Bob Cherry's difficulties were of his own making. He did not say so, however.

"I am speaking to you as head boy of the Lower Fourth, and captain of the Form," said Mr. Quelch. "I look to you, Wharton, to see that there is no further trouble for Cherry, in his endeavour to make up for lost time. You are probably aware that I was compelled to give him a very bad report last term, and that, in consequence, his father contemplated taking him away from Greyfriars. There is very much at stake for Cherry, and he is entitled to every consideration from his Form-fellows, and especially from his friends."

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"I leave the matter in your hands, Wharton."

"Very well, sir."

"I rely upon you, Wharton."

And Mr. Quelch departed.

Wharton and Nugent looked at one another when the Form master was gone. Frank's face was serious—Wharton was frowning.

Mr. Quelch's footsteps had hardly died away down the Remove staircase when the door of Study No. 1 opened again, and Bolsover major looked in.

"Cherry's back," he said.

"I know!" said Harry shortly.

"Was that what Quelchy looked in for?"

"Let the nigger have it, Gaddy!" said Ponsonby. Gaddy obliged, and the horrid contents of the hat swamped down upon Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dusky face, obliterating his features under mud and ooze and slime. The nabob gasped and spluttered wildly, and the nuts of Highcliffe yelled with laughter. (*See Chapter 9.*)

"Yes."

"He's jawed the chaps in No. 13. Jawed you too, I suppose?"

Wharton made no answer to that.

"Pretty thick, isn't it?" said Bolsover major, with a sneer. "I never thought that even that outsider would complain to a Form master, and bring Quelchy down on us. I thought he would draw the line at sneaking. You never know a chap till you find him out."

"I don't think he has complained to Mr. Quelch," said Nugent.

Snort from Bolsover major.

"What did Quelchy come for, then? Of course he's complained—he's a Good Little Georgie now, sucking up to the masters, and sneaking about other fellows. Depend on it, if there's any rag in No. 13, Quelchy will be down on us now like a ton of bricks."

"There isn't going to be any rag," said Harry. "Mr. Quelch has left it to me to see that there's nothing of the kind."

"Special protection for the swot!" sneered Bolsover major. "Well, I can jolly well tell you that Cherry won't find it nice in the Remove passage. He turned us down for the Fourth—and he can't come sneaking back here when the Fourth kick him out."

And Bolsover major stalked out of the study and slammed the door. A few minutes later he looked into No. 13.

Chilly silence reigned in that study.

Little Wun Lung was curled up in the armchair again, with his almond eyes half-closed. Hurree Singh and Mark Linley were working on one side of the table, Bob Cherry on the other, without exchanging a glance or a word. The outsider had returned to the fold; but evidently not on improved terms with his former friends.

Bolsover major surveyed them for a minute or two with a sarcastic grin. He spoke at last.

"So you've come back, Cherry."

No answer.

"They didn't want any more of you in the Fourth, did they?"

Bob did not seem to hear.

"No wonder they got fed-up with you, as your own Form did," went on Bolsover major. "I dare say they knew you'd let them down, same as you let us down. Well, I can jolly well tell you that you're not wanted here."

Bob looked up at last.

"You're interrupting me, Bolsover," he said.

"Interrupting the swotting!" jeered Bolsover. "It won't be the last time it's interrupted, either. We don't want swots and saps and sneaks here."

"Shut the door after you."

"Wharton's been told that he's got to keep a special eye open, to see that you're not bothered," said Bolsover major sarcastically. "You're under special protection—dear little master's favourite now. Pah! Sucking up to old Quelchy——"

"Bolsover!"

"Oh!" gasped the bully of the Remove.

He spun round in alarm at the sound of Mr. Quelch's voice. Then he stood rooted in utter dismay, under the stern eyes of the Remove master. He had not expected Mr. Quelch to come back. Possibly the Remove master had considered it judicious to take another walk along the Remove passage, in the circumstances. At all events, there he was; and he had obviously heard Bolsover major's remarks. The thunder in his brow made Percy Bolsover quake.

"You were speaking of me, Bolsover!" Mr. Quelch's voice was like the rumble of thunder.

"I—I—I——" stuttered Bolsover.

"You were alluding to your Form master as 'old Quelch'!"

"I—I——"

"You were threatening to interrupt Cherry in his very creditable endeavour to make up for previous slackness in his lessons!"

"I—I——"

"I must make it clear to you, Bolsover, that this kind of conduct will not be tolerated," said Mr. Quelch. "Follow me to my study."

Bolsover major gave Bob a glare of concentrated fury, and followed the Remove master.

When he came back to the Remove passage his face was rather pale, and he was wriggling uncomfortably. Mr. Quelch had felt that it was necessary to make an example of Bolsover, and he had not spared the rod. In the Remove passage Bolsover was the recipient of much sympathy from the other fellows; and if anything had been needed to give the final touch to Bob Cherry's unpopularity in his Form, it was given now.

Bob was very well aware of it. He had not asked for his Form master's intervention, and had not wanted it; but he knew that the term "master's favourite" was bandied up and down the passage now. Mr. Quelch had meant well by him; but he had, as a matter of fact, done his very worst, so far as setting Bob right with his Form was concerned.

If the hapless junior had been an outsider before, he was doubly and trebly an outsider now. It was not his own fault; and it seemed to poor Bob that the stars in their courses were fighting against him.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.
On His Own!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were in the Form-room passage the following morning, when Bob Cherry came along to the Remove-room.

There were five or six other fellows near at hand, and they exchanged sarcastic looks at the sight of Bob.

Bob did not seem to observe it, or to see his old friends.

His rugged face was a little set and almost expressionless. Whatever his feelings might be, he was quite determined upon one point—never to let the Remove fellows see that he was hurt; and never, never to make any step towards a reconciliation. If they thought badly of him, if they looked on him as an outcast, let them! Pride was all the outsider of the Remove had left to sustain him now; but that, at least, was left.

Wharton coloured a little, and made a movement towards Bob. He had made up his mind to speak and break the ice if he could.

"Cherry!"

Bob looked at him then.

His glance was hard and cold as steel.

It was not encouraging.

Wharton paused. Before he could go on, Bob Cherry spoke again.

"I was going to speak to you, Wharton, as a matter of fact. I want the fellows to hear, too—and they all seem interested." He glanced for a moment at the Remove fellows, who certainly did look interested, some of them in the expectation that "trouble" was coming between the outsider and the captain of the Form. "I hear," went on Bob, "that Mr. Quelch has told you to keep an eye open, to see that there's no ragging now that I'm back in the Remove passage."

"That's so," said Harry.

"Well, you needn't trouble."

Wharton bit his lip.

"I shall do as Mr. Quelch has instructed me, of course," he said.

"You needn't trouble!" repeated Bob, raising his voice a little. "I can take care of myself, and I don't want anybody to chip in on my account. If you interfere I shall simply look on it as cheek."

"You can look on it as you like, and go and eat coke!" exclaimed Wharton angrily.

"If there's any ragging I can deal with it myself," said Bob. "I don't want any help, and won't accept any—that's all!"

And he went into the Form-room.

Wharton's face was red with vexation. The time to speak and break the ice was evidently past.

"Awfully independent, aren't we?" jeered Skinner, loud enough for Bob to hear in the Form-room. "We don't need protection—now we're the master's favourite!"

"Oh, shut up, Skinner!" said Nugent.

Mr. Quelch appeared at the end of the passage, and the juniors went into the Form-room.

Bob Cherry sat quite alone, the other fellows giving him plenty of room in a rather ostentatious way. Even in the Form-room, under the eyes of Mr. Quelch, they liked to make it clear that he was an outsider—with them, but not of them, so to speak.

Bob was the first called on to construe that morning.

Until quite recently, Bob's construe had generally caused smiles in the Remove, and frowns on Mr. Quelch's countenance. It was not nearly so bad as Bunter's or Lord Mauleverer's; but certainly Bob had never, till quite lately, shown any sign of excelling in the study of the classics. But of late there had been quite a change.

Now Bob handed out a faultless construe, quite as good as Mark Linley's, which was usually the best "con" in the Form.

Mr. Quelch listened with great approval.

A pupil who really worked, was sure to find favour in the eyes of a hard-worked Form master, whose task of driving knowledge into careless or obtuse heads was neither grateful nor comforting.

Bob's "con" being so very good, Mr. Quelch kept him on longer than was usual, as a sort of example to the Remove of what a junior "con" ought to be.

A few weeks before fellows would have stared at the bare idea of Bob being held up as an example of a model pupil. Nobody was surprised, however. Fellows were almost forgetting, by this time, that Bob had been in constant hot water for carelessness, that he had been a great man at games, and very small beer in class. He had now become a "swot," and it was as a "swot" that the Remove fellows thought of him now.

As a matter of fact, since he had resolutely tackled Livy, Bob found Virgil unexpectedly easy, and he was able to hand out a good "con" without undue effort. But to most of the fellows his excellent construe, and the Form master's smiling approval, represented the reward of "swotting," or "sapping," as they variously termed it. Skinner declared that Cherry had taken to "sapping" with a wet towel round his head, for the especial purpose of "showing off" in the Form-room, and "getting round" Mr. Quelch. While Bob earned the Remove master's words of commendation, the other fellows exchanged sarcastic looks.

Vernon-Smith, who followed, made it a special point to hand out a very faulty "con"—to make it quite clear that he, for his part, at least, was not "sucking up" to a Form master.

In morning break, Bob Cherry left the Form-room by himself, and went out into the quad. Mr. Quelch's commendation was gratifying enough to a fellow who was working for an examination, upon which a great deal depended. But it was not of much use to a fellow out of class, who had not a friend left in his Form. Bob detested solitude, which was one reason why he had chummed with Fourth Form fellows after being sent to Coventry by his own Form. But he was turned down by the Fourth now as well.

In the quad he passed Temple, Dabney & Co. Teddy Wilkinson was with them, and he looked very uncomfortable when Bob came along the path under the elms.

The MERRY MAG.
6D. ONLY
Ask for it at your Newsagent or Bookstall.

Cecil Reginald Temple gave the Remove fellow a glance of lofty superiority. He would very willingly have given him something much more drastic; but discretion was the better part of valour. Bob Cherry might be an outcast and an outsider, but there was no doubt that he was still the possessor of a four-point-seven punch which was not to be despised, and which would have played ducks and drakes with Temple's handsome Greek nose.

Teddy Wilkinson looked very uncomfortable, but he gave Bob a friendly hail.

"Hallo, old bean!"

Temple turned his superior glance on Wilkinson.

"Chuck that!" he said. "I've told you, Wilkinson, that we're not takin' up a man who's sent to Coventry by his own Form."

"Look here, Temple——"

"If you keep up speakin' to Cherry, Wilkinson, I can jolly well tell you that nobody in the Fourth will speak to you," said Cecil Reginald frigidly.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

Bob stopped. In his present desolate circumstances he did undoubtedly miss the cheery company of Teddy Wilkinson. But nothing would have induced him to have acknowledged the fact. Certainly, he was not asking to be "taken up" by anybody, least of all by the superb Cecil Reginald.

"You silly ass!" said Bob gruffly. "Who the thump wants to speak to a Fourth Form futhead? Go and eat coke!"

"Is that meant for me, too?" asked Wilkinson.

"Yes, if you like."

"Done, then!" snapped Wilkinson, perhaps not sorry for an excuse for dropping his undesirable acquaintance.

Bob's lip curled.

"You keep your distance, Cherry," said Cecil Reginald Temple, with lofty dignity. "You're not wanted, it seems in your own Form, and you're certainly not wanted in ours. We bar you!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Too bad," said Bob sarcastically. "Now I sha'n't be able to teach you how to play football! I was going to try—though I don't suppose I should have made much of a success of it."

And Bob walked on, leaving Cecil Reginald Temple pink with indignation and Cecil Reginald's companions grinning.

"We took too much notice of that cheeky cad," said Temple, breathing hard. "It was rather a mistake to let him play for us against the Remove last week. It's got into his head, you know."

"Oh, rather!" assented Dabney.

"We beat the Remove that time, though," remarked Fry.

"I suppose we should have beaten them without Cherry's help," said Cecil Reginald loftily.

"Hem!"

"Look here, Fry——"

"Well, let's beat the Shell to-morrow without his help, too," said Fry, winking at Wilkinson with the eye that was farthest from Cecil Reginald Temple.

"We're goin' to!" said Temple.

"Hem!"

Cecil Reginald, as it transpired, was a little mistaken on that point, for when the Upper Fourth met the Shell on the following afternoon Hobson & Co. made remarkably short work of them.

Whether Cecil Reginald chose to admit it or not, the loss of his new recruit made a tremendous difference to his team. Certainly Hobson and his merry men would not have walked over the

(Continued on page 17.)

HARRY WHARTON'S Football Supplement

This week's special feature:

"HARD-LUCK FOOTBALL!"

By J. McMULLAN of Manchester City.

No. 11. Vol. 3 (New Series). Week Ending November 13th, 1926.

Do You Know?

THAT the list of registered referees for the various Associations affiliated to the F.A. include 10,634 names? London heads the list with 1,022, and Birmingham F.A. and Lancashire F.A. each have upwards of 600 referees on their respective lists.

That before a game, Billy Gillespie, the Sheffield United forward, generally has nothing except a glass of milk with an egg beaten up in it?

That by the end of the present campaign every member of the recognised first team of Bolton Wanderers, except Harry Greenhalgh, Alec. Finney, and John Smith, will have had at least one benefit, which means five years service at least?

That only one England man who played against Ireland last season, also played in the same International match this season? The distinction belongs to "Billy" Walker, of Aston Villa.

That J. F. Mitchell, the amateur goalkeeper who recently signed for Leicester City, plays in spectacles? In this way he is unique among first-class footballers.

That Harry Nuttall, the Bolton Wanderers half-back, was born in a house actually within the confines of Burnden Park, where Bolton Wanderers play? Harry was born there when his father was employed by the club.

That Binks (Blackpool), Eggo (Reading), Sykes (Swansea T.), and Wilson (Nelson), all of whom used to be with the Wednesday, all captain their present teams?

That in each of their first eight games of the present season, Manchester United scored two goals—no more, and no less?

That in Spain they give a miniature football in gold to the player receiving the most votes from the crowd as the best man in an important match?

"GANGWAY THERE, PLEASE!"

F. WOMACK, the Birmingham captain, finds it no easy matter leading his team through the crowd.

Big Crowds & their little Ways!

The effect the crowd has upon the players.

COMING away from a football match not so long ago, I struck up a casual acquaintance with another fellow who had also been to the same match. I started to discuss the game with him, but to my surprise my companion declared: "I always find greatest interest in football from watching the crowd, and noticing its little ways." I don't suppose there are many people who attend football matches mainly for the purpose of seeing how the onlookers behave themselves, but certainly football crowds and their ways are interesting.

There are people who deplore the attitude of football crowds generally; who declare that for the most part, they are mere partisans who go to a match not so much to watch the football as to see their favourite team win. It is probably true that the

ENJOYMENT OF THE AVERAGE CROWD

is all the greater when they see their favourite side gain a well-deserved victory, but why grumble about this? After all, what is partisanship but a form of patriotism? When a country goes to war, every right-minded citizen of that country hopes for victory to go to his own side. When England played Australia at cricket just recently, all England wanted the home country to win. So there is really no difference between a football crowd and any other crowd. It is the cries of the onlookers which

INSPIRE FOOTBALLERS TO GREAT EFFORTS;

compels them to give of their very best.

Different crowds have different ways. The smaller provincial town crowds usually display the greatest amount of partisanship, while on the other hand, players as a whole generally agree that, as visitors, they get most cheers on the London grounds. This is not surprising, for London's millions are a

COSMOPOLITAN LOT.

Suppose the Arsenal are playing Newcastle United, it is certain that among the spectators will be many former residents of Newcastle, who have gone to London to work. They go to the Arsenal ground, wanting to see Newcastle do well, and cheer the Newcastle men accordingly.

It is often said of Chelsea, that they have very few real supporters, but that most of the people who attend at Stamford Bridge go there to watch the football, and that they don't care a great deal which side wins.

10,000 Miles in a Season!

No wonder the travelling expenses of a football club eat up—

—thousands of pounds in the course of a season.

THERE are many things which we take for granted. Among them, in a football sense, is the fact that practically every big game starts promptly to the minute—at the actual time previously announced. This is one of the things which the football authorities have always insisted upon, and any team which arrives too late to make a start at the advertised time usually gets a smart fine imposed unless the excuse they are able to make is a really good one. It is not, for instance, considered a good enough excuse for a club to say that they were late in starting because the train by which they travelled was half an hour late in arriving. Clubs which make this sort of excuse are told in no uncertain language that they should not have run the thing so close—that they should have caught an earlier train.

PORTSMOUTH'S POSITION.

These very punctual starts are so much taken for granted that we give very little consideration to the travelling which has to be undertaken by the clubs in the fulfilment of their fixtures up and down the country. Perhaps you will be surprised to know that some clubs, in order to get through their fixtures, have to travel something like ten thousand miles every season. Yet that is a fact. Take, by way of example, the case of the Portsmouth club in the Second Division. There is only one away match on their programme which involves a train journey of less than a hundred miles—when they meet Southampton. For the rest they have usually long trips: to the Midlands, to Yorkshire, to Lancashire, and even farther North. The actual mileage covered by Portsmouth in completing their League fixtures alone is 8,482, and this figure is not quite so large as that of Swansea Town, who recently got into the Second Division. When you add to the eight thousand odd miles of Portsmouth for their League games the Cup-ties, friendly matches, and games in other competitions, it will be seen that it is not much of an exaggeration to say that they travel ten thousand miles in a season. To play one match—at South Shields—the players of Portsmouth must travel 688 miles.

AN EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION!

No wonder the travelling expenses of a football club eat up thousands of pounds in the course of a season, because it has to be remembered that a long distance journey invariably means that the whole party must put up at some hotel for two nights at least.

The average travelling party belonging to a football side numbers about sixteen. A minimum of twelve players must be taken, and possibly one or two others, if there are doubtful starters among the party. Then there is the trainer, the manager, and probably one or two directors. No club would think of sending its players on a really long journey on the morning of the match, because that would mean the players being stiff and cramped from travelling, and not in as fit a condition as they ought to be for a strenuous football game.

LUGGAGE—ONE FOOTBALL TEAM!

Generally speaking, the railway companies do everything possible for the comfort of football club parties. Usually there are special saloons for their use attached to the trains, and every effort is made for the travelling to be done on trains on which there are dining saloons. Sometimes the necessity for catching a particular train prevents any such convenience being arranged, and it is on record that one Christmas time the players of the Bury club travelled in a luggage train, mixed up with some fish, in order to fulfil their football fixture.

When the players do have the comfort of a saloon, the train journey usually passes fairly quickly. In practically every football team there are some fellows who, with song or musical instrument of the light kind, help to while away the time by amusing the other members of the party. Card games also help to pass the time, but one cannot get away from the feeling that the amount of travel involved is one of the reasons why home teams win the majority of their matches.

"LOOK PLEASANT, PLEASE!"

Members of the Sheffield United football team pose for their picture at Euston Station, London, prior to their return to Sheffield.

GOAL KICKS!

CROSS, the Burnley forward, is playing better since he went to Canada, and one of his colleagues says that he ought to get goals now because he had such a lot of practice out there taking "snap-shots."

In the twenty-one International matches played by England since the War, no fewer than seventeen different players have been tried at centre-forward. As we haven't won the International championship during that period this looks like a case of too many cooks having spoilt the broth.

The Football League officials recently gave an instruction to referees not to be quite so quick to blow the whistle for trivial offences. We suppose this is a slight hint to referees that they can save their wind for running up and down the field.

The players of Derby County are now given a drink of barley water at half-time, and it is said that the players benefit from this novel refreshment. Why don't they go the whole hog and give the men barley corn for lunch on match days?

Haines, the centre-forward of Portsmouth, was a farmer's boy before he became a footballer. Now he always expects to get a good crop of goals.

There are no fewer than fourteen players on the Arsenal staff at the present moment who have had experience of working in a coal-mine. Here is a "picked" team with a vengeance.

According to Charles Paynter, the trainer of West Ham, the three half-backs and the two inside-forwards of a team have to be "engines," not footballers, under the new rules. In other words, they must keep up steam.

Huddersfield Town recently introduced a young player named John Slicer to League football, and he celebrated his promotion by scoring two goals. Evidently John is not a "slicer."

John Paul, the Bristol City inside-right, came from a Scottish club called Torpedo Athletic. No wonder he can shoot hard.

Fulham have recently signed on a young player named Sparke. It is expected that in the near future he will succeed in setting alight the followers of the Fulham club.

It's an ill wind that doesn't blow goals to one side or the other on a gusty day.

It is a stock joke among footballers that all goalkeepers are mad. In view of the small number of goals conceded this season by Maddison, the goalkeeper of Hull City, there are a number of clubs who are regretting that all goalkeepers are not Maddisons.

The secretary-manager of a certain club was once called upon to keep goal in an emergency. Thirteen goals were scored against him. When he was blamed he told the directors that after all they had, when giving him his appointment, told him he must see that everything passed through his hands.

Hard Luck Football!

You will never convince the average footballer that there is no such thing as luck.

Read what Jimmy McMullan, the famous Scottish International half-back of Manchester City, has to say on this matter.

THERE are some people who turn up their noses when the word "luck" is mentioned, and declare that there "ain't no such thing." Whether there is such a thing as good luck or bad luck I am not at all certain. It may be that many of the happenings which we consider due to chance have some other origin. Of one thing I am certain, however, you will never convince the average footballer that there is no such thing as luck. The luck of the sport appears at every turn. It applies to individuals and to teams, just as it applies to certain games and to certain seasons.

A SHATTERED HOPE!

I could use up the whole space at my disposal quite easily by telling of individual cases of what we describe as sheer bad luck. Only the other day there was a case of a footballer on a month's trial with a particular club. He seemed likely to give satisfaction, too, and there was a prospect of getting a job and making good in the game once more. But even during his period of trial he had an accident on the field, which resulted in a broken leg. Let us hope that even this will not stop the player from making good, but it is as certain as anything can be that if you told this particular player there was no such thing as bad luck he would probably be inclined to kick you out of the room.

HELPED UP THE LADDER!

In various other ways does the good and the bad luck show itself. Quite a good player on the staff of a club may be prevented from showing his worth and climbing to the top of the tree because bad luck prevents him from getting his opportunity. On the other hand, opportunity seems to knock at the door of other players in the most unexpected way. A player gets hurt, the substitute makes good, and the original player finds it impossible to get back into the side. We players often pat ourselves on the back that we are fine fellows, but in our sanest moments we have to acknowledge that the so-called goddess of fortune has played a part in helping us to get to the top of the tree.

HIT AND MISS SHOTS!

That there is much luck in particular matches cannot be denied. I suppose that, taking the games in a general sense, the greater proportion are won by the teams which are deserving of success. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that luck does play a part. How small, for instance, is the margin between a shot which strikes the crossbar and one which goes underneath. Then, after a team has had the better of

JIMMY McMULLAN, of Manchester City, as seen by Jimmy Seed, of the Spurs.

the play, a member of the opposing side will take a "blinder"—a sheer hit or miss shot—and find it sailing under the bar and into the net, to give his side the victory.

THE LUCK OF THE TOSS!

We don't often talk of the luck of the toss in football, but from time to time this is illustrated. I recall, in this connection, the International match between England and Scotland last season. As it happened, Scotland won the toss, and in the first half we managed to get a goal lead. Right through that first half the elements were decidedly in our favour, and it seemed long odds on England replying in most spirited fashion during the second half, when we no longer had the assistance of the wind and rain. But as the interval approached the wind died down, the rain ceased, and in the second half there was comparative calm, which made it much easier for we Scots to hold our own than would otherwise have been the case.

WHEN THE CITY WENT DOWN!

Even in regard to this aspect of the matter, however, luck plays its part. If you look at the records you will find that Manchester City got enough points last season to have saved themselves from relegation in the ordinary course of events. Indeed, we had several more points than other clubs in previous seasons, but who yet retained their places in the League.

LOST BY ONE KICK!

I am not suggesting that Manchester City have all the bad luck which is going about. That wouldn't be true. On many other occasions in the course of football history has a side missed promotion on goal average. Derby County, for instance, would have been in the top class before the present season, and Bury might still have been in the second class if Derby had scored one more goal during the season in which Bury gained promotion. Then Cardiff City once lost the championship of the First Division because they failed to score from a penalty kick in the very last match of the season. Luck? Of course there is luck in football! Tons of it!

FIXING THE BLAME!

Just one other point may be made, however, on this matter of chance. There is a temptation, sometimes, to blame bad luck for the effects of bad football. It isn't bad luck when a side having all the play, and missing three or four sitters, loses the match. It is bad football. And many lads are inclined to blame their luck in not getting to the top of the football ladder when they have only themselves to blame.

James McMullan

BUYING PLAYERS WHOLESALE!

Clubs Which Have Spent Big Fortunes in a Few Days.

JUST recently there has been much activity in what is called the transfer market, some clubs spending large sums in obtaining the services of new players because the men with which they started the season were doing so badly. Especially when rich clubs like Everton, West Bromwich Albion, and Aston Villa find themselves near the foot of the table there is a strong temptation to buy new men wholesale. Indeed, only two or three weeks back it was announced that Everton were prepared to spend

FIFTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS

in buying a winning team if they could find the right players and persuade the employers of those players to release them.

Even if Everton had spent fifteen thousand pounds all at once in buying half a team they would not have created a record, for several clubs have spent this amount in the course of a few days. In the spring of 1922, when Sunderland were not doing at all well, they bought three players in one week, who cost them over ten thousand pounds, and during that one season the Wearside club spent in all nearly twenty thousand pounds on transfer fees.

In the season of 1923-24 Middlesbrough spent £21,500 on new players in the hope of

SAVING THEIR POSITION

in the First Division, but the desired effect was not secured, and the club went down, which seems to show after all that although money does play an important part in football it cannot always buy success on the field.

Blackburn Rovers, who recently paid several thousand pounds for John Hutton, from Aberdeen, have in their time repeatedly gone all out for star players regardless of cost. During the first season after the War the Blackburn directors dipped into their banking account to the extent of over thirteen thousand pounds.

The most sensational effort to buy players wholesale, however, was made by the Millwall club a few years back, when they made a bid of ten thousand pounds for the whole of the forward line then playing for Raith Rovers. This bid was not accepted.

This Week's Big Games!

Thrilling Tussles for the week-end.

By OLD PRO.

IT is always dangerous to prophesy in regard to football, but it seems safe to assume that one game of this week-end will not have the same result as the corresponding match of last season. I refer to the coming contest between Birmingham and Burnley. When these two clubs met at Birmingham last season the Lancashire side triumphed by seven goals to one. The remarkable part of this amazing result was the wonderful goal-scoring of Louis Page, the Burnley centre-forward, who did the

HAT-TRICK IN EACH HALF

of the game.

The circumstances were truly remarkable. Burnley had for some time been hard up for a centre-forward, and, in sheer desperation, they decided to play Page in that position for the match against Birmingham. He had never previously led the forward line, and there were doubts as to how he would shape. It can be taken for granted that after he had scored six goals in that first centre-forward game of his the Birmingham defenders were not in much doubt as to how Page had performed. Of course, he never repeated the feat, and has now gone back to his old position at outside-left, but the match certainly showed that you never can tell how a man will fare in a new position. When Page turns out at St. Andrew's this week-end there will be many to recall the most sensational personal goal-scoring triumph of recent years.

Certain teams almost invariably put up

A REALLY HIGH-CLASS GAME

when they meet each other, and, remembering what has happened in the past, one of the most promising games of this week-end is the meeting at White Hart Lane between the 'Spurs and Cardiff City. In the past I have witnessed some exceptionally stirring games between these sides. A few years back they met in successive seasons in the Cup. And what games they were! In 1921 the 'Spurs went to Cardiff in the Cup, and until the last minute the visitors were leading by a goal to nothing. The onlookers were leaving Ninian Park in their thousands, disappointed because they thought that Cardiff had lost a match which on the run of the play they really deserved to win. But while the referee was getting ready to blow the final whistle the Cardiff outside-left sped down the field, dropped the ball across, and Len Davies headed the equaliser. The people who were leaving the ground rushed back when they heard the cheering, and in all my football experience I have never witnessed a scene of enthusiasm quite like that one.

This last-second goal meant that the teams had to play again at Tottenham in mid-week, and once more there were

AMAZING SCENES.

A crowd bigger than has ever attended any other mid-week match turned up to see this game. Thousands were locked out, and the motor-cars were held up for a distance of two miles outside the ground. The ground was full an hour

W. HARDY, of Cardiff City fame.

before the start, and some of the players had the greatest difficulty in getting in. But the onlookers who were fortunate to get inside witnessed a really fine game, which the 'Spurs won by two goals to one. After the match Billy Hardy, the left half-back of Cardiff, declared that it was the hardest contest in which he had ever taken part, and that the football reached a high standard.

ORDERED OFF!

What it means to the player who does something which merits the receipt of "marching orders."

"LEAVE the field!" This is the sort of dramatic order, issued by referees from time to time, which no player worthy of the name wants to hear. It means a certain amount of disgrace attached to the particular incident, as well as possible trouble for the player afterwards.

When we think of all the excitement associated with big football—of the vital issues which are often at stake—it has to be admitted even by those who do not like professionalism in football that the order is not often given and not often deserved.

Sometimes, though, a player loses his temper, retaliates against an opponent against whom he had a real or fancied grievance, and in consequence is ordered off the field. Here I want to tell you exactly

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER

a player has received "marching orders."

In the first place, the referee sends his version of the incident to the headquarters of the Football Association. The club is also asked for an explanation, as a rule, and the player himself may write his own story of the incidents which led up to his being dismissed. When the authorities are in possession of these facts they usually appoint a small commission to inquire into the whole business. The player is put on trial, as it were, the evidence sifted, and the verdict issued in due course.

Until quite recently the player himself was not usually given an opportunity of making his personal explanation of the distressing affair; but nowadays any player who likes to appear

BEFORE A COMMISSION

which is inquiring into his dismissal from the field has the right to give evidence on his own behalf, and also to take other witnesses if he feels so disposed. But if the judgment goes against him he, or his club, may be called upon to pay some of the expenses of the inquiry.

When the commission has sifted all the evidence they issue their verdict. Sometimes they let a player off with a caution; sometimes the suspension is for a fortnight, more frequently for a month; and if the case is a very bad one, coupled with a previous bad record of the player, he may get two months' suspension. I am now dealing, of course, with the cases of misconduct on the field. There are

GRAVER OFFENCES

which have to be dealt with occasionally, such as an effort to "square" the result of a match. When fellows are found out doing this the sentence is usually very severe, and the last player who was adjudged guilty of an attempt to arrange a result was suspended from taking part in football and football management for the rest of his life.

Now, for a player to be suspended means that his wages must be stopped immediately, and thus it will be seen that a player receiving a month is really being fined something between thirty and forty pounds. Not always, though, does the player lose the whole of this amount.

I have known plenty of suspension cases in the past when the other members of his team have had a

"ROUND ROBIN"

each week during the suspension, made a voluntary levy on themselves, and collected a fair amount in order to make up to the player some part of his wages. The authorities do not look with favour on this sort of thing; but, of course, they can't prevent a player's colleagues from giving him a bit during his term of suspension.

The club suffers, because the player cannot take part in any match during the period of suspension.

In regard to this matter of ordering off, it should be remembered that referees are instructed that they should never give a player marching orders for an offence unless that player has been

CAUTIONED

about his conduct previously in the same game. On the other hand, it does not necessarily follow that a player is not suspended unless he has been sent off. On every occasion when a referee considers it necessary to give a warning to a player the referee must report the circumstance to headquarters. The player's record is then turned up, and if it is found that he seems to be transgressing against the rules rather frequently, he may be suspended for a fortnight or a month as a reminder that he must mend his ways forthwith.

(*Continued from page 12.*)

team quite so easily had it included Bob Cherry in its ranks. Most of the Fourth Form footballers were quite well aware of it, and their feelings towards Bob were not pleasant. He had been given a place in their team, asked to play in that special match, and had refused, and the view of the Fourth Form fellows was that he had let them down, just as he had let down his own Form in a similar manner.

Teddy Wilkinson, who had urged Temple in season and out of season to give Bob a place in the eleven, was especially sore on the subject, and his brief friendship with the outcast of the Remove was quite at an end.

While the match was being played Bob Cherry was spending his half-holiday in the study, swotting.

If he was going to have a chance for the Head's prize and to keep his promise to his father he had no choice in the matter.

But it was hard.

By the time the exam was over it seemed that so far from having any friends left at Greyfriars he would be the most unpopular and thoroughly disliked fellow in the school.

After an afternoon's swotting Bob walked in the dusky quad, alone, with his hands shoved into his pockets, his brow moody. The juniors who saw him took no heed, or only gave him sarcastic looks. It was a new thing to Bob Cherry to be left quite alone, and it was not a pleasant experience. Indeed, he began to think that he would not be very sorry, after all, if the major did decide to take him away from Greyfriars. Greyfriars was beginning rather to resemble Robinson Crusoe's island, so far as Bob was concerned. He was left utterly "on his own," and he was more than fed up with it; and all that remained was to keep a stiff upper lip and never show that he was hurt. Pride was his only companion now; but he found it very dismal company.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"BOB, old chap!"

Bob Cherry stared.

"Old chap" was an expression that was rather strange in his ears now.

Billy Bunter was the speaker. Bunter, apparently, had reinstated Bob in his valuable friendship. The "old chap" indicated as much.

Perhaps Bunter expected a cordial and grateful reply, or at least a friendly nod. He received neither. Bob Cherry stared at him with a grim stare.

It was Friday, and Bob was going out of gates for a ramble before afternoon classes.

He had fallen a good deal, of late, into the habit of taking solitary rambles, so far as school bounds allowed him to do so.

If he had to "mooch" about by himself it was better to do so outside the school walls, where at least he was not the mark for derisive or pitying eyes—the latter the more offensive of the two.

Bob undoubtedly would have been glad of company in his walk. But he was not glad of Bunter's company.

After staring at the Owl of the Remove he walked on out of gates. But Bunter was not to be shaken off so easily as all that.

He rolled out after the outcast junior.

"I say, Bob——"

"Hook it, Bunter!" gasped Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Let me alone, bother you!"

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his big spectacles. This was not the reception he had a right to expect when he was generously taking notice of a fellow to whom no one spoke.

"Oh, come off!" said the fat junior. "You haven't got so many friends that you can afford to be cheeky, you know."

"No bizney of yours. Hook it!"

"But I'm going to speak to you, you know," said Bunter. "I'm not sending you to Coventry like the other chaps, Cherry."

"Oh, rubbish!"

"I mean it," said Bunter impressively. "The fact is, Cherry, I don't really think you're such an out-and-out rotter as the others do."

"What?"

"Wharton thinks you're the absolute limit, you know——"

"Does he?" muttered Bob savagely.

"Yes; and Johnny Bull says——"

"Don't tell me what he says, you mischief-making fathead! Give me a rest."

"But I can't see that you're such a rotter as they make out," said Bunter, blinking at Bob seriously. "Of course, you let the Form down over the football. That was rather thick."

"Oh, dry up!"

"And you chummed up with the Fourth, which was rotten, of course——"

"Cheese it!"

"But they've got fed up with you, and turned you down—he, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

Bob Cherry started walking towards Friardale. Bunter rolled along by his side.

"But the fact is, Cherry, I'm going to take pity on you," said the Owl of the Remove.

"Are you?" said Bob grimly.

"Yes, old chap. I don't mind speaking to you. Of course, I don't want you to come butting in when I'm talking to other chaps, or anything of that kind. Have a little tact, you know."

Bob grinned involuntarily. Bunter was not worth kicking; which was the sole reason why Bunter did not feel, at that moment, the weight of Bob Cherry's boot. But the Owl of the Remove quite unconscious of the reason why he remained unkicked, rattled on cheerily:

"In a quiet way, you know, I'm going to take a little notice of you—a word now and then, and all that. You'll be glad of it, I fancy. What?"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"For goodness' sake, sheer off, and don't bother me, Bunter!" exclaimed Bob impatiently.

He quickened his pace, striding along the lane at a good rate. But the Owl of the Remove accelerated also. His fat little legs fairly twinkled as he kept pace with Bob's long strides.

"You don't seem to catch on, Cherry," he explained, "I'm going to take you up—take notice of you, and talk to you sometimes—when I've got time, of course. I have a lot of engagements, as you know. Popular fellows have."

"Fathead!"

"So long as you have a little tact, and don't come up claiming my friendship before a lot of fellows, and that sort of thing, it will be all right," continued the fatuous Owl of the Remove, "I'm going to be kind to you—you know what a kind-hearted chap I am. But, of course, old fellow, one good turn deserves another."

Bob did not answer; but he quickened his pace a little more. He was moody and troubled, with the thought of the morrow's examination heavy on his mind. He had worked hard for weeks, he had given up everything that made life at Greyfriars worth living; and now, almost at the last moment, he felt deep misgivings; it seemed to him that he had no chance of success at all. As a matter of fact, Bob had swotted not wisely but too well; in his fear of doing too little, he had done too much; and he was stale. Filled with moody forebodings of failing miserably in the examination for which he had given up so much, Bob was not in a humour for Bunter's tattle. He only wanted to shake off the Owl of the Remove.

But William George Bunter was not to be shaken off. Bunter—as usual—was thinking wholly and solely of himself, and he had no time to waste in bothering about what Bob might be thinking of.

"Now, to come to the point," went on Bunter, rather breathlessly. The speed was telling on him. "As I said, Cherry, one good turn deserves another. If I take notice of you, and speak to you, and all that, I shall expect you to oblige me, you know. That's only cricket, isn't it?"

"Ass!"

"And the fact is, I'm expecting a postal-order——"

"What?"

"Postal-order?"

"You silly owl!" roared Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm expecting a postal-order, from one of my titled relations, you know. There's been some delay in the post. I suppose you could hand me the five bob, and take the postal-order when it comes."

Bob burst into an angry laugh.

The cat was out of the bag now. Bunter was taking the trouble to speak to the ostracised junior, in the hope of getting his celebrated postal-order cashed.

Apparently the fat junior considered that his fascinating company and entertaining conversation would be cheap at five shillings.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter. "Don't walk so fast—I'm getting a bit out of breath. I say, old chap, my postal-order is coming by the first post in the morning. I suppose you can squeeze out the five bob, what? And I'll tell you what," went on Bunter, in a burst of generosity. "You oblige me in this little matter, Cherry, and I'll take your arm in the quad—before all the fellows, too! There!"

Bob Cherry halted.

"Will you cut off, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh, really, you know——"

"I'm going to kick you if you don't."

Bunter backed away promptly. The Owl of the Remove was both short-sighted and obtuse; but even Bunter could not mistake the gleam in Bob Cherry's eye.

"I—I say, old bean——"

"That's enough! Clear!"

Bob Cherry made a motion with his foot, and Bunter backed away a little farther.

Even his fat mind realised that there

was nothing doing. For reasons unknown and inexplicable to Bunter, the outcast was not anxious for his company. So far from closing gratefully with Bunter's generous offer, he was going to kick him! Ingratitude could not have been blacker.

"Why, you—you——" gasped Bunter, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles. "You cheeky cad! Yah! Not a man at Greyfriars will speak to you—you're turned down by everybody. I take pity on you, and this is my reward! Yah! I despise you! Sickening cad!"

And Bunter, screwing up his fat face into an expression of withering scorn, turned his back on Bob Cherry contemptuously.

Unfortunately for Bunter, Bob's long-tried patience gave way at the same moment.

As the fat junior turned contemptuously away, with his fat little nose in the air, Bob let out his foot.

Crash!

The boot landed on Bunter's tight trousers, and Bunter almost flew. He gave a wild yell as he landed on his hands and knees in the lane.

"Yarooop!"

Bob Cherry strode onward.

"Ow! Wow! Wow!"

Bunter squirmed round and glared after the departing junior.

"Yah! Beast!" he roared. "Outsider! Cad! Rotter! Come back and I'll jolly well lick you!"

Bob did not heed.

The Owl of the Remove staggered to his feet, gasping for breath. He shook a fat fist after Bob.

"Yah! Funk!" he roared. "Come back and be licked."

Bob Cherry stopped, and half-turned.

That was enough for Bunter. By the time Bob had half-turned, Bunter had quite turned, and was speeding back to Greyfriars as fast as his fat little legs could take him. Evidently he had decided not to lick Bob Cherry on that occasion.

Bob gave an impatient grunt and resumed his way.

He had lost an opportunity of securing the valuable friendship of William George Bunter—at very reasonable rates!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Highcliffe Ragging!

"NIGGER!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh paused in his walk, and glanced round.

The nabob of Bhanipur had walked down to Friardale, and was on his way back to Greyfriars, when Ponsonby's voice fell on his ears.

Four Highcliffe juniors were resting, in a row, on the stile in the lane, their bicycles stacked against the hedge.

Ponsonby and Gadsby, Monson and Drury, exchanged grinning glances as the nabob of Bhanipur came in sight from the direction of the village.

The nabob was alone; had his friends been with him, the nuts of Highcliffe would have allowed them to pass without a remark, carefully taking no notice of them. But in the present circumstances, there was an opportunity for a rag, and Ponsonby of Highcliffe was not disposed to let such an opportunity pass unimproved.

"Nigger!" he called out cheerily.

"What are you doin' outside a Christy Minstrel show?" inquired Gadsby.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dark eyes glittered.

Hurree Singh was a Hindu of the purest caste, and no end of a great gun in his native country of Bhanipur. In that far-off country, unnumbered guards and retainers would salaam to the ground before him. But Ponsonby & Co. were pleased to call him a "nigger," regardless of his princely rank.

For a moment the nabob hesitated, and paused, tempted to charge the four Highclifflans grinning at him from the stile. But the odds were too heavy, and he restrained his wrath and walked on.

"After him!" murmured Ponsonby. "He's not gettin' off so easily as all that."

"No fear!" grinned Gadsby.

And the four juniors dropped from the stile and ran in pursuit.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh stopped, and swung round as he heard the running footsteps behind him.

"Collar him!" shouted Ponsonby.

"Chuck him into the ditch!" exclaimed Gadsby. "There's a lot of mud, but it can't make him any blacker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The four young rascals rushed at the nabob. Hurree Singh jumped back, with his dusky hands up.

He was "for it" now, but he was not to be ragged without a scrap. And though Hurree Singh was not a fighting-man like Bob Cherry or Harry Wharton, he was a good man with his hands, as the raggers quickly discovered. Ponsonby, rushing in, rushed right upon a fist

POOR OLD BOB!

It does seem rough that Bob Cherry should get it in the neck all along the line, but take comfort, you admirers of Bob Cherry, for he wins through in next week's grand long complete story of Greyfriars. If you miss this treat of a yarn you'll want to kick yourselves. An order to-day does the trick!

that felt like a lump of iron as it came into collision with his nose; and Cecil Ponsonby went spinning over, crashing down at full length in the lane, with a howl.

Gadsby was down the next moment from Hurree Singh's left. And Monson and Drury, rather discouraged by that warm reception, jumped back.

"Come onfully, my esteemed and rascally rotters!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, his dark eyes gleaming.

Ponsonby staggered up.

His nose was streaming red, and it had a severe pain in it. Pon's handsome face was black with rage.

"Collar him!" he panted. "Collar the black beast! By gad! We'll rag him for this!"

Pon rushed to the attack again. His comrades backed him up, and the four piled on Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, all hitting together. Fair play in a combat was a trifle light as air in the estimation of the nuts of Highcliffe.

For two or three minutes there was a wild and whirling scrap. But the odds were too great, and by sheer force of numbers, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was brought to the ground. He struggled up gamely, however, fighting hard, and backed away from the Highcliffians, defending himself valiantly.

But a rush of the four drove him into the hedge, and there he was pinned. Four pairs of hands grasped him, and held him helpless.

"Rescue!" yelled the nabob, in the faint hope that Greyfriars ears might be within hearing.

Ponsonby laughed savagely.

"Hold the rotter!" he gasped. "I'll fasten his paws to this tree, and then we'll give him a lesson."

"Go it, Pon!"

The nabob struggled hard, but the Highclifflans held him down in the thicket. Ponsonby doubled a length of twine and bound the nabob's hands to a sapling. Then the four young rascals released him and stepped back, panting, leaving Hurree Jamset Ram Singh struggling in the hedge.

"Rescue!" yelled the nabob.

Ponsonby cast a quick look up and down the lane. There was no one in sight.

"Shovel the mud on him," he said. "You can use his hat for a bucket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hurree Singh's hat had fallen into the road in the struggle. Gadsby picked it up and dipped it into the ditch across the lane, filling it with water and mud and slimy ooze. He came back towards the nabob with the dripping hat held in both hands.

"Where will you have it?" he inquired.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh wriggled desperately, but the string held his dusky wrists fast to the sapling, and he sprawled helplessly in the hedge. He was at the mercy of the Highcliffe nuts, and they gathered round him, grinning. Gadsby held up the hat, overflowing with mud and ooze.

"Say when!" he chuckled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You esteemed and scoundrelly rotters!" gasped Hurree Singh.

"Give it to the nigger!" said Ponsonby, rubbing his damaged nose. "Let him have it, Gaddy."

Gaddy let him have it.

The horrid contents of the hat swamped down upon Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dusky face, obliterating his features under mud and ooze and slime. The nabob gasped and spluttered wildly, and the nuts of Highcliffe yelled with laughter. This was some rag, in their opinion.

"Give him some more!" chortled Monson.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gadsby ran across the lane again and refilled the hat in the oozy ditch. The hat was suffering considerably in the process, but that did not matter to Gaddy—it was not his hat. He came back with a hatful of muddy ooze, grinning with glee.

"Groooogh! Oooch!" Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was spluttering wildly. "Oooch! Ow! Ooogh! Rescue! Help! Oooooop!"

Splash!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groooogh!" spluttered the hapless nabob.

"Another lot!" chuckled Drury.

"Yes, rather!"

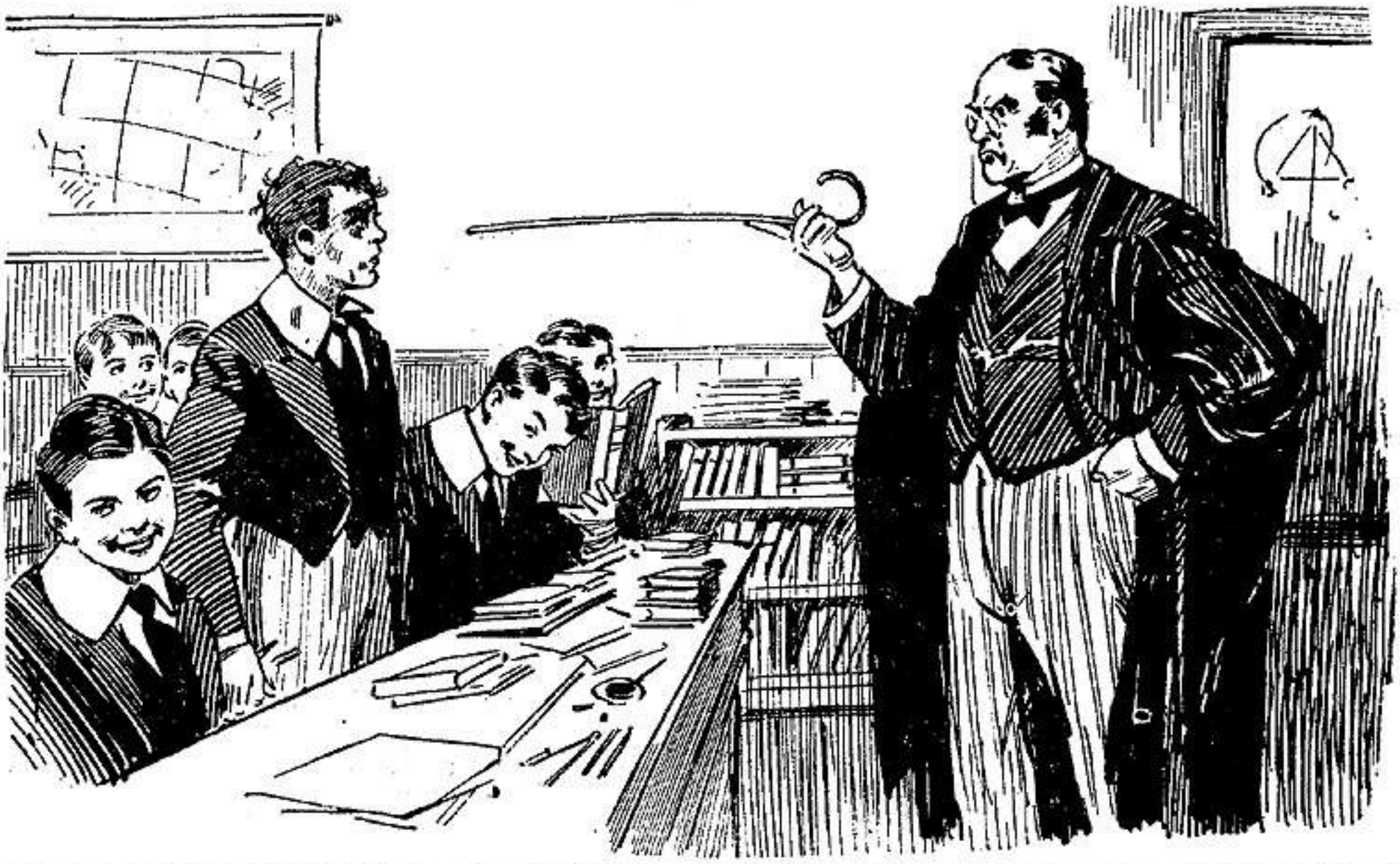
"Go it, Gaddy!"

And once more Gaddy "went it."

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Fight Against Odds!

BOB CHERRY glanced round him. He was taking a footpath across a field towards Friardale Lane, on his way back to Greyfriars after his lonely ramble. It was getting near time for class, and in these days Bob was very careful never to be late for class. He had been tramping along, his hands deep in his pockets, a glum frown on his brow, when strange and weird sounds from the direction of the lane, ahead of him, drew his attention. Some sort of a struggle seemed to be



Mr. Quelch's keen eyes almost bored into the hapless junior. "Cherry!" he thundered. "What does this mean? How dare you appear in the Form-room in this disgraceful state?" "I can't help it, sir!" answered Bob Cherry. "I had to come!" "You did not have to come in that condition!" rumbled Mr. Quelch. "Are you aware that you look like a prize-fighter?" *(See Chapter 11.)*

going on in the hedge, and mingled with a wild yelling and spluttering were sounds of laughter.

Bob was not in a mood to be concerned about anybody's business but his own; and, after a glance round him, he continued his way. But when he came out into the lane, he glanced in the direction of the uproar and recognised Ponsonby & Co. The Highcliffians were too busily occupied in ragging Hurree Jamset Ram Singh to observe the Greyfriars junior who had emerged into the lane from the field, twenty yards away. Bob turned in the direction of the school, but he stopped and turned back. It was evident that the cads of Highcliffe were ragging some helpless victim, and Bob's good-nature got the upper hand. A row with the Highcliffe fellows, or anybody else, was about the last thing he desired on the day before the examination. But he felt that it was up to him—knowing of old the ruffianly manners and customs of Ponsonby & Co.

After a moment's hesitation he strode along the lane towards the scene.

"Help! Rescue!"

Bob started.

He knew the voice of the nabob of Bhanipur now. It was Hurree Jamset Ram Singh who was struggling in the hedge, with his tormentors grinning round him and smothering him with mud.

Bob set his lips.

He was on unfriendly terms with all his old friends, the nabob included. Exactly what the nabob's offence was he would have found it difficult to say; unless it was that Hurree Singh had backed up Wharton in the unhappy dispute between the old comrades. Certainly, though they shared the same study in the Remove, he never spoke a word to the nabob, and never showed any sign of being conscious of his presence in Study No. 13. His mood was bitter, and he said to himself that this was no business of his—he was an outcast in his Form, and it did not matter to him if the Highcliffe fellows ragged a Remove man. But even while that bitter reflection was in his mind he was hurrying towards the scene—whether it was his business or not he knew that he was going to chip in.

"Give him another, Gaddy!"

"Grooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The nigger seems to be rather fed-up!" chuckled Ponsonby. "But we're not finished yet!"

"No fear!"

"Give him another hatful!"

Bob Cherry came up with a run.

"Chuck that!" he rapped out.

Ponsonby & Co. spun round towards him. Gaddy dropped the muddy hat in his surprise and alarm. But the four Highcliffians saw at once that Bob Cherry was alone, and they recovered their nerve at once. Ponsonby gave him an insolent grin.

"You buttin' in here, Cherry?" he sneered.

"Yes," said Bob quietly. "Chuck it! I don't want any trouble with you; but you're stopping this game, and at once!"

"Are we?" grinned Ponsonby. "And who's goin' to make us, dear man?"

"I am!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh blinked through clinging mud and ooze at the new arrival.

"My esteemed Bob——" he gasped.

Bob Cherry strode towards him to release him. Ponsonby & Co. exchanged a quick look.

"We'll give that rotter some of the same!" said Ponsonby between his teeth.

"What-ho!"

Of old the Highcliffe nuts knew that Bob was a dangerous customer. But they were four to one now. Four to one was long odds, even for a hefty fighting-man like Bob. Another fact that Bob evidently preferred not to row with them was encouraging. Bob was thinking of the morrow's exam, and his last preparations for that trying ordeal. But to Ponsonby & Co. his unusual forbearance was a sign that he was daunted by the odds against him. In such circumstances, as a rule, Bob would have started punching without wasting time in words.

"Go it!" said Ponsonby.

And the four rushed at Bob and dragged him back before he could reach Hurree Singh. Four to one, they looked for an easy victory; but if the nabob had been released the odds would have been only two to one, which would have made a very great difference. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was left still wriggling and squirming in the hedge as Bob staggered back into the lane, with the four Highcliffians clinging to him like cats.

"Let go!" roared Bob savagely.

Ponsonby chuckled breathlessly.

"Down him!" he gasped.

And under the weight of the four Bob went to the ground with a crash, the Highcliffians sprawling over him.

"Pin the cad!" panted Drury.

"Hold him!"

"Squat on the brute while I tie his flippers," gasped Pon. "We'll fix him up like the other cad!"

"What-ho!"

That was Ponsonby's programme; but he soon discovered that it was not a programme that was easy to carry out.

Bob Cherry was an adversary rather more formidable than the slim nabob. He made a desperate effort and staggered up, with the four juniors clinging to him. An upper-cut, which jolted

every tooth in Gadsby's head, relieved him of Gaddy—that youth jumping clear and clasping his chin with both hands, with a howl of anguish.

Bob hurled off the other three and sprang back, panting, his blue eyes in a blaze.

"Come on, you rotters!" he gasped.

He had forgotten the exam now—forgotten the final work he had intended to put in for it—forgotten class in the Remove-room. He had no time now to think of anything but defending himself, for the cads of Highcliffe were not slow to come on.

They came on savagely.

Bob Cherry had his hands full now. But, heavy as the odds were, he held his own. He was strong and sturdy and thoroughly fit, and a good boxer, and he had unlimited pluck. In that quality he excelled all the Highcliffians put together. Nevertheless, the odds were very heavy, and he was hard pressed.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh struggled frantically in the hedge. But he could not get loose; Pon had tied his hands too carefully to the sapling. He was forced to remain a helpless spectator of the unequal fight.

"Down the cad!" gasped Ponsonby.

Crash!

It was Pon who was downed, as Bob's powerful right crashed upon his chin.

Monson followed him into the dust, hurled over by Bob's hefty left a second later.

But even as Monson fell Drury and Gadsby got in their blows, and Bob Cherry staggered back, his nose streaming crimson, one eye half-closed.

Pon and Monson were up quickly enough and rushing on.

Gamely the Greyfriars fellow faced the odds.

The thought of fair play did not enter the minds of Pon & Co. for a moment. All four of them were hurt already, and all four in a savage and ruthless temper. Bob was hurt, too, but he was going to be hurt a great deal more before the quartette were done with him. They pressed him hard, taking his blows when they could not dodge them, and raining blows on him in return.

Bob Cherry had often been in a shindy and often he had taken severe punishment; but he had seldom or never taken punishment like this.

Every moment a fist was crashing on him somewhere, and if he had not been fit all through, hard as steel, he must have crumpled up under the savage and merciless attack.

But he did not crumple up. To the amazement and rage of Ponsonby & Co., he stood up to them unflinchingly.

A right-hander with all Bob's weight behind it caught Drury on the chest and lifted him off his feet. He crashed into the hedge and lay there, gasping helplessly. Drury was out of the fight.

But three pairs of hands closed on Bob now, and he was tiring. He was dragged to the ground once more.

"Now pin him!" panted Ponsonby.

But Bob was not easy to pin.

A fierce jab from the struggling Greyfriars fellow caught Ponsonby under the chin, and he rolled away, yelling with pain.

Ponsonby was out of the fight now; he sat in the lane clasping his chin in agony, feeling as if his head had been nearly knocked off.

Monson and Gadsby were still clinging to Bob; but he struggled to his feet, with both of them grasping him and hanging on to him. He was hurt and he was fatigued, but he was more than a match for the two nuts of Highcliffe. He shifted his grasp to their collars and brought their heads together with a ringing concussion.

Crack!

"Ow!" gasped Monson, collapsing.

"Wow!" spluttered Gadsby.

Crack!

"Leggo!" screamed Gadsby. "I give you best! Leggo!"

"Ow! Leggo!" moaned Monson.

With a swing of his arms Bob Cherry sent the two of them spinning. They sprawled over Ponsonby in the road.

Bob stood panting for breath.

"Want any more, you rotters?" he gasped.

"Ow! Keep off, you cad!"

"Leave us alone, you rotter! Ow! Wow!"

Ponsonby & Co. had had enough. They were four to one, but they were more than satisfied. So far from wishing to carry on, they were only terrified at the idea of Bob keeping on the combat. In ludicrous haste they squirmed away towards the stile, where their bicycles stood.

Bob was glad enough to let them go.

He was sorely damaged, and one of his eyes was quite closed already. He was almost at the end of his tether.

Four very damaged Highcliffians clambered in hot haste on their bicycles, and scoured away down the lane. Bob Cherry turned to the nabob.

"My esteemed chum, the thankfulness is terrific!" gasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bob did not answer.

With his penknife, he cut the cord that fastened the nabob's wrists, and released him. Then he helped Hurree Singh out into the road.

"All right now?" he asked.

"Yes, my esteemed Bob," murmured Hurree Singh. "But you——"

Bob passed his hand across his face. He could see with only one eye now, and his nose felt quite twice its usual size. The reaction after the excitement of the fight had set in, and he was feeling limp and tired. He knew that he was going to have a black eye—a black eye to take into the examination-room on the morrow! He knew that after that severe struggle, and the terrible punishment he had received, he would be in no state on the morrow to work through a difficult examination. There was something like black despair in Bob's heart. This was the finish.

"I'm all right!" he said gruffly.

And he strode away towards the school. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh cast a wistful glance after him.

———

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Straw!

MR. QUELCH frowned portentously.

All the fellows in the Remove Form-room had looked very curiously at Bob Cherry. When the Form master came in his glance fell on Bob at once, in surprise and vexation. He frowned.

Bob's face was what Billy Bunter called a "picture." Seldom or never had a fellow ventured to appear in a Greyfriars Form-room in such a state.

Poor Bob had done all he could; he had bathed his face, removed all the signs of damage that could be removed. But he could not disguise a black eye or a swollen nose, or a cut lip.

The Remove fellows had wondered how he had got into such a state. He had not been fighting in the school—Skinner opined that, having hunted up all the trouble that was going, so to speak, in Greyfriars, he had walked abroad hunting for some more outside the school. Skinner's humorous theory made the fellows chuckle.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had reached the school later than Bob, and he had been busy cleaning himself, after his ragging at the hands of the Highcliffians, till the bell rang for class. So what had happened was not yet generally known; Inky had told only his chums, who had helped him clean off the mud. They had had to hurry to the Form-room; Bob had been there already, sitting in his place, bruised and bitter and grim. Mr. Quelch had come in almost immediately. Bob had had a faint hope that the Form master would take no notice of the state he was in. That hope was ill-founded. Black eyes were not likely to pass unnoticed in Mr. Quelch's Form-room.

"Cherry!"

"Yes, sir," said Bob drearily.

It was more trouble, and he was weary of trouble. It seemed to him that his life, of late, had been all trouble.

"Stand up this minute!"

Bob stood up.

Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes on him; and never had Mr. Quelch's keen eyes seemed so like gimlets. They almost bored into the hapless junior.

"Cherry, what does this mean? How dare you appear in the Form-room in this disgraceful state!"

"I can't help it, sir. I had to come."

"You did not have to come in that condition!" rumbled Mr. Quelch. "Are you aware that you look like a prize-fighter?"

Bob was only too well aware of it. He looked, and he felt, as if he had been having trouble with Tunney.

"I am afraid, Cherry, that you have grown quarrelsome of late," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall, however, inquire into this strictly. You have been fighting?"

Really, the question was a little superfluous.

"If this is the outcome of what the juniors call a ragging——" said Mr. Quelch, with an alarming look at the Remove.

"There hasn't been any ragging, sir, that I know of," said Bolsover major hurriedly, as he caught Mr. Quelch's gimlet-eye.

"I trust not," said the Remove master. "Cherry, point out the boy, or boys, with whom you have been fighting."

"Nobody here, sir," said Bob.

"You have been disputing with the Fourth Form boys——"

"No, sir."

"Then with whom have you been fighting, Cherry?"

"Highcliffe chaps, sir."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, greatly incensed. "You have become so quarrelsome, Cherry, that, not satisfied with disputing with your own Form, and the Upper Fourth, you go outside the gates of Greyfriars seeking more disputes."

Bob did not answer.

"I am surprised, and shocked," said Mr. Quelch. "As you have to attend the prize examination to-morrow, Cherry, common sense should have restrained you from this reckless conduct."

"I know, sir," said Bob bitterly. "I suppose I never had much common sense. I shouldn't be in this scrape if I had."

Mr. Quelch stared at him.

"I shall not punish you, Cherry. Your own reckless foolishness seems to have brought upon you a sufficiently severe punishment. I will only say that I am shocked and disgusted, and deeply disappointed in you. You may sit down again."

"Very well, sir."

Harry Wharton jumped up with a red face.

"If you please, sir——"

"Were you concerned in this, Wharton?"

"No, sir. But——"

"Then you may sit down, and be silent!" snapped Mr. Quelch crossly.

"But, sir——"

"Silence!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh rose as the captain of the Remove sat down, crushed.

"If you please, esteemed Form master sahib——" he began.

Mr. Quelch glared.

"Hurree Singh, were you concerned in this?"

"The concernfulness is terrific!"

"I wish, Hurree Singh, that you would make an effort to speak English," snapped the irritated Remove master.

"Esteemed sahib, the speakfulness of the excellent English is sameful as instructed by wise moonshee in Bhanipur——"

"That will do, Hurree Singh. You may sit down."

"But I am forcefully bound to explain to esteemed sahib," persisted the nabob. "The excellent and ludicrous Cherry——"

"That is enough!"

"Came to my helpfulness, sir, when the execrable Highcliffians were ragging me," said the nabob, unheeding.

"I have spoken before on the subject of this endless quarrelling between the two schools!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "It is disgraceful. If you cannot keep the peace with the Highcliffe boys, you should avoid them. If you were concerned in this disgraceful episode, Hurree Singh, you will take five hundred lines."

"But, my esteemed sahib——"

"And if you utter one more word, Hurree Singh, I shall cane you," said Mr. Quelch, with a glitter in his eyes.

The nabob of Bhanipur sat down. Obviously, there was nothing doing. To Mr. Quelch's mind, the affair was simply one more of the incessant rows and rags between Highcliffe and Greyfriars. He did not want to hear the details, and he did not intend to hear them.

Lessons went on, in the Remove-room, in a thundery atmosphere. Mr. Quelch, from his own point of view, had good cause to be vexed and irritated. He had given up a considerable amount of his scanty leisure in bestowing extra tuition on Bob, helping the junior to prepare for the prize exam. Now, on the very eve of the examination, Bob had thrown all his chances away, by getting mixed up in a reckless scuffle with boys belonging to another school. It was too much for the Form master's patience; and it gave him the impression that Bob had not really been in earnest at all.

Bob dragged wearily through classes that afternoon.

He was tired, his head ached, and his damaged eye was throbbing painfully. Skinner and his friends, who had sneered at him as a "master's favourite," and a model pupil, had little cause that afternoon for such sneers. The hapless junior was in the Form master's black books; and he made so many mistakes in lessons that Mr. Quelch's acid tongue lashed him more than once. Bob was not fit for lessons; but that Mr. Quelch regarded as being his own fault entirely. Form work could not be neglected, because a fellow chose to get mixed up in fighting. It was a fellow's business to be fit for work in class hours; and if matters were otherwise, he had to take the natural consequences.

It was a wretched afternoon to Bob.

It seemed to him that classes would never end; and he longed to get away from the buzz and the worry, and rest. But everything comes to an end; and so did classes at last.

Bob tramped out of the Remove Form-room, only anxious to get away by himself, and bathe his aching eye.

Harry Wharton & Co. hurried down the corridor after him.

Hardly a word had been exchanged among the chums of the Remove on the subject; it was tacitly agreed that the trouble between them and their old comrade should end, if they could end it. Bob had practically thrown away his chances in the exam, for which he had worked so hard, to rescue Hurree Singh from the Highcliffe raggers. After that, it was no question of judging rights and wrongs, and apportioning blame. The instinct of the Co. was to rally round their old chum, forgetful of past offences.

"Bob!"

"Bob, old fellow——"

Bob Cherry looked round at them. His face was dark and bitter. The moment was ill-chosen for a friendly overture. Bob, with a feeling that everybody and everything had turned against him, was at the very bottommost depths of depression; feeling like Ishmael of old, his hand against every man, every man's hand against him. He was down and out—and his only desire was to be let alone.

"What do you want?" he grunted harshly.

"My esteemed Bob——" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"We want to chuck up this wretched quarrel, Bob, if you're willing," said Frank Nugent.

"We are, if you are," said Bull.

"Let it drop, Bob," said Harry.

Bob's lip curled.

"What's the good of that now?" he said bitterly. "I suppose you're saying this because I stopped those cads ragging Inky—as if that makes any difference. When I wanted your help, you stood off—when you could have helped me, you turned me down. Now I'm down and out, what's the good of talking? Leave me alone."

And Bob Cherry swung away, and tramped down the passage; and the Co. looked after him in silence.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Finish!

BOB CHERRY did not "swot" that evening.

He had no interruption to fear—no "ragging" by the other Remove fellows. Although he had angrily disclaimed any desire for the "protection" of the captain of the Form, Wharton had not failed to keep Mr. Quelch's commands in mind. More than once, the idea of a "rag" in No. 13 had been mooted in the Remove, but nothing had come of it; the juniors knew that Harry Wharton was determined that there should be nothing of the kind, and behind the captain of the Remove was the authority of the Remove-master. Even Bolsover major had not ventured.

Bob had intended to take a last run, as it were, through his work that evening; all the fellows who were entered for the Latin exam were let off prep.

But it was impossible.

With an aching head and a throbbing eye, and in the lowest gloomy spirits, he could not touch his work. He did not even go to the study—he tramped a long time on the dusky quad, and for a long time rested in a bench under the leafless elms. He did not come to No. 13 till Mark Linley and Hurree Singh, and Wun Lung had gone down to the Rag; and then it was only to throw himself wearily into the armchair, a prey to bitter and gloomy reflections.

He knew that he would not be fit for

(Continued on next page.)

Be a handyman

MAKE THESE IN YOUR SPARE TIME

You'll find no hobby to come up to fretwork. It doesn't cost much, and when you have a Hobbies Outfit you can start right away to make all sorts of lovely things. But insist on a Hobbies Outfit to be sure of good reliable tools. They are obtainable from 2/6 to 45/-.

HOBBIES FRETWORK OUTFITS

Free fretwork designs are given every week with the journal HOBBIES, which your newsagent can supply, every Wednesday, price 2d. It is packed with things of interest to any boy.

FREE

Let us send you a specimen copy of HOBBIES and a free illustrated list of Outfits and tools.

HOBBIES Ltd.
(Dept. 34) Dereham, Norfolk
Branches & Agents in all towns.

Get this A1 Outfit

A complete range of tools with 32-page book of instructions and wood and designs for making 6 useful articles.

12/6
Post 1/-

the examination on the morrow. He would attend it, and grind through as best he could; but he knew that the result would be hapless failure. At the very best, he had never expected to head the list, against such opponents as Mark Linley and Wilkinson, and Stewart of the Shell. He had only hoped to gain an honourable place—a number of marks for his paper, which would earn Mr. Quelch's commendation, and assure his father that he really had worked, and done his best.

Now that modest hope was at an end.

He knew now that, try as he might, he would be at the bottom of the list, or very near it—that the number of marks awarded him would not only be small, but probably ludicrously small.

All his work had gone for nothing. It might have gone for nothing in any case, for he had worked himself stale; but the fighting with the Highcliffe fellows that afternoon had made it a certainty. Indeed, it was possible that when the Head saw his discoloured eye, he would send him away from the room without allowing him to compete at all. Bob almost hoped that he would.

It was in his mind to stand out of the exam—and let the thing go. What was the use of putting in two hours of desperate labour, for nothing—knowing in advance that there was nothing in it?

But he dropped that idea from his mind. He had promised his father to do his best; and he would do his best. He was beaten; but he would make it a fight to a finish all the same.

And afterwards——

What was his father to think?

Mr. Quelch would report—he could only report—that Bob had failed disastrously; that he had been unfit to do his best, owing to indulging in reckless fighting the day before the exam, Mr. Quelch certainly would mention that circumstance, if pressed for details. Bob wondered miserably what Major Cherry would have expected of him—to pass on his way and leave a schoolfellow in the hands of a gang of young ruffians! That was not likely; the major would not have expected that. But even if Bob told the whole story—even if the incensed old gentleman listened to it—it sounded too much like a lame excuse for failure. It was one of the major's complaints, that his son gave too much time to reckless ragging, instead of remembering that he was at Greyfriars to learn. He was not likely to take ragging and fighting with the Highcliffe fellows as an excuse for Bob's failure.

Bob laughed aloud mockingly, harshly, as he thought it over.

He had lost all his friends, he had quarrelled with his Form, and with another Form—all on account of working for that wretched exam. He had let the Remove down in football matches—he had done, and left undone, so many things that the whole Form had turned him down with one accord. And at the eleventh hour he had thrown it all away for the sake of helping one of the friends who had not stood by him when he needed help—one of the friends who was no longer a friend.

He told himself sardonically that he was a fool for his pains. Yet he knew that, if it had happened all over again, he would have done the same thing—he would have gone to the rescue of any Greyfriars fellow in hostile hands, regardless of the consequences to himself. He knew, too, that he had done rightly; while he knew that he would never be able to make his father understand as much.

The game was up now.

It was no longer a question of doing badly in the exam, as he had had reason to fear, after all his efforts. It was a question of doing absolutely rottenly—so rottenly that his entering for the exam at all would seem absurd.

Dreary thoughts occupied poor Bob's mind as he sat alone in the study. He did not leave the study till bedtime; and then he went to the Remove dormitory after the other fellows had gone up.

Billy Bunter gave a fat cackle as he came in, and Skinner grinned. Bob's black eye and crimson, swollen nose seemed to afford them entertainment.

Bob did not heed them; he was far past caring for Bunter's cackle or Skinner's derision. He went quietly to bed, without a look or a word for the rest; indeed, hardly conscious of their presence.

"Good-night, Bob!" called out Frank Nugent, when the Remove had turned in and Wingate had put out the light and gone.

Bob did not answer.

Long after the rest of the Remove were asleep Bob Cherry lay with open eyes—one of them blinking painfully. Sleep came at last, however, and he slumbered uneasily till the rising-bell clanged out in the cold, clear morning.

Bob turned out before the rest and hurried downstairs by himself. He walked in the quadrangle before breakfast, hoping that the fresh air would do him good and clear his head a little. He felt better when he came in to breakfast, and had a glimmer of hope. After all, he was going to put all his beef into it—he was going to fight hard.

Mr. Quelch gave him a severe glance at the last.

The aspect of Bob's face shocked the Remove master. He was still more shocked at the idea of a junior presenting himself in the examination-room with a black eye—in the presence of the headmaster himself.

"Cherry!" said Mr. Quelch, as the Removites rose after breakfast.

"Yes, sir!"

"If you desire to be excused from the Head's examination this morning, I will explain to Dr. Locke."

Bob smiled bitterly. His Form master was only thinking of keeping that obnoxious black eye out of the examination-room. It was humiliating for the Remove master to send in one of his boys in such a state. That was what he was thinking of; all Bob's desperate work for weary weeks went for nothing in comparison. In that, Bob was hardly just to Mr. Quelch, but the hapless junior was not in a mood to be just.

"Thank you, sir," he answered, with a curling lip, "but I want to go in for the exam, sir."

"Very well!" said Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips.

Bob went out into the quad.

The bell for classes called the various Forms to the Form-rooms, with the exception of the entrants for the Head's exam. They were free till ten o'clock, when they had to go to the examination-room. Some of them walked in the quad, some of them took a last glance over their books. Bob sat on a bench under an elm till ten chimed out from the clock-tower. He tried to look at a book, but the Latin danced before his eyes and he gave it up.

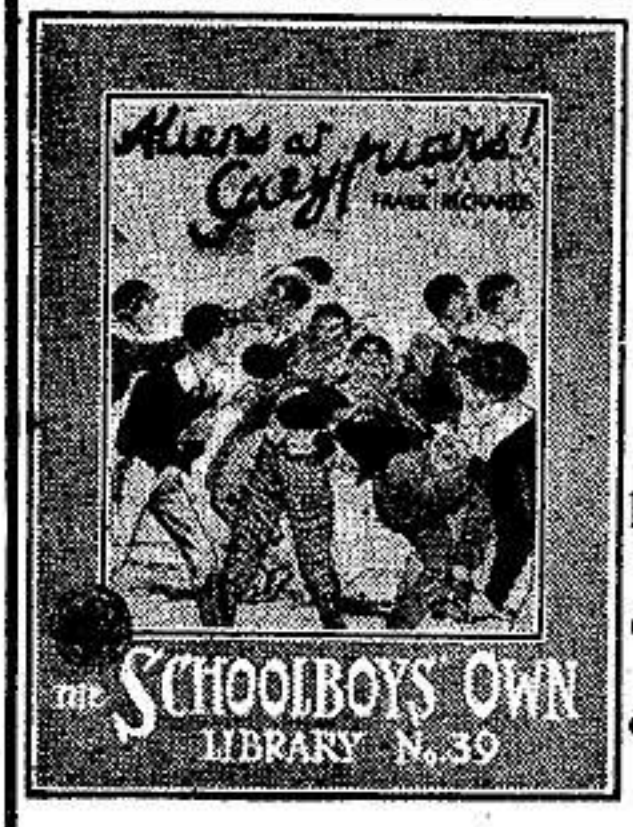
At ten o'clock he went in with the others.

Wilkinson of the Fourth stared at his black eye, and smiled faintly; the others did not heed him.

Dr. Locke was present, and his glance fell on Bob, and he frowned. But he did not speak on the subject of the discoloured eye, and Bob breathed again. The papers were handed out, and the

(Continued on page 28.)

SCHOOL STORIES THAT CAN'T BE BEATEN!



When a crowd of foreigners take up their quarters next door to Greyfriars the fur begins to fly with a vengeance. You'll laugh loud and long over this fine story, chums. Ask your newsagent for a copy of the

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY No. 39

Price 4D. each.

Every boy likes a mystery, and this "mystery" yarn by Ernest Protheroe will satisfy every boy. You'll be spending 4d. to good advantage if you get a copy of the

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY No. 40.

BOTH THESE RIPPING VOLUMES ARE NOW ON SALE!

"THE GAME'S UP, YOUNG COMBER!" shouts a policeman. But he doesn't reckon with the resource of "Young Comber," for Tommy sees a chance of retaining his freedom and he goes for it baldheaded!

The Boy with the Million-Pound Secret!

DAVID GOODWIN'S

SERIAL MASTERPIECE!

.....

A Sporting Chance!

IT was a policeman in uniform who came along the wall. What Tommy had seen poking up over the grass was the top of his helmet. But he wasn't making for Tommy at all. He was heading at full speed for the place where the motor-boat had been left, and suddenly he vanished out of sight over the wall. He had made sure of the boat, and had cut off all retreat!

At the same moment two tall men in tweed suits came dashing out of the bungalow, and made straight for Tommy.

He turned and fled as fast as his legs would carry him. It didn't need more than a glance to tell him what they were. Plain-clothes men—probably detectives from Scotland Yard.

The motor-boat was useless to him now. He was sprinting for the jetty in the creek, the old landing-place. There was a chance the policemen had left their own boat there. But it was a forlorn hope. They were not likely to have left it ungoarded. If nobody was there, he might swim the creek and get on to the mainland. That was a slimmer chance still, for they were bound to catch him now.

He had got a start of the two men in tweeds, and he went flying over the ditches, taking them in his stride. The detectives were bounding along after him, both of them faster runners than Tommy, but they did not know the ground so well. One of them fell headlong in jumping a dyke, and came a terrific cropper into the mud. But the other kept going, and when they got on to the open ground near the creek he began to gain.

"Give in, Comber!" he shouted. "We've got you!"

"Not yet!" said Tommy through his teeth, darting over the embankment.

He half-expected to run into the arms of another policeman. But there was no one there. The police must have landed from a craft of some sort, but where was it?

Suddenly another policeman sprang up on the far side of the creek, and yelled out something which Tommy could not hear and didn't want to. But that road of escape was cut off. It was hopeless to swim across.

Not a second did Tommy waste, but darted off to the left along the creek's shore. A gleam of hope came to him. He remembered the boat he had bought at Queenborough the day he first came back to the island. Neither of the boys had ever used it since. It lay out of sight in a little rill among the saltings, near the water. Tommy made one dash for it, tugging at it savagely, launched it down the slippery mudbank into the creek, and sprang in.

Just as he reached the water the foremost detective appeared on top of the bank. But the boat was just afloat, and, grabbing an oar, Tommy shoved off with all his might.

The man did not hesitate, but fairly hurled himself off the bank and across the mud, plunging into the creek after Tommy.

"The game's up, young Comber!" he shouted.

So apparently it was. But Tommy never believed any game was up till it was finished, and as the man grabbed at the stern of the boat he shortened his oar and made a lunge. The oar-blade took the man neatly in the waistcoat.

"Ouch! Yow!" said the pursuer, and sat down with a mighty splash in three feet of water.

Tommy hated to interfere with anybody who apparently was a policeman doing his duty. But he was up against it, and the fate of nations might hang on his getting away. It was no good trying to explain to the police. Once they had got him they would keep him for good. He ran out his oars and pulled away down the creek with all his might. He reached the open river.

Tommy was the hunted fox with a plucky heart, who never gives in till he gets away or the hounds pull him down. But he didn't expect to get away in a row-boat, even now. And he was right.

The detective had pulled himself out of the water, and his companion had now reached the embankment, and stood there, shouting and waving his arms. The policeman farther along the wall, who had captured Tommy's boat, was shouting, too.

Away out in the river, opposite Tommy, was the cockle-boat that he had noticed on first approaching the island,

HOW THE STORY OPENED.

TOMMY COMBER, sentenced to three years' detention aboard the reformatory ship Bellerophon for being concerned in the murder of his uncle,
JOSEPH COMBER, a clever chemist, inventor of a powerful high explosive named Comberite, and owner of Curlew Island.
CHUFFER FOSS, Tommy's cousin, a ne'er do well, whose false evidence at the trial did much to prejudice the innocent Tommy's chances of acquittal.
DR. SOLTOFF, alias O'Hara, a Russian Soviet agent and a skilful surgeon, who shelters the fugitive from the Bellerophon and fakes his features to resemble those of Pat Roche, his servant, so that Tommy's own pal.
DAN BENNETT, doesn't recognise him until Tommy makes known his identity.
MERTON HAYNES, KARKOFF and BALDY, satellites of O'Hara.
JOHN CARFAX, an official in the Secret Service.

. . . . . .

In return for the service O'Hara has rendered him, Tommy—who knows the secret of Comberite—is asked to make the explosive, he himself to take a third share in the partnership. Tommy agrees to the proposal and, privately, asks Dan to join him on Curlew Island where the stuff is to be made.

Tommy's second attempt at Comberite proves successful, and in accordance with his promise he wires O'Hara to that effect. Immediately afterwards, however, he meets Carfax, who to Tommy's amazement not only knows his identity but puts him wise to the motives of the mysterious O'Hara & Co. Then after informing Tommy of his efforts to bring the Russian gang to book and warning him to keep out of the way for a time Carfax takes his departure with Dan. Heedless of Carfax's warning, however, Tommy makes an attempt to regain a flask of Comberite he has left buried on Curlew Island. He has scarcely set foot on the island, however, when he espies a blue-helmeted figure racing towards him. One glance at the approaching form is enough for Tommy.

"Gosh!" he gasps. "The cops at last!"

(Now Read On.)

and the men ashore seemed to be waving to it. The cockle-boat had only one man in it, and as he turned Tommy recognised him.

It was his cousin, Chuffer Foss!

In a flash Tommy understood. Chuffer had given him away to the police. The detectives had come to Gravesend from London, and Chuffer had sailed them down the river in his boat, and had landed them on the island; then he had waited outside so that it should not be seen that any strange boat was at the jetty.

"Ah, you swab, Chuffer!" said Tommy through his teeth, pulling at the oars with all his might. "Cop me if you can; and, if you do, look out for yourself!"

The men ashore were signalling to Chuffer to stop Tommy at all costs. But Chuffer did not seem to like the look of it. He had recognised Tommy, and he hung in the wind. He had had a taste of his young cousin before. Besides, his boat was heavy and slow, and there was not much wind, and Tommy was making good way with the oars. Chuffer, instead of coming after Tommy, turned straight for the island, like the coward he was. He meant to pick up the police before he tackled Tommy.

"By gosh, I'll do 'em, after all!" thought Tommy, in wild excitement.

If he could only reach the Kentish shore before they overtook him he might get away yet.

But the police on the island were dancing and yelling, and waving their arms frantically, and they didn't seem to be taking any notice of Chuffer. Suddenly Tommy caught sight of the cause of their excitement, and his heart sank into his boots.

Close inshore, pulling down-stream with the tide, came a coastguard cutter with half a dozen men in her, four of them at the oars. They had evidently nothing to do with the job. But it was to them that the police were shouting, and they could see there was something wrong.

"Cutter ahoy!" yelled the tall detective on the bank. "Stop that boy in the boat! Get hold of him! It's Comber! It's Tom Comber, the runaway!"

There was a moment's pause, and then:

"Ay, ay!" roared a voice from the cutter; and she came swinging across to cut Tommy off, her oars making the water fly.

Tommy groaned aloud. He gave a despairing glance up and down the river. And the next moment he nearly gave a shout of excitement.

Not three hundred yards away, but coming at a racing pace, was the white bow of a big petrol launch, tearing along with a cushion of snowy foam breaking away from either side of her stern.

Whether the coastguard cutter saw her is uncertain. All the cutter's efforts were fixed on capturing Tommy, the men were rowing at a tremendous pace, and the officer was standing up in the stern, urging them to still greater efforts.

Tommy pulled frantically to try to clear them. But the cutter fairly leaped ahead, and she bumped alongside Tommy's boat with a jerk that nearly flung him off the thwart. One of the men dropped his oar and grabbed hold of the boat's gunwale.

"No go, you young beggar!" he gasped. "We've got you!"

He had hardly said it when there came a wild shout from the officer of the cutter.

"Look out there!" he bawled. "Starboard your helm, you fools! Hard a-starboard!"

Tommy swung round and got a momentary glimpse of a sharp steel stem with a great fan of water curving away on each side of it. Before he could even cry out, there was a jarring crash and a medley of shrieks and yells.

Cut Down!

WHAT happened after that Tommy never quite knew. The butt of an oar swung round and smote him a cracking blow on the nose. His first impression was that his nose was done for, for good and all; he doubted if he had any nose left. At moments of crisis the strangest thoughts come into one's head.

But that was all over in a second, the boat seemed to disappear from underneath him, and he found himself flying head-first into the water. He struck out as he fell, and came to the surface almost at once. A rope came hurtling through the air, and struck him across the face. He made a wild clutch at it, and before he knew what was up he was being dragged through the water and hauled bodily into the motor-launch.

Tommy collapsed on a thwart, gasping and spitting out sea-water. He heard the engine beating and throbbing, and amid all the noise rose quite a chorus of curses. With an effort, he sat up and looked about him.

The motor-launch had already changed course, and was swerving round in a half-circle before buzzing away down the river. Tommy's boat had sunk. The coastguard cutter was in terrific confusion. Her side was stove in, and three of her oars were smashed. One of her crew had been jerked clean overboard by the shock, and the others were hurriedly rescuing him with their crippled boat.

"Gee! What a bust-up!" panted Tommy.

Besides himself, there were three men in the launch. Two of them were Dr. O'Hara and Merton Haynes. The third, who steered the launch, Tommy had never seen before. He was a big-built man, with a grim, sinister face and a grizzled, military moustache. He was paying no heed to Tommy, all his attention was fixed on steering the launch—and on the cockle-boat, which, with her sail flapping, was right ahead.

"That's Foss!" cried Merton Haynes suddenly. "Cut him down, Karkoff, if he gets in the way! Cut him down!"

In the cockle-boat was Chuffer Foss, standing up and waving his arms excitedly. Furious oaths and shouts came from him, as he saw Tommy being carried off, apparently to safety. Then he gave a frightened scream, and jumped to the helm of his boat.

Crash!

The launch's steel stem hit the cockle-boat on the quarter and drove over her as if she had been a lump of wreckage. Tommy wasn't prepared for the impact, and the jar of it upset him off the thwart, and landed him on his back in the bottom of the launch, with his heels kicking in the air.

He was so sore and shaken already that it was a minute or two before he could pick himself up. When he did he looked hurriedly back. The cockle-boat was now three hundred yards astern, a sinking wreck, and of her crew there was no sign. The launch was fairly flying down river on her way to the sea.

"By gosh!" gasped Tommy. "What's become of Chuffer?"

"We are not interested in Chuffer, Tommy," said Dr. O'Hara quietly. "He has not only betrayed you, but he has betrayed us, too. People who betray us never get away with it alive!"

Tommy looked up into the grim, cruel faces whose eyes were fixed on him.

"Yes, you little gaol-bird!" said Haynes fiercely. "You have betrayed us, too. And this is where you answer for it!"

Tommy saw that he was in just as tight a fix as he was when the police were at his heels; and most likely a much tighter one. He guessed that the three men knew something about John Carfax. All three of them were his enemies, though which of the three was the worst he wasn't yet sure.

His first impulse was to defy them. But he was utterly in their power, and he saw that, unless he was very careful, it was all up with him—and with Comberite, too.

He looked into the faces of his captors with a stare of innocent bewilderment.

"What the dickens is all this fuss about?" said Tommy simply. "You've pulled me out of a mess—and none too soon, either. I was done for if you hadn't turned up. But what's all the guff about betraying? You don't suppose I told the police to come and cop me, do you?"

He put his hand up to his face; it was not hurting him now, but somehow it felt like a piece of wreckage.

"Gosh!" he said. "What's happened to my nose? I don't seem to have anything left that you could call a nose!"

Dr. O'Hara looked at Tommy with a grim smile.

"That is true, my dear Tommy," he said suavely. "But it isn't your own nose that's broken. It is the nose I made for you."

Tommy remembered that strange operation in O'Hara's house, when his face had been so skilfully altered, and the little needle-squirt had injected the paraffin-wax under the skin of his nose, which was afterwards moulded by O'Hara's deft fingers till it became the high, hooked nose which Tommy had since worn with his dark skin and black-dyed hair—and all this had saved him from the Bellerophon.

"Well, then, it's a good job spoiled, that's all," said Tommy. "It's a bit rough on a fellow to have to go about with a bashed-up wax nose like this; but, of course, that ain't your fault."

Karkoff, the man at the helm, cut in.

"Enough of this fooling!" he said harshly. "The boy has not answered your questions, Haynes!"

"No," said Haynes, moving towards Tommy, "but he's going to!"

"Wait a moment—wait a moment!" said O'Hara gently, putting out his hand to keep Haynes back. "Let us hear what Tommy Comber has to say first. I have never yet known Tommy to play me false, and he gave me his word."

"Quick, then!" said the other two men.

"I'll tell you what I know, and it isn't much," said Tommy. "I've made the powder, and I came back to the island this morning to get it. The first thing I knew, the police came after me. They must have been lyin' in ambush for me, expecting I'd turn up——"

"Stop!" interrupted Haynes sharply. "You came back to the island—why did you leave it? Where were you last night, eh? What were you doing?"

"Last night I slept in my motor-boat in Egypt Creek, across yonder on the

"Halt, there!" A sharp, clear voice cut in with startling suddenness. Haynes and Karkoff whipped round and faced the door and saw John Carfax, with a big service revolver in his hand, covering them. But Doctor O'Hara, with a single bound, leaped straight out through the window. (*See page 26.*)

Kent side," said Tommy calmly. "I reckoned it wasn't safe to stay on the island all night alone, after I'd made the powder, in case anybody turned up, same as those chaps did who nearly dished me the night before. It's no good running risks. I slept till daybreak, and then went back to the island. I was very careful, but the police must have hidden themselves there while it was dark, and I didn't see 'em. Then I bolted, and managed to get clear in the row-boat. Chuffer Foss was outside, and I saw it must have been him that gave me away to the cops. But I'd have got away all right if it hadn't been for those coastguards. I don't think they'd anything to do with the job, but they happened to be passing. It's jolly lucky for us all that you were on the spot with your launch, else I'd have been a prisoner with the police now—and all up with Comberite!"

"Are you sure," said Haynes threateningly, leaning forward, "that you didn't come to Haven——"

"Hush!" interrupted O'Hara quickly. "No need to give that away!" And he spoke rapidly to Haynes in a language that Tommy did not understand.

"All that doesn't matter now!" said O'Hara. "As long as we have the stuff!" He turned to Tommy. "The powder, boy—the powder! You telegraphed me it was a success. Have you got it? Have you any of it with you?"

"Hadn't time to get any," he said. "But there's some hidden on the island; and it's where nobody will find it but me! What do you say to going back an' gettin' it?" he added, with a sour grin.

He saw by the blank faces of the three men that they would never do that. They could never go near Curlew Island again, now that the police were "wise" to Tommy Comber, whom O'Hara had rescued out of the very clutches of Scotland Yard.

Merton Haynes scowled, and blurted out what was evidently an oath.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Karkoff. "But the powder—now that you have made it once successfully—you can make it again!"

"Oh, yes!" said Tommy. "I can make the giddy stuff easily now."

He did not add that he was determined no power on earth would make him give the secret over to these three men. They left him alone for a minute or two and talked eagerly amongst themselves in Russian.

Tommy glanced at the sun and judged the time was already past nine. He had not thought they had spent so long over the business. He had missed the appointment with Carfax and Dan at Sheerness.

One thing was sure. As soon as ever the baffled police on Curlew Island could get to a telephone, a sharp lookout would be kept everywhere for O'Hara's launch. If only Tommy could delay the launch in some way and prevent it getting clear, all would be well. He didn't mind getting arrested now—provided O'Hara & Co. were nabbed as well! But they were not the sort of people who did get nabbed—they were far too clever for that. And he guessed that, if they were up against it, they would not be taken alive, nor without taking a few lives before they went under.

Doctor O'Hara turned to Tommy.

"This alters our plans entirely!" he said. "The English authorities will be able to trace the launch now. She cannot remain in the Thames."

"As likely as not we shall be fired on when we get abreast Sheerness!" growled Haynes.

O'Hara took no notice of him.

"Luckily we have still time," he said, "and there is only one thing to do. This, Tommy," he said, pointing to the grim figure of Karkoff, who sat at the helm, "is Mr. Miles, who is a member of our company, and in a way its leader; he is deeply interested in Comberite Powder."

"Pleased to meet Mr. Miles," replied Tommy. "I hope he'll like Comberite when he gets it."

"I am sure he will," said O'Hara, "but as we cannot stay in England after this little brush with the police, and neither can you, Tommy, for they will have you to a certainty if you remain, we are leaving for a happier country. We have a fast, seaworthy vessel under us, and we shall now cross the North Sea to Holland, on our way home."

Tommy's jaw dropped.

"What! Now—at once?" he exclaimed.

"Immediately! We are on our way now," said O'Hara.

The proposal was so clearly the right thing to do, from the gang's point of

view, that it was impossible for Tommy to object. If he did, he would at once arouse their suspicion of him again. And, anyhow, they would not take any notice of him whether he objected or not. But the thought of being hurried out of England by this crew of scoundrels was awful. Suppose they got him away to Russia—which was evidently what they were after? He was already beyond reach of Carfax and Dan.

The launch was tearing down the centre of the broad river channel; the open sea lay ahead, and already they were nearly abreast Sheerness, where several torpedo-boats lay at anchor. But these took no notice whatever of the launch.

One thing alone gave Tommy a faint gleam of hope. The weather had been calm so far, but now dark clouds, with ragged, windy edges, were gathering over the Maplin Sands to the north-east, away seaward. He could see a heavy rain-squall driving along the sea horizon. There was a gale coming, though it was still quiet in the estuary. Would the crew dare face such weather in a motor-launch?

They did not seem to have noticed it yet. For Haynes was busy with the engine; he was testing the petrol-tanks and trying the level. He said something to the others which dismayed them, and made Karkoff swear.

"There must be enough! Why didn't you fill her up, you fool?" he said angrily.

"I did not know we should have to cross the North Sea!" retorted Haynes. "I tell you there is not enough—we shall run out of petrol half-way across, and that would be the end of us! We must have another fifteen gallons aboard at least to reach the Scheldt!"

"There is no difficulty, my friends," said O'Hara coolly. "We have forty tins stored in the cottage at Havengore, and it is on the way. We must nip in there and jerk enough of them on board to see us through."

"But——"

"There is plenty of time, I tell you! The police at Curlew Island will not be able to get the alarm out in less than two hours, and even then they would not find us. I particularly wish to land at Havengore, in any case, for there are things of ours yonder which it would be fatal to leave behind," said O'Hara.

"Soltoff is right. Besides, we have no choice!" broke in Haynes impatiently. "We must have the petrol, or we cannot cross. It will not take twenty minutes to get it. Full speed for Havengore!"

The launch headed in towards the little group of islands far in over the Maplin Sands, to Tommy's enormous relief. Yet it was only the dimmest of hopes that anything could happen at Havengore to help him. As the launch neared the island she slowed down, and the crew looked ahead watchfully.

"If there is any craft about we must cut it out, and chance getting our petrol somewhere else," said Haynes.

"We're in for rough weather, anyhow," said Karkoff, looking uneasily at the sky. "I wonder if we can get across?"

"We shall get across or drown—that's all there is to it!" growled Haynes. "Is anybody ahead of us here? That's what I want to know."

But Havengore was lonely and desolate: seldom does any craft go near it, and there was none now. They ran the launch up to the shore, for the tide was high. Karkoff sprang ashore to scout, and returned to report that all was well.

"One of you stay here with the boy, while the rest of us get the stuff aboard!" he called out.

"No!" said O'Hara. "Speed's the thing—we must make one journey of it. Four of us can each carry two cans—that's sixteen gallons. Bring the boy along; he must carry his load. Then it will take us no time."

They sprang ashore, and Haynes, gripping the arm of Tommy, made him run along with them. Right in front was the cottage—the only building on the island. When they reached it, Haynes whipped out a key, opened the door, and they all hurried inside.

Tommy found himself tingling with excitement—and disappointment. If only he could break away from them! But it was utterly useless. All the men were certainly armed. They would shoot him down before he had gone ten paces if he showed the least sign of bolting.

Karkoff threw open the door of a store-room, which was full of petrol-cans. Tommy racked his brains for some way of delaying the gang. Time was everything. But they all seemed cock-a-whoop with themselves now that they had reached the petrol and the way out of England lay clear before them.

"Here are your two—take these!" cried Karkoff, heaving a couple of cans towards Tommy. "Come on, all of you! Here's the stuff to take us home! And a triumph for Russia and the Red Republic!"

Haynes laughed grimly as he snatched up the tins.

"Just one moment, gents," said Tommy quietly. "There's a little thing we've forgotten."

The men turned to him with impatient surprise.

"Well, what is it?" rapped out Karkoff. "Quick!"

"Before I go back to your boat I've a question to ask," retorted Tommy, quite politely and apparently not at all hurried by Karkoff's manner. "I thought this powder of mine, 'Comberite,' was to be put on the market and sold as a business job, just like petrol, only patented?"

"You are perfectly right," said O'Hara, before the others could speak. "What then?"

"Why, I want to know what all this stuff is about Russia and the Red Republic," said Tommy. "I'm not a republican. I know there are chaps who are, but that's not my business. I'm a King's man! I want to know who is going to get this powder of mine."

There was a short pause.

"Ach!" said Karkoff impatiently. "Tell him, if he wants to know! What does it matter now? We are wasting time!"

"Certainly," said Dr. O'Hara, with his suave smile. "There's no need for any more mystery about it." He turned to Tommy. "The Russian Government has made us a very good offer—a rich offer—for Comberite, provided it will do what you claim for it."

"It'll do that all right," said Tommy coolly. "But I don't wish to sell it to the Russian Government."

Again there was a pause of astonishment. But Haynes rose up, and his fierce eyes narrowed to two slits as he glared at Tommy.

"You don't wish?" he said, in a voice like a knife tearing through a piece of cloth. "You don't wish? And why?"

"Because," said Tommy, "it's likely that if Russia had got a powder like that she could smash up England, for all I know. And any other country, too."

"And suppose she did?" retorted Haynes, with contempt. "What does that matter to you? What is England to you—an escaped prisoner, sent to gaol for a crime he never did?"

And, at that, Tommy forgot he was playing for time. His temper broke loose.

"It matters just this much," he said, "that I'll see you hanged first!"

Haynes came right up to him, his face was white with fury, and his terrible eyes glared into Tommy's.

"You pitiful little fool!" he said slowly. "Do you suppose that you can say what's to be done—or not done?"

"You can kill me if you like," said Tommy, "you'll never get Comberite. There's another reason, too. You two swabs have told me lies, right from the start up till now. You're just a gang of thugs and murderers. I know that it was you who raided Curlew Island that first night, when my uncle died." He looked straight into Haynes' face. "And I believe you are the man who killed him!"

It was a chance-shot. But it hit the bulls-eye, for Haynes flushed dull red, and came a step nearer. Then he laughed, and a dreadful laugh it was.

"Yes!" he said, coming closer still. "I killed Joseph Comber. And it was I who knocked you on the head, stunned you, and turned you adrift in the boat with the stolen notes that I put in your clothes! I killed Comber because he stood in my way, and refused me what I demanded. Just as you are refusing now!"

There was a moment's silence.

"It's true!" muttered Doctor O'Hara. "And it was a pity, I consider, and a blunder. I am always against killing, if it can be helped. I——"

"Hold your tongue, Soltoff!" said Haynes, his eyes still on Tommy's face. "Yes, I killed Joseph Comber. And I think you will envy him the easy death he died, before I have done with you!"

"Enough of this!" cried Karkoff furiously. "What are you waiting for! We may have the police here any moment. Knock him on the head and carry him down to the boat, and——"

"Halt, there!"

A sharp, clear voice cut in with startling suddenness. All of them whipped round suddenly and faced the door—all except Doctor O'Hara, who with one bound leaped straight out through the window.

The door had swung wide open, and John Carfax stood facing them—alone. His brown hand held a big Service revolver.

"Keep still, all of you," he said, in his cool, quiet voice. "Quite still—just as if you were going to be photographed. The first one of you who moves will be shot down."

There was a second's dead silence. Then Karkoff spoke:

"What does this mean!" he cried. "Who are——"

And at that moment Merton Haynes moved. His hand slipped to his side-pocket, quick as a snake striking, and

Printed and published every Monday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Subscription rates: Inland and Abroad, 11s. per annum; 5s. 6d. for six months. Sole agents for South Africa: The Central News Agency, Ltd. Sole agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for Canada: The Imperial News Co., Ltd. (Canada).—Saturday, November 13th, 1926

whipped out an automatic-pistol. The two shots rang out together, but Haynes went down with a gasping cry. Tommy did not even see what happened, for with one stride he was up to Karkoff and hit him under the jaw with all his might just as he drew his pistol. Karkoff reeled backwards on top of Haynes, tripped up, and fell headlong.

Almost at the same moment the other window burst open and two burly figures came bouncing through into the room. The first was a stocky-looking man in a blue serge suit, gripping a revolver in his fist. The second was Dan Bennett.

"Tommy," yelled Dan gleefully, "we've scooped 'em!"

Tommy scarcely heard him; he made one dive for Karkoff's pistol, and gave a grunt of triumph as he got hold of it. Then he scrambled up again, and one glance showed him all there was to see.

Merton Haynes lay motionless upon his face, his arms spread out. Karkoff's huge bulk was sprawling feebly on the floor, and Carfax's revolver covered him.

"Fix this chap up, Willie," he said to the man in the blue suit. "I'll see to the other. I think he's past giving any more trouble."

The man who had come in through the window put up his revolver and coolly clicked a pair of light handcuffs round Karkoff's wrists, while Carfax stooped over the fallen Haynes.

"Are you all right, Tommy?" cried Dan. "Not hurt——"

"Never mind me—O'Hara's got away—he bolted through the window!" exclaimed Tommy. "After him!"

"Don't worry, young 'un!" said the man who had handcuffed Karkoff, and was now hauling him into a chair. "We have three more men outside, and they're on to him. They saw him nip out. We've snaffled his launch, and he can't get off the island. Is your man alive, Jack?"

Carfax stood up, and shook his head.

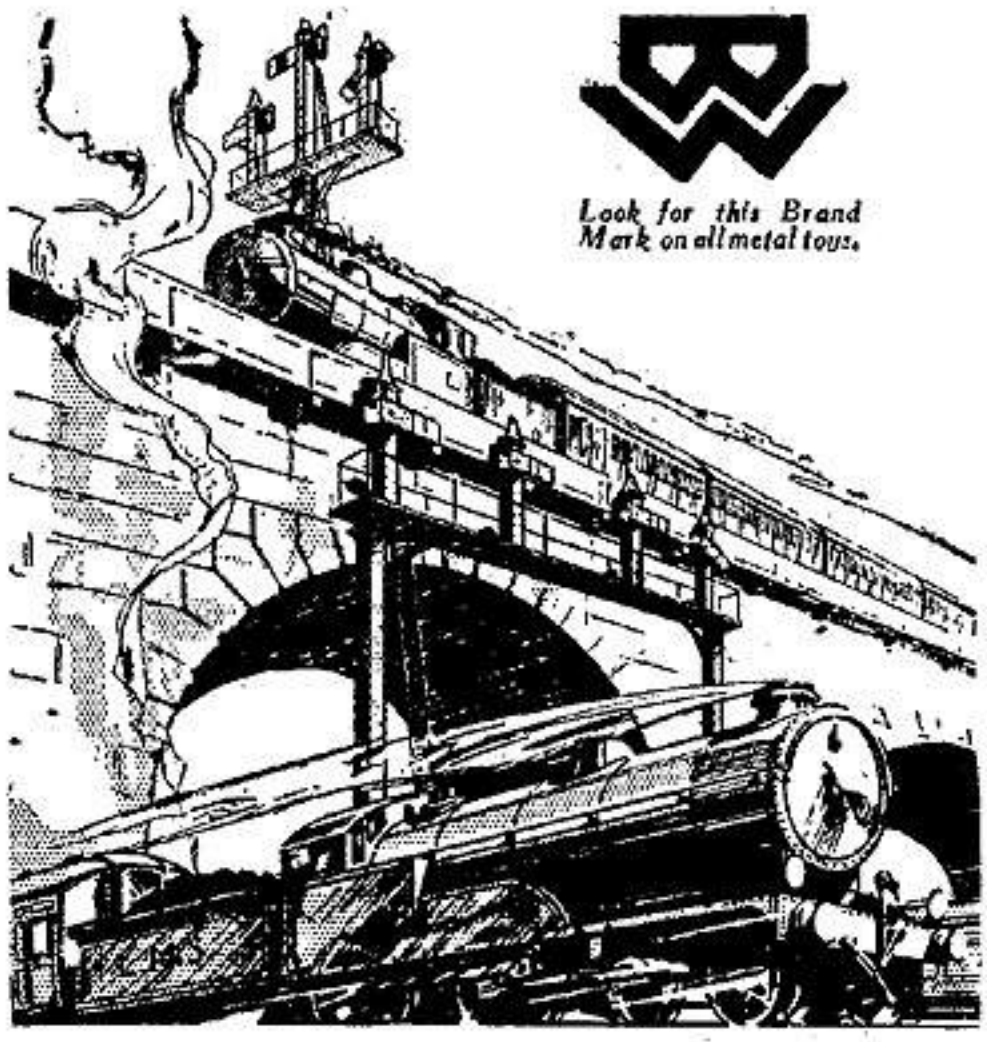
"All up, I fear," he said; "that's the worst of these gunmen—you've got to let them have it quick. It's a pity. I think he would have talked, and told us something useful."

Suddenly the dying man opened his eyes, and turned them upon Tommy. That look of hatred, which Tommy knew so well, came over the grim, dark face for the last time. His lips moved, as if he were trying to speak. Then his head sank slowly back, and Merton Haynes, better known as Ivan Dimitri, of Moscow, was silent for ever.

(Don't miss the continuation of this splendid serial in next week's topping number of the MAGNET, *chums.)*

You're bound to see these Ripping Annuals on the Bookstalls — and when you've seen 'em, bear them well in mind if your Dad or your Uncle asks you what you would like for Christmas!

BEST SIX SHILLING BARGAINS!



Look for this Brand Mark on all metal toys.

WORKING MODELS OF EVERY TYPE

In Bing Miniature Railway Systems there are Engines, Rolling Stock, Tracks, Points, Sidings, Buffers, Signals, Stations, etc.—everything necessary to run a miniature railway. Or, if you prefer it, you can buy a system complete. Don't think of these perfect little models as Toys. They are mechanically perfect models as continuously interesting to grown-ups as boys. Bing is the most absorbing hobby and the most interesting method of imparting accurate mechanical instruction.

BING TRAINS

The Bing Catalogue describes the complete range of railways, stationary engines, tractors, etc. Get your copy to-day from your nearest toy shop or write to address below.

Send for free booklet

to
Bing Advertising Department 8,
Lincoln House, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

Q1

"NOBODY'S CHUM!"

(*Continued from page 22.*)

examination-room was silent save for the scratching of pens and an occasional restless movement. Bob Cherry, with his teeth set, worked hard—harder than any other fellow in the room; and he worked with the bitter consciousness that it was useless, that he had failed before he began.

In the Remove room, perhaps, Harry Wharton & Co. wondered how their estranged chum was getting on.

The Remove had been dismissed from their Form-room before the door of the examination-room opened. Harry Wharton & Co. were in the quad when Bob Cherry came out.

Nugent called to him:

"What luck, Bob?"

Bob Cherry laughed—a harsh sound that was very unlike his old sunny laugh. That laugh was a sufficient answer. The result of the examination was not to be announced that day; but Bob did not need to wait for the official announcement. He knew what his paper had been like.

"What luck?" he repeated sardonically. "Oh, the best—the very best! I shall be taken away from Greyfriars—good news for you and the other fellows. I've made a muck of it—worse than I expected, and I didn't expect to do much. You'll see the last of me soon—and I shall be jolly glad to go!"

And with those bitter words, and black bitterness in his breast, the unhappy junior turned his back on his former friends and tramped away.

THE END.

(*Be sure and read the next powerful story in the splendid series, chums, entitled: "Bob Cherry Wins Through!" by Frank Richards.*)

2 FREE GIFTS!

PURSE AND POCKET KNIFE GIVEN AWAY to all who buy a Pen!

The 'SILKRITE' Registered SELF-FILLING FOUNTAIN PEN

Over 5,000 Testimonials received! Guaranteed 5 Years' Wear!

1/6

G. FRANCIS, Esq., writes:—"35 Pens I have purchased and all my friends are perfectly satisfied."
M. G. POWELL, Esq., writes:—"Delighted with 'Silkrite' Pen. It equals any other make at 10/-."

2 FREE GIFTS!—With every "SILKRITE" Pen at 1/6 each, and 3d. extra for postage of gifts, we GIVE FREE a Real Leather LOOK PURSE and a Handsome POCKET KNIFE (2 blades) as sketch. *Write for 1926 Gift Catalogue, Richly Illustrated, full of Big Bargains, Jewellery, Fancy Goods, Post Free!* 21st Year of Business! Over a million supplied to customers. The London Art Co., [illegible] Leeds.

COLLECTOR'S OUTFIT FREE

A Splendid Offer for Stamp Collectors! Pocket Wallet and Perforation Gauge, Watermark Finder, 50 All Different Stamps, Stamp Hinges, British Colonials, etc.—Send postcard requesting Approvals and Lists.
LISBURN & TOWNSEND, LONDON ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument. Invisible. Imitate Birds. Priced each 4 for 1/-.—T. W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.

5/- Down

to all you pay before delivery for a superbly made No. 601 *Wireless* Gramophone or a No. 605 Mead with gigantic richly coloured horn, solid oak cabinet, large motor and loud Sound Reproducer. Sent (with 30 tunes) carriage paid on **10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL**. Mahogany Cabinet Models, handy Portables and inlaid Table Grands at low factory prices. Write to-*day* for art catalogue.

Mead
Co. Dept. N.2, Birmingham.

FREE! 20 Different Queen Victoria Stamps (Malta, 1885, etc.). Request Approvals. (Abroad 6d.)—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, STOURBRIDGE.

£2,000 WORTH CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL.—Samples catalogue free; 12 by 10 Enlargement, any photo, 8d.—HACKETT'S WORKS, July Road, LIVERPOOL.

SECRET SERVICE Pocket DISGUISE OUTFIT for Actors, Detectives, and others. 3/- each, post free. Overseas 6d. extra.—Dept. XX, MILTON, 24, Station Parade, Norbury, London, S.W.16.

HEIGHT COUNTS

in winning success. Height increased—health and physique improved. Wonderful results. Send for particulars and our £100 guarantee to.—GIRVAN SYSTEM (A.M.P.), 17, Stroud Green Rd., London, N.4.

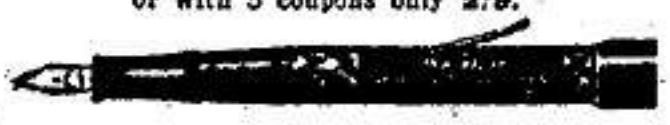
BLUSHING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, SHYNESS, TIMIDITY,

Simple 7-day Permanent Home Cure for either sex. No Auto suggestion, drill, etc. Write at once, mention "M.G.," and get full particulars quite FREE privately.
U.J.D., 12, All Saints Road, ST. ANNES-ON-SEA.

CUT THIS OUT

"MAGNET" PEN COUPON. VALUE 3d.

Send 5 of these coupons with only 2/9 (and 2d. stamp) direct to the FLEET PEN CO., 119, Fleet Street, E.C.4. By return you will receive a handsome lever self-filling FLEET FOUNTAIN PEN with solid gold nib (fine, medium, or broad), usually 10/6. Fleet price 4/-, or with 5 coupons only 2/9.



NN

HEIGHT INCREASED IN 30 DAYS. 5/- Complete Course.

No Appliances. No Drugs. No Dieting. The Melvin Strong System NEVER FAILS. Full particulars and Testimonials, stamp.—Melvin Strong, Ltd. (Dept. S.), 10, Ludgate Hill, London, Eng.

ARE YOU HAPPY

Bright and Cheerful? It is impossible to be so if you suffer from Nervous Fears, Awkwardness in Company, Nervous Depression, Blushing, Timidity, Sleeplessness, Lack of Will-Power or Mind-Concentration. You can overcome all nervous troubles if you use the Mento-Nerve Treatment. GUARANTEED CURE. Send 3 penny stamps for particulars.—GODFRY ELLIOTT-SMITH, Ltd., 527, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, E.C.4.

FREE!—Set of 50 Hungarian Stamps FREE to those sending postage (abroad 6d.) and asking to see Approvals.—M. FLORICK, 175, Asylum Road, Peckham, London, S.E.15.

JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD.

Boys are wanted for the Seaman Class (from which selections are made for the Wireless Telegraphy and Signalling Branches). Age 15½ to 16½ years.

Men also are required for

SEAMEN (Special Service)	*Age 18 to 25*
STOKERS	*Age 18 to 25*
ROYAL MARINE FORCES	*Age 17 to 23*

GOOD PAY. ALL FOUND.
EXCELLENT CHANCES FOR PROMOTION.

Apply by letter to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N. and R.M.: 5, Suffolk Street, Birmingham; 121, Victoria Street, Bristol; 50, Canning Place, Liverpool; 55, Whitehall, London, S.W.1; 289, Deansgate, Manchester; 116, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or 6, Washington Terrace, Queen's Park, Southampton.

HAVE YOU A RED NOSE?

Send a stamp to pay postage, and you will learn how to rid yourself of such a terrible affliction free of charge. Enclose stamp. *Address in confidence:* T. J. TEMPLE, Specialist, "Palace House," 129, Shaftesbury Avenue, LONDON, W.1.

MAKE YOUR OWN ELECTRIC LIGHT 5/6

These wonderful Dynamos light brilliantly 4-6v. lamps and are very easy to work. De Luxe model 5/6, post 6d. Delivery by return of post.
GREENS (Dept. U.J.), 14, New Oxford St., London, W.C.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

TRICKS AND JOKES.—Boxes of each, 1/6, 3/-. Book of Magic or Card Tricks, 6d. each.—J. McBRIDE, 45, Lorton Street, BELFAST.

55 STAMPS FREE, including NYASALAND, GEORGIA, DAHOMEY, ARGENTINE, and 200 STAMP HINGES. Send 3d. for Approvals. (Abroad 4½d.).—BROOKS, Hillside, Hilbury Road, Whyteleafe, Surrey.

When Answering Advertisements Please Mention This Paper.