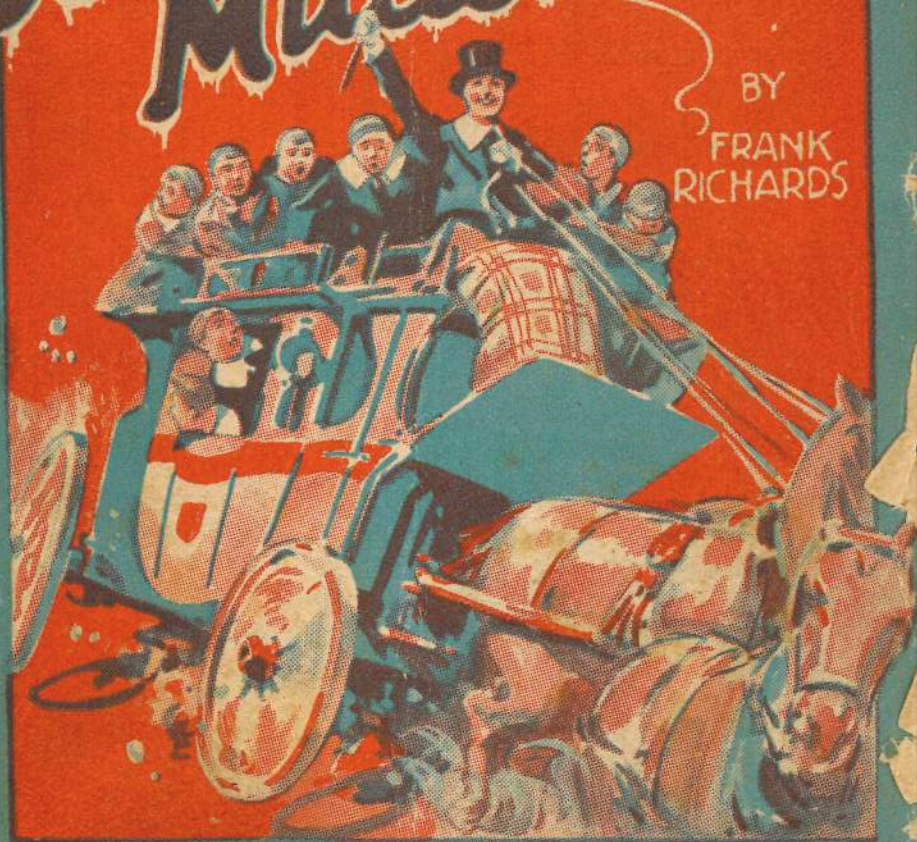


The
SCHOOLBOYS'
Schoolboy Millionaire!

BY
FRANK
RICHARDS



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the Chums of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

CHAPTER 1.

His Lordship!

"PORTER!"

"Yessir."

"Where's my carriage?"

"Eh, sir? Which?"

"My carriage, porter! I ordered my carriage to be here to take me to Greyfriars School."

"My only hat!" said Bob Cherry.

Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars School, were standing just inside the station entrance at Friardale. Bob Cherry was inserting pennies into a slot machine and extracting chocolates, and Harry Wharton was looking out into the old High Street of Friardale. The chums of the Remove were waiting for some other Greyfriars fellows who had come down to the village that afternoon.

A somewhat high-pitched, but not unpleasant voice became audible from the direction of the platform, and the mention of Greyfriars made the two juniors look round at once. It immediately struck them that the speaker was a new boy for Greyfriars.

A somewhat slim and handsome youth in Etons, with a very shiny silk hat, came towards them, with an obsequious porter in

close attendance. The newcomer carried his head very high in the air, and seemed scarcely to regard the ground as he walked along; and Bob Cherry murmured to Harry Wharton that he thought it must be quite a long time since the chap had seen his own feet. To which remark Harry Wharton replied by a chuckle.

The youth carried a cane with a gold head, and he wore a gold chain, which probably had a gold watch at the end of it. His sleeve-links glittered with diamonds, and he had a diamond pin that was worth at least fifty pounds. He had pale blue eyes and light eyelashes, which gave him a peculiarly languid and bored-to-death expression. The high pitch of his voice, too, indicated that he considered it a troublesome effort to have to speak at all.

"Porter!"

He did not notice the Greyfriars fellows at first. He gave a glance out of the door of the station, and then fixed his tired eyes on the porter.

"Porter! Where's that porter? Where on earth can that exasperating porter have disappeared to? Porter! Porter!"

"'Ere I am, sir," said the porter, who was at the newcomer's elbow all the time.

"'Ere I am!"

"Oh, good! Quite so, porter. Where is my carriage?"

The Friardale porter scratched his head in a puzzled way. He had seen all sorts and conditions arrive for Greyfriars, but he had never seen one quite like this. The new arrival was something quite new in his experience.

"The carriage, sir!" he repeated.

"Yes; where is it? What!"

"The keb is here, sir!"

And the Friardale porter sleepily indicated the ancient hack outside the station, the vehicle which Harry Wharton & Co. intended to take to Greyfriars. The youth in Etons gave one glance at the hack, and sniffed.

"Do you really think I could ride in that thing?" he asked. "Oh, dear! If my carriage is not here, I am really at a loss! Whatever shall I do, porter?"

"I dunno, sir," said the Friardale porter. "S'pose you walk, sir?" he added, as if struck by a brilliant idea.

The youth seemed to gasp at the idea. His glance fell upon the two Greyfriars juniors, who were watching him with quiet grins, and he came over towards them, raising his silk hat in a really graceful way.

"Excuse me," he said, with a bow. "May I ask if you belong to Greyfriars College?"

Bob Cherry bowed in return with great solemnity.

"Certainly you may," he replied. "Ask away."

"Well?"

"Well!"

"Ahem! I don't think you quite understand me! I asked you if you belonged to Greyfriars College!"

"No, you didn't," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "You asked if you might ask, and I said that you could."

Harry Wharton laughed. The stranger was looking very puzzled, not quite comprehending Bob Cherry's little picaresque.

"We do belong to Greyfriars," said Harry. "You are for the school, I suppose?"

"Yes, certainly. I am going there. I am in a predicament—a really terrible predicament. Perhaps you could help me."

"Certainly!" said Harry.

"I ordered my carriage to be here to

meet this train," exclaimed the other. "It was to be sent here, you see. I foresaw that there would be some such wretched vehicle as that to convey passengers from the station to the school, and I ordered a coach and four to be sent here for me."

Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton looked at him. They could not believe that he was speaking seriously, yet his manner was perfectly earnest. But a junior schoolboy who ordered a coach and four to be sent to convey him a quarter of an hour's walk, from a railway-station to a school, was something quite new.

"Coach and four?" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes."

"Curious; we're in the same fix," said Bob Cherry, with great seriousness. "Only we're waiting here for a coach and twelve! Coaches and four are considered a little out of date in the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars, you know—a chap who drove less than twelve horses would hardly be spoken to."

"Dear me! Amazin'!"

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh. Bob Cherry chuckled himself. The newcomer looked at them both in a puzzled way, apparently not able at all to make them out.

"You haven't seen my carriage?" he asked.

Wharton shook his head.

"No," said Bob Cherry. "But perhaps we might know it if you described it. Was it a pink one with yellow spots and crimson bars?"

"Dear me! Certainly not."

"Then I haven't seen it," declared Bob Cherry, with a shake of the head.

"Shut up, Bob!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Look here, my friend," he went on, addressing the new boy, "don't pile it on too thick."

"Eh?"

"Draw it mild!"

"I do not quite grasp your meanin'. Pray excuse me."

"Well, draw a line with your coaches and fours," explained Wharton. "We are more than six years old, you know; we don't believe in fairy tales."

"Dear me! I do not quite understand you! I am waiting for my carriage! This is very distressing. It is impossible to walk. How am I to reach Greyfriars?"

"We might join hands and carry you," suggested Bob Cherry. "I think I can see myself doing it, too."

"Oh, no, I couldn't trouble you in that way," said the other with perfect seriousness. "It is very, very kind of you, but I really couldn't—excepting as a last resource, at all events."

They stared at him. Bob Cherry tapped his forehead significantly.

"Mad!" he murmured. "Fairly off his rocker!"

There was a rumble of wheels and a clatter of hoofs in the street. The newcomer turned quickly to the station-door, looked out, and uttered an exclamation of satisfaction.

"Very good! Here's my carriage!"

There was a voice outside the station.

"Lord Mauleverer's carriage! Yes, my lord! Here, my lord!"

Bob Cherry looked dazedly at Wharton.

"Then it's true!" he murmured. "He's got a coach, and he isn't mad."

"My hat!"

The two juniors followed his lordship into the street. They were too astounded to speak further. There was no doubt about it—the coach, with four splendid horses pawing the ground, stood there—waiting, and a liveried coachman was bowing most respectfully before the youth in Etons.

CHAPTER 2.

Something New in New Boys!

LORD MAULEVERER drew out a gold watch, of which the case sparkled and glittered with diamonds. He glanced at it, and then cast a severe glance at the coachman.

"Peters!"

"Yes, my lord."

"You are two minutes and a half late."

"I'm sorry, my lord."

"Yes, Peters, I have no doubt that you are sorry, for it is a very serious matter. I have been kept waiting two and a half minutes, and was thrown into a great state of alarm. I feared that something might have gone wrong with the arrangements, and that I might have had to walk to Greyfriars."

"Oh, my lord—"

"I will excuse you, Peters, but you must

never allow anything of this sort to happen again."

"No, my lord."

"Where have you been, Peters?"

"I baited the horses at the Railway Arms, my lord."

"And himself, too," murmured Bob Cherry.

"Very well, Peters, we will say no more about it," said Lord Mauleverer, with a wave of his gloved hand. "I will overlook it this time, but you must be more careful in the future—much more careful."

"Yes, my lord."

"Oh, my lord!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Never knew there were so many blessed lords outside the House of Lords. I say, Harry, this will be an acquisition for Greyfriars. I wonder what Form the image is going into?"

"Ask him."

"By Jove, so I will!"

Bob Cherry walked across the pavement to Lord Mauleverer.

"I think you said you were going to Greyfriars?" he remarked.

"Yes, certainly. What?"

"What Form are you going into?"

"The Lower Fourth, I understand," said Lord Mauleverer politely. "I think it is called something else at Greyfriars, but I don't remember."

"The Remove?"

"Yes, quite so—that's it!"

"My hat! We belong to the Remove, you see," Bob Cherry explained.

"Indeed! Then I am very pleased to meet you," said his lordship, holding out his hand. "My name's Mauleverer."

Bob was a little taken aback. He had expected plenty of swank from Lord Mauleverer, and the frank manner surprised him. But he grasped the hand, giving it a big grip, and leaving some very visible marks upon the lavender-kid glove.

"My name's Cherry," he said—"Bob Cherry! This chap is Harry Wharton!"

"Glad to meet you," said Lord Mauleverer. "Perhaps I can give you a lift to Greyfriars?"

Wharton and Bob Cherry exchanged glances. The softly-cushioned and shady interior of his lordship's coach appealed very much to the tired juniors.

"You're awfully good," said Wharton.

"But we're waiting for some fellows here."

"I can take them, too."

"There are four of them. Would you have room?"

"Oh, you could cram in, you know, if you don't mind," said Lord Mauleverer. "I am going outside, so it would only be six of you."

"It's jolly good of you," said Bob Cherry. "Here come the chaps. Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Four juniors of the Greyfriars Remove were coming down the street. They were Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, Mark Linley, and Fisher T. Fish, the American. They stopped and stared at the elegant coach and the four handsome horses in blank astonishment.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Pray allow me to present Johnny Bull, Fishy Fish, Franky Nugent, and Marky," he said. "Lord Mauleverer! Know one another?"

"My hat!"

"Pray accept a lift in my carriage to Greyfriars," said Lord Mauleverer. "I shall be most honoured. Peters, open the door."

"Yes, my lord."

The man stood with immovable face while the juniors, tired from an afternoon's roaming in the woods and by the seashore, piled on to the coach.

"Quite comfy?" asked Lord Mauleverer, looking round at the juniors.

"Quite, thanks," said Harry Wharton.

"But you—"

"Oh, I'm going to drive!"

"What!"

"I'm going to drive!" explained his lordship.

"H'm!"

"Ahem!"

"Oh!"

His lordship did not seem to observe the dubious exclamations. He mounted to the coachman's seat and took the reins and the whip. The juniors on the coach looked at one another very doubtfully. Lord Mauleverer was certainly a very polite and good-natured fellow, but he did not strike them at all as being the kind of fellow to manage four horses.

His lordship looked down from his seat.

"Peters!"

"Yes, my lord?"

"You will get to Greyfriars somehow to take charge of the carriage after I have driven there."

"Yes, my lord."

Bob Cherry turned his head to look at Lord Mauleverer.

"I say, Mauleverer!" he exclaimed.

"Hold on!"

"What! What!"

"We're not tired of life," Bob Cherry explained. "We've got to play a footer match with Highcliff and do several other things before we kick the bucket. The road to Greyfriars is jolly hilly. Would you mind letting the coachman drive?"

Lord Mauleverer laughed.

"My dear chap, I am a safe driver, ain't I, Peters?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You've seen me drive six-in-hand, haven't you, Peters?"

"Yes, my lord."

"There, you hear what Peters says, my young friend?" said his lordship.

Bob Cherry snorted.

"Well, I believe the man's got to the end of his vocabulary, and can't say anything else if he wanted to!" he replied. "As for being your young friend, I'm as old as you are!"

Crack!

The horses started.

"My hat! Hold on! I say——"

But the coach-and-four were going! Bob Cherry made a comical grimace at his companions.

"It's neck or nothing now," he remarked.

"We're in for it! I only hope he won't break all our necks!"

"My only hat! I hope not!"

Wharton called out.

"Mauleverer!" he exclaimed, "you've forgotten your box!"

The new junior laughed.

"My boxes are coming on," he replied.

"I never travel with luggage. Peters, you will tip the porter. Give him a quid."

"Yes, my lord."

"A quid!" gasped Johnny Bull. "My hat!"

Then the juniors were silent. The new boy surprised them more and more; but the carriage was now gathering such speed that the chief question that interested them was whether they would arrive at Greyfriars with broken bones or not.

CHAPTER 3.

Lord Mauleverer Arrives in Style!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. had cause for alarm. Lord Mauleverer, when he was on the ground, had seemed the quietest of fellows, and almost too tired to live. But on the driver's box he was a different person altogether. Jehu of old, who was known for his furious driving, would have looked upon Lord Mauleverer as a promising disciple if he had seen him handling the ribbons.

The coach-and-four dashed down the old High Street of Friardale. The street was old and crooked and bumpy, and not at all the place for such a race. But Lord Mauleverer, sitting bolt upright, reins in hand, did not seem to think of that at all. He was thinking only of getting as much speed out of the horses as possible.

The team dashed down the old street in fine style.

P.-c. Tozer jumped into the road as he saw the coach coming, his fat face purple with indignation.

He waved a fat hand in menace.

"Stop!" he shouted.

Lord Mauleverer did not even look at him. He drove right on, and Mr. Tozer jumped back to the path faster than he had left it.

"My heye!" gasped Mr. Tozer.

The next moment the coach-and-four had flashed past him.

Harry Wharton & Co., sat holding on. The vehicle bumped from side to side, and the horses' hoofs struck sparks from the stones in the road.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"This is ripping!"

"I guess it's a giddy circus," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Well, a chap can only die once," said Mark Linley, laughing. "That's one comfort."

Bump, bump!

Shouts rose on all sides as the team dashed on.

Such a sight was seldom, or, rather, never seen in the village of Friardale, and the villagers clustered to doors and windows at the clatter of the hoofs. Boys shouted and waved their hands and caps, chickens and dogs flew out of the way with loud protests.

The wheel caught into a barrow, and

hurled it flying, depositing its contents in the gutter, and the merchant to whom that barrow belonged stood in the middle of the street and looked after the flying coach and said things.

The juniors were soon enthusiastic. It was clear by this time that Lord Mauleverer could drive.

He was about as reckless as a driver could possibly be, but he knew how to handle his team, and he handled them wonderfully. He seemed to have a wrist of iron.

"Splendid!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Go it!"

"Pile it on, Mauly!"

"Put on the speed!"

"Hurrah!"

Crash! Crash!

A baker's cart went staggering, and crashed upon the pavement. There was a roar from the baker as his loaves were distributed in the road.

"Hurrah!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

They were out of the village by now, and careering along the country road in the direction of Greyfriars. The horses were still gathering speed, and the pace by this time had become terrific.

"I guess this beats the deck!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Hurrah!"

"Go it, Mauleverer!"

His lordship did not need bidding to "go it." He "went" it.

Clatter, clatter, clatter! Bump, bump!

A wagon came lumbering round a bend in the lane. There was a yell of warning from the juniors. It seemed that a collision was inevitable. But Lord Mauleverer handled his team in the most masterly way. They swept by the wagon with about an inch to spare, and the off wheels slid over into the ditch by the side of the road. The juniors caught their breath, but the danger was over as soon as it had arisen. The impetus of the coach carried it on, and dragged it safely to the road again, and it tore on unharmed.

"M-m-my word!" muttered Nugent.

"My word! What an escape!"

"Hurrah!"

"Pile it on, Mauly!"

Clatter, clatter—bump!

A grey tower rose into view over the trees. Down the road the grey old stone gateway of Greyfriars was visible.

Wharton shouted to the youthful Jehu:

"Hold on! That's Greyfriars!"

"What! What!"

"That's Greyfriars!"

"Oh, good!"

"Slacken down!" yelled Johnny Bull. "You can't prance up to Greyfriars in that style! Back-pedal, you ass!"

Lord Mauleverer did not reply. The whip cracked, and the team leaped forward at a greater speed than ever. The juniors looked at one another in consternation. It was clear that Lord Mauleverer meant to take them right up to Greyfriars at a gallop. What the Head would say to juniors arriving at the school in that manner they could not guess.

Clatter, clatter! Thump! Bump!

Right up to the gates of Greyfriars and in at the broad drive the team went at the gallop, and Gosling, the school porter, jumped back and staggered into the doorway of his lodge in amazement.

"The mad young ass!" gasped Bob Cherry. "He means to take us right up to the house like this. My hat! Here's the Head!"

The coach-and-four careering up the drive had drawn attention from all Greyfriars. There were crowds of fellows, seniors and juniors, in the Close, coming in from the playing-fields. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was chatting with Mr. Prout, of the Fifth, under the elms, and the Head was visible in the doorway of the School House. He was staring blankly at the oncoming team.

Shouts rose on all sides:

"Who is it?"

"What's the game?"

"There'll be an accident!"

"Ten to one they'll come a mucker!"

"Ten thousand to one, I think!" gasped Bob Cherry, clinging to the side of the coach. "Who'd have thought that sleepy young ass would wake up like this? My hat!"

Clatter, clatter, clatter!

With wonderful skill, Lord Mauleverer brought the team to a halt just outside the School House, and the horses, snorting and foaming, stood covered with sweat.

His lordship jumped lightly down, and raised his silk hat to Dr. Locke.

The animation had died out of his face, and he was the calm, placid fellow again when the juniors had met at the station.

His bow to the Head was a model for a Chesterfield.

"Dr. Locke, I presume," he said gracefully. "Pray allow me to introduce myself. My name is Mauleverer—Lord Mauleverer!"

CHAPTER 4.

Bolslover Backs Down!

DR. LOCKE gasped.

"Lord Mauleverer!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir."

"What—what do you mean by arriving at Greyfriars in this fashion, Mauleverer?"

His lordship looked surprised.

"Anything wrong, sir?"

"Wrong!" exclaimed the Head warmly. "Do you think that is a proper style for a junior schoolboy to arrive—dashing up to the house in a coach-and-four? What do you mean by it, sir?"

"Sorry, sir, it's only my way," said Lord Mauleverer. "I'm sure I didn't mean to do anythin' to displease you, sir. It's only my way."

"Then you will kindly discontinue ways of this sort while you are at Greyfriars," said the Head. "How does this coach come here at all?"

"I—I drove it, sir."

"Yes, yes! I mean, how did it come at Friardale? I am sure such a turn-out could not be hired in the village!"

"I had it sent on to meet me at the station, sir."

The doctor could hardly believe his ears. He stared hard at the new junior.

"You had it sent on!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir, to meet me at the station."

"Is it possible that you have so much money to waste, Lord Mauleverer?"

"Oh, it didn't cost much, sir!" said Lord Mauleverer negligently. "Not more than twenty pounds altogether, probably. Peters knows."

"Dear me! And what is to become of it now?"

"Peters will take it away."

"Dear me! Then you had better ask Gosling to take charge of it until Peters arrives. You are a most extraordinary boy!"

"Yes, sir."

The Head re-entered the house. Gosling

had followed the turn-out up to the house in great amazement. Harry Wharton & Co. had dismounted from the coach. The Greyfriars fellows were thronging round.

Lord Mauleverer seemed to be unconscious of having caused any undue excitement. He looked round in a languid way, and nodded to Gosling.

"Are you the porter here?" he asked.

"Which I ham!" said Gosling. "And wot I says is this 'ere—these 'ere goings hon is dangerous, I says."

"Take charge of my horses till the coachman arrives."

Gosling nearly collapsed. He had never received an order like that from a junior schoolboy before.

"Which?" he gasped.

"You heard what I said. Take charge of the coach-and-four, and deliver them to my man Peters when he comes," said Lord Mauleverer crisply. "Take this for your trouble."

He thrust something that crisped and rustled into the school porter's hand. Gosling stared at it, and stared again, hardly able to credit his eyes. It was a banknote for five pounds.

"My—my—my heye!" gasped Gosling.

Lord Mauleverer turned away. Evidently he saw nothing unusual himself in his action. Gosling gasped and gasped. But he did not let go the banknote. After satisfying himself that it was a good one, he stowed it away into his pocket. Then he led the horses away, still in a state of great astonishment.

"My hat!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"What sort of a fish have we caught this time? I've never seen a chap of fifteen handing out fivers like that before."

"I guess not! He must be rolling in quids," said Fisher T. Fish. "I suppose he's really a lord?"

"Oh, that's right enough!"

"I guess I like him," said Fisher T. Fish. "Something very nice about him. Don't you think so?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Yes, to an American—his title," he remarked.

"I guess I'm going to improve his acquaintance," said Fisher T. Fish. "It will sound well in letters to home, and make them sit up in New York—some!"

Fisher T. Fish was not the only fellow who wanted to improve the acquaintance

of the new boy. A fellow who could hand out in a tip to a porter as much money as made a whole term's pocket-money to many of the juniors was evidently a fellow whose acquaintance was worthy of cultivating.

Quite a crowd of fellows gathered round Lord Mauleverer, asking him questions in a manner far more civil and obliging than was customary with a new boy. After all, as Skinner remarked, a lord was a lord, and cash was cash—two propositions that were quite incontrovertible.

"So you are Lord Mauleverer?" said Bulstrode.

The new boy nodded.

"Yes. Quite so—what!"

"Hope you had a good journey down," said Skinner.

"Thank you, excellent."

"What Form are you coming into?"

"I hope you'll be in my study."

"There's room for Lord Mauleverer in mine."

"Are you in the Remove, my lord?" asked Snoop.

"Yes."

"Hurrah!"

His lordship beamed upon the Removites. He was evidently pleased at the welcome extended to him by his Form-fellows.

"Thank you very much!" he exclaimed. "You are very nice indeed! I am sure I shall like Greyfriars."

"I'm sure Greyfriars will like you!" said Skinner unblushingly. "Is your lordship hungry? It would be a pleasure to stand your lordship a feed."

"Oh, he's coming to feed in my study," said Ogilvy. "There's room in my study for a new chap, and I'm going to ask Quelchy to put Mauleverer in."

"I guess he's coming into mine."

"Here, clear off, all of you!" said a loud and bullying voice. "Lord Mauleverer is going to my study. This way, Mauleverer."

It was Bolsover of the Remove. Bolsover was the bully of the Form. He was old enough and big enough to be in the Fifth, and he took the most unscrupulous advantage of his size and strength.

Bolsover dropped his hand familiarly upon Mauleverer's shoulder. He did not trouble to be civil to anybody very often, but he meant to be quite polite to his lordship. Unfortunately, his variety of

politeness was not appreciated by Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship glanced at the large hand on his shoulder, and then glanced at the big, heavy face of Bolsover.

"Come on, kid," said Bolsover; "I'll show you the way."

"Where?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"To my study."

"But I'm not going to be in your study. I don't know you."

"My name's Bolsover."

"Thank you! Please take your hand off my shoulder."

"What?" roared Bolsover.

"Take your hand off my shoulder, please."

Bolsover stared at the new boy. He found some difficulty in believing his ears. Surely he, Bolsover, the bully of the Remove, was not really spoken to in this cool, nonchalant way by a new boy whom he could have knocked into a cocked hat with one hand!

"What?" he gasped at last. "What did you say?"

"Kindly remove your hand from my shoulder."

There was a chuckle from the juniors. There was not a fellow in the Remove who was not pleased to see Bolsover taken down. The bully cast a fierce glance round at the Removites and then fixed his eyes with a deadly look upon Lord Mauleverer.

"So you don't want to come into my study?" he asked.

"Thank you, no!"

"Why not?"

"I don't quite like your looks, Bolsover, and your manners don't please me, either."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

Bolsover was almost purple with rage. He took his hand from the new boy's shoulder, and pushed back his cuffs.

"I'll give you such a licking that your mother wouldn't know you if she saw you within a week or two!" he cried. "You swanking cad—"

Harry Wharton interposed.

"Hold on, Bolsover!"

The Remove bully looked at him furiously.

"Are you going to interfere here?" he shouted.

"Yes," said Wharton determinedly.

"You're not going to pile on a new kid

who's not much more than half your size. Chuck it!"

"I'm going to lick him!"

"You're not!"

"Who's going to stop me?"

"Well I think there are enough of us here to stop you," said Harry Wharton scornfully. "If you lay a finger on Lord Mauleverer you'll get bumped—hard!"

"Yes, rather!" said Bulstrode. "And I'll lend a hand in doing it."

And there was a shout from all the Removites. No one wanted Lord Mauleverer to be licked. His kindness and good-nature moved Harry Wharton & Co. in his favour, and his evident wealth was not without its effect upon the rest. Bolsover gritted his teeth, but he saw that it would not do. Six or seven juniors were already preparing to collar him. It was evident that he would not be allowed to lay sacrilegious hands upon the Greyfriars millionaire.

He stepped back, his face dark with rage.

"Thank you very much, Wharton!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I have a great objection to being licked, and I could not possibly fight that great beast."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lord Mauleverer!" It was Mr. Quelch's voice. "Kindly follow me to my study."

And the new boy followed the master of the Remove.

CHAPTER 5.

In Great Request!

MR. QUELCH looked scrutinisingly at the new boy as Lord Mauleverer stood before him. His lordship stood in an easy attitude, evidently not in the least afraid of the Form-master, and yet at the same time not in the least assuming. He was something new in the experience of the Remove-master, and Mr. Quelch was naturally interested in him.

"You seem to have some manners and customs very unusual in a junior, Lord Mauleverer," said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir. It's only my way, sir."

"You must try to be more like the others while you are at Greyfriars. You seem to me to have far too much money."

"Oh, no, sir!"

"What allowance does your father make you?"

"I have no father, sir."
 "Oh! I am sorry! Your guardians, then?"

"I'm allowed as much as I like, sir."
 "What?"

"It was in the will, sir. My guardians have to give me all the money I want, sir," said Lord Mauleverer. "There's plenty of it. When the coal was discovered on the Mauleverer estate it made us quite rich. Our family used to have only about fifty or sixty thousand a year—"

"Only!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Now we have about half a million a year, and most of that is accumulating during my minority," Lord Mauleverer explained, "so I can afford to have a good allowance, sir. I mention it to show you that I can afford it, sir, not to swank. I am sure you will not form a wrong opinion of me."

"At the same time, it is necessary to be careful with one's money," said Mr. Quelch; "though, under the circumstances, I suppose you can afford to spend very freely. But you should never waste money."

"Oh, I never do, sir!"

"I saw you give the porter five pounds as a tip."

"Well, sir, he's a poor man, and it will be useful to him."

"Ahem! And the expense of bringing a coach-and-four down to meet you at the station here—"

"All good for trade, sir."

"Ahem! I understand that you are going into my Form, Lord Mauleverer," said the master of the Remove. "Dr. Locke has also mentioned to me that you are to have a study to yourself in the Remove passage."

"Yes, sir. My Uncle Harry told me he would arrange it for me if he could. He is my guardian. You see, sir I have artistic tastes, and I want to furnish my quarters to suit myself."

"Ahem! You will have the new study, No. 15, that has been added at the end of the Remove passage," said Mr. Quelch. "You may have your things taken into it, and your box into the Remove dormitory. I have some work to do now, and so you may go. I shall see you again later. No. 15 is your study."

"Thank you, sir!"

Lord Mauleverer quitted the Form-

master's study. Mr. Quelch shook his head very dubiously. He was evidently a little doubtful as to Lord Mauleverer's future at Greyfriars. However, he dismissed the matter from his mind, and taking up his pen began to write.

Tap!

"Come in!" said Mr. Quelch.

Ogilvy, of the Remove, entered. Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes upon him across his table.

The junior stopped, hesitated, and blushed.

"Well, Ogilvy," said Mr. Quelch, "what is it?"

"If you please, sir—"

"You have something to ask of me, Ogilvy? Is that it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then kindly come to the point at once, Ogilvy," said Mr. Quelch. "My time is of value, and I have a great deal to do."

"H'm, sir! It is about the new boy, sir," stammered Ogilvy.

"Indeed! Lord Mauleverer?"

"Yes, sir. He's a nice chap, sir, and I—I've taken a great fancy to him, sir, and—and I should like him in my study, sir."

"Very good! I am glad Lord Mauleverer has made such an excellent impression upon you, Ogilvy," said Mr. Quelch, with a note of sarcasm in his voice. "But his study is already decided upon. Close the door after you."

Ogilvy closed the door after him. Five minutes later there was another tap on the door, and in response to Mr. Quelch's somewhat tart invitation to enter, Skinner came in.

Skinner was not blushing; Skinner seldom blushed, though he had plenty to blush for if he had troubled to call it to mind.

"If you please, sir—" he began.

"Well, Skinner, what is it?"

"There's a new boy just come, sir—"

"Lord Mauleverer! Yes?"

"He's a nice chap, sir, and he looks rather as if he wants somebody to look after him a bit—very quiet and mild, sir. I was thinking you might put him into my study, and I could look after him, sir," said Skinner.

"That is very kind of you, Skinner."

"Yes, sir. I want to be kind to the new

kid. He doesn't seem really to be quite up to a school like this, and I want to protect him, sir."

"Ahem! Lord Mauleverer's study is already arranged. You may go, Skinner."

"If you please, sir—"

"Close the door after you."

Skinner departed. He stopped in the passage to grit his teeth. He knew perfectly well that the Remove-master had seen right through him.

Mr. Quelch took up his pen again. But he was not suffered to work for very long in peace. There was a tap at the door again, and Mr. Quelch rapped out the words "Come in!" as if they were two bullets that he was discharging at an invader.

It was Hazeldene, of the Remove, this time. Hazeldene was more hesitating than Skinner had been. The clear, steady gaze of the Form-master seemed to disconcert him.

"Well, Hazeldene, what is it?" asked Mr. Quelch, although he hardly needed to ask the question. He knew very well what it was before Hazeldene opened his mouth to speak.

"I want to ask a favour, sir."

"You may ask it."

"There is a new chap here to-day."

"Lord Mauleverer—yes."

"I should like him to come into my study, sir, if possible. He's such a—nice chap. that I've taken a fancy to him, sir, and I want to look after him a bit."

Mr. Quelch smiled grimly.

"Lord Mauleverer is indeed fortunate in the impression he has succeeded in making upon the Remove," he said. "You are not the first who has wanted to have Lord Mauleverer placed in his study, Hazeldene, and I dare say you will not be the last. Lord Mauleverer's quarters are already fixed. You may go."

And Hazeldene went. Mr. Quelch, breathing rather hard through his nose, took up his pen again. The pen scratched on the paper, and the Remove-master, immersed in his work, forgot Lord Mauleverer and the juniors who were so anxious to look after him, and take him to their hearts, so to speak. But before ten minutes had elapsed, the inevitable tap came at the door again.

Mr. Quelch snorted this time. He fixed a glare upon the door as he rapped out

"Come in!" which would certainly have scared the junior who entered if he had been able to see it. But he wasn't; for the newcomer was Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, so called on account of his short sight and the big spectacles he wore, which gave his fat face a peculiarly owl-like expression. Bunter blinked at the Form-master with an ingratiating smile, all unconscious of the thunder upon Mr. Quelch's brow.

"If you please, sir—" began Bunter.

"Bunter! You want Lord Mauleverer in your study, I suppose? Is that it?"

"Yes, sir," said Bunter. "I don't know how you guessed, sir. You see, sir, I have a study to myself. It's a small one, but there's plenty of room for two, and I wouldn't mind crowding a bit for the sake of a fellow I like. I'm on very chummy terms with Lord Mauleverer, sir, and he would be as pleased as myself, sir, if you put him in the study with me. In fact, he told me, almost with tears in his eyes, how much he would like it, sir. If you would put him in my study, sir, I—"

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir?"

"I do not believe you have told me the truth."

"Oh, sir?"

"In any case, Lord Mauleverer's study is arranged. Bunter, take this pen, and this sheet of paper, and write as I dictate."

"Ye-es, sir," said Bunter, in amazement.

"But sir—"

"Silence! Write!"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Lord Mauleverer will occupy Study No. 15 in the Remove passage," dictated Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, sir!"

"Give me the pen."

Bunter handed Mr. Quelch the pen, and the Form-master signed the paper. Then he blotted it, and handed it to Bunter. The fat junior took it, and blinked at it.

"You will pin that paper up on the notice-board in the hall, and draw the attention of the rest of the Remove to it," said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, really, sir—"

"You may go, Bunter."

"But, sir—"

Mr. Quelch laid his hand upon a ruler, and Billy Bunter left his study in a great

hurry, and a few minutes later the notice was pinned up on the board. There were no more visitors to Mr. Quelch's study that afternoon.

CHAPTER 6.

A Little Luggage!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Great Scott!"

"Only look!"

and the juniors looked. Four vehicles were laden with trunks, boxes, packages, and cases.

"What on earth is it!" Harry Wharton exclaimed. "There can't be a dozen new fellows coming all at once, surely, at this time of the term!"

"Ha, ha, La!" roared Bob Cherry suddenly.

"What is it, Bob?"

"Ha, ha, ha! It's the property of our friend Mauly."

"Mauleverer?"

"Yes, rather! These are his goods and chattels."

"Phew!"

"My word!"

"Mauleverer! Where's Mauleverer? Mauly! Mauly!"

Lord Mauleverer's name had already been cut down to Mauly by most of the juniors. Bob Cherry had promised to call him Mauleverer on Sundays, but suggested that Mauly was good enough for week days. He came to the call, and looked out of the doorway at the approaching cargo with a nod of approval.

"What? What? Yes, they're my traps."

"You don't mean to say that all those things belong to you?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Yes, indeed. I had to have my personal belongings with me, you know."

"But—but—but—"

"I've brought on a few things, too."

"Only a few! My hat!"

The vehicles halted, and began to unload. There were six men in charge of the consignment, and there were lurking smiles upon their faces. A fat man in livery came up the steps and saluted Lord Mauleverer with great respect.

"Bring them in, James," said his lordship.

"Yes, my lord."

And the boxes were brought in.

Man after man came staggering up the steps with boxes, or trunks, or gun-cases, or parcels of books, and a bicycle, and a motor-bike.

There was plenty of space inside the big entrance of Greyfriars, but the property of Lord Mauleverer made a very big demand upon it.

Boxes were piled on all sides.

The bumping of the boxes brought Mr. Quelch out of his study after a time. The last of the consignment had just been deposited in the hall, and the vehicles were wending away towards the gates again.

The Remove-master stared at the piles of luggage, and rubbed his eyes, and stared again. He thought for a moment that he was dreaming.

"What does this mean?" he exclaimed.

"How did all this luggage come here?"

"It's mine, if you please, sir," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Yours!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"Exactly, sir. Quite so."

"Yours! All this luggage is yours?"

"Yes, sir. I haven't brought very much, as I feared there might be some lack of accommodation in the school," said his lordship innocently.

Mr. Quelch gasped.

"Not much!" he exclaimed. "You do not call this much! Boy, there is enough here for a whole Form, I should think. You cannot possibly keep all this luggage at Greyfriars. It is impossible."

"Oh, dear!" said his lordship.

"Call—call Gosling, some of you, and tell him to pack all this away somewhere," said Mr. Quelch. "The hall cannot be humbered up in this way. This is most—most extraordinary."

And Mr. Quelch retreated into his study again, leaving Gosling to deal with the luggage. Gosling rubbed his chin as he surveyed the piles of boxes. The five-pound note had imbued Gosling with a great respect and admiration for his lordship, but those boxes seemed too big an order altogether.

"I s'pose they can be packed away in the box-rooms, sir," said Gosling—"I mean, my lord, of course. But wot I says is this 'ere, 'ow am I to get them hupstairs? I says, You want a Goliath on this 'ere job, my lord."

"Oh, we'll help!" said Boisover.

"Thank you kindly, Master Boisover."

said Gosling, looking suspiciously at the bully of the Remove. "I don't know as you can 'elp. Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Oh, come on, Gossy, start!" said Bolsover. "I'll lend you a hand with the biggest one, for a beginning."

"Wot I says is——"

"I'm sure it's very kind of you, Bolsover," said Lord Mauleverer. "I would help myself, but I always avoid exertion; it's my way. Pray, take the boxes up, Gosling."

Gosling snorted a little, and bent over one of the largest trunks. He succeeded in lifting it, with Bolsover's assistance, and the burly junior helped him carry it up the stairs. The juniors stood looking on and grinning. They had a feeling that something would happen to that box before it reached the top of the stairs; and they were right. Something did!

"'Ere, 'old on!" said Gosling, as he mounted the fourteenth or fifteenth stair. "You're pulling of the box, Master Bolsover!"

Bolsover chuckled.

"I'm helping you, Gossy."

"Ow! You ain't! You nearly made me fall that time."

"Stuff! Go on!"

"Look 'ere, you let go——"

"Hallo! It's going!" exclaimed Bolsover. "Look out, Gossy!"

He had given the big trunk a heavy shove, at the same time letting go. Gosling had to let go, too, to save himself from being hurled downstairs.

The box slid to the stairs.

Bump! Bump! Bump!

From stair to stair it crashed with a terrific din, rolling down, and rolling over the whole length of the staircase.

"My heye!" gasped Gosling.

"Look out!" roared Harry Wharton. "Clear the way!"

The juniors crowded back from the foot of the staircase.

Bump! Bump! Crash!

The trunk careered wildly down the stairs, crashed into the hall, and burst open. A sea of shirts and socks and other articles of apparel flooded the hall. There was a yell of laughter from the juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

The terrific crashing had alarmed the whole House. The Head himself came down

the passage from his study, and he stood looking at the scene in amazement.

"Extraordinary!" he exclaimed. "Dear me! What is it? What has happened?"

"It's only Mauleverer's luggage, sir," said Harry Wharton, choking back his merriment.

"Bless my soul! Is all that luggage Mauleverer's? Gosling, it is very careless of you to allow that box to fall."

"Ow! Master Bolsover was 'elping me, sir. Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Accidents will happen, sir," said Bolsover blandly. "The box was very heavy, sir, and Gosling couldn't quite manage it, though I did my best to help him."

"Amazing!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I do not see anything to laugh at in this accident," said the Head, with a puzzled look. "Silence! Boys, collect up all those things, please, at once. Gosling, you had better get the gardener to help you. This is most—most extraordinary."

The Head looked at Lord Mauleverer and was about to speak, but he checked himself. Perhaps he realised that it was useless.

He retired to his study; and for the next hour or two Gosling and the gardener were engaged in conveying Lord Mauleverer's luggage to the most accessible box-room and stacking it away there. Meanwhile, Lord Mauleverer was shown the way to the school tuckshop by some obliging juniors, who feared that he might be badly in need of refreshment after his journey down.

CHAPTER 7.

The Whole Hog!

"YOU'RE awfully kind, all of you!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I hope you will all join me in a little feed. Will you?"

Would they?

As one man the Remove marched with Lord Mauleverer into the school shop. The shop was not very large, but the juniors crammed themselves in with great skill. But even with the best of management there were many left outside. Billy Bunter, of course, succeeded in getting a front place. On an occasion like that the Owl of the Remove was not likely to be left out.

Mrs. Mimble came out of her little

parlour, with some alarm in her face, as the juniors crowded in; perhaps with some fear of a raid. There was a general shout to greet her.

"Buck up, Mrs. Mimbler!"

"Ladle it out!"

"Pray, allow me to introduce my friend Mauly," said Bob Cherry. "He's rolling in quids—most disgustingly wealthy—beats even Johnny Bull hollow! Most valuable person for you to know, Mrs. Mimbler."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I want to stand a little feed," said Lord Mauleverer. "Lemme see! Don't push, you fellows—I never could stand being pushed."

"Some of them can't get in," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"The grub can be passed out," said Billy Bunter. "Don't shove! It spoils a feed, to be shoved. Can I begin on the tarts, Mauly?"

"Yes, certainly! Quite so!"

"Go it, you fellows!"

"Hand out the jam-tarts, Mrs. Mimbler."

"Doughnuts for me—to begin."

"I'll have cake—"

"Pineapple here—"

"Chocolates, please—"

"Pile in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Please—please don't be in such a hurry!" gasped Mrs. Mimbler. "I shall never be able to keep an account. Deary me!"

"Oh, never mind that," drawled Lord Mauleverer. "Suppose I take the whole stock—that would be simpler."

"Eh?"

"I will take the whole stock, dear madam. What is the value of the whole stock—eatables and drinkables?"

Mrs. Mimbler smiled.

"It would be fifty pounds, young gentleman."

"Very good!"

Lord Mauleverer took out a handsome little Russia-leather pocket-book, opened it, and extracted a wad of banknotes. The juniors looked on breathlessly. There were wealthy fellows at Greyfriars. Johnny Bull of the Remove had once been in possession of a large sum of money, and had spent it right royally. Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was the son of a millionaire, and he made a great display of wealth. But certainly nobody at Greyfriars had ever seen

cash in quantities like this before. The juniors gazed almost in awe at the wad of banknotes.

"Fifty, I think you said, madam?" said his lordship.

"Yes!" gasped Mrs. Mimbler.

"You are quite sure that is sufficient?"

"Ye-es."

"Very well, then."

Lord Mauleverer counted out five notes for ten pounds each and laid them, crisper and rustling, on the counter. Mrs. Mimbler took them up with fingers that positively trembled.

"Now, kids," said his lordship, "pile in!"

And the kids piled in—with a vengeance.

Mrs. Mimbler's stock was raided, and it was handed out as fast as hands could hand it, the good dame herself lending every aid.

It was amazing to see how quickly shelves were bared, and jars and dishes emptied. Good things were passed out to the fellows outside the shop. The news of the stupendous feed soon spread, and fellows arrived from all quarters to lend a hand.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "This is something like! I say, Mauly, lend me a million pounds, will you? I'm expecting a postal-order to-morrow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—" began Bunter.

"Hand over the jam—the whole jar, please!"

"Tarts here! Tarts!"

"Jam-puffs!"

"Lemonade!"

"Ginger-beer!"

"Go it!"

"I guess you're a regular duck, Mauly!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I've seen some feeds over there, but I guess this prances off with the whole biscuit factory."

"Yes, rather!"

"Huray!"

Lord Mauleverer stood looking on with a quiet and cheerful smile. He ate very little himself, though Billy Bunter generously urged him not to spare the grub. Billy Bunter himself was doing wonders. Bunter could always be relied upon to play up on an occasion like this. And he played up manfully. The way Bunter travelled through the eatables was simply a marvel.

Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, looked in at the tuckshop door and stared.

"What's going on here?" he exclaimed.
 "Feeding," said Bob Cherry.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You're—you're not raiding the shop, are you, young sweeps?" asked the captain of the school, laughing.

"Ha, ha! No; it's Mauly's treat."
 "Mauly's!"
 "Lord Mauleverer's! This is Lord Mauleverer, of that ilk—our dearest friend!" said Frank Nugent. "We all love him like a brother."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "He has bought up the shop——"
 "Bought up the shop?" gasped Wingate.
 "Yes. Fifty quid!"
 "Fifty pounds?"
 "That's the figure—it's nothing to Mauly! He's rolling in quidlets," said Bob Cherry. "He exudes banknotes at every pore of the skin."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 Wingate walked away in a state of great astonishment. Two or three seniors pushed their way into the shop, elbowing the juniors out of the way.

Loder and Carne of the Sixth tapped Lord Mauleverer on the shoulder in the friendliest possible way. The two black sheep of Greyfriars were generally impetuous. They both had good allowances, but their little excursions to the Cross Keys and their little flutters on the races reduced them to a chronic state of hard-up. Dead certs, after the manner of dead certs, turned out to be certainties only for the book-makers, as a rule. Loder and Carne belonged to the Sixth, but they would have chummed up with a fag in the Second Form if he had had a pocket-book full of banknotes.

Lord Mauleverer smiled cheerfully at them.

"Will you have something?" he asked politely.

"Thanks, I will!" said Loder. "Ahem—ginger-beer."

"Same for me," said Carne. "So you're Lord Mauleverer?"

"Yes, that's my name."

"You're the chap who arrived in a coach-and-four?"

"Yes."

"Jolly glad to meet you!" said Loder. "What Form are you in?"

"The Remove."

"H'm! Rather rough on you to be stuck

among those kids!" said Loder. "But I've no doubt you'll make friends in the Upper Forms. Would you care to give me a look in this evening? I'm Loder of the Sixth."

"You're awfully kind. Everybody's awfully jolly to me!" said his lordship.

"Well, give me a look in when this celebration is over," said Loder. "Come on, Carne."

The two seniors left the tuckshop. They did not care very much for ginger-beer unless it had something stronger in it.

In the Close they paused to look at one another.

"My word!" said Loder. "What is this for a little bit of luck?"

"Gorgeous!" said Carne.

"That chap is Lord Mauleverer, a giddy nobleman in his own right, and the richest in England," said Loder. "I've heard about him. They were always rich, and when the coal was discovered on the Mauleverer estate they became millionaires. I've heard that this chap will have five hundred thousand a year when he comes of age."

"Great Scott!"

"Worth cultivating—hey?"

"Well, rather!" grinned Carne.

"We ought to look after him a bit," said Loder. "As I'm a prefect, I shall be able to do him lots of little favours. I dare say he would like to learn how to play nap—for quids—hey?"

"What-ho!"

And the black sheep of the Sixth walked away feeling very pleased with their new prospects.

CHAPTER 8.

Faithful Friends!

"MAULY!"

"Where's Mauly?"

"Mauleverer!"

"Yaas!" said his lordship, coming out of the tuckshop. "Yaas! What is it?"

"Something's come for you," said Temple of the Upper Fourth. "Big van with Liberty's name on it!"

"By gad, you know, that's the furniture!"

"The what?"

"The furniture!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "So you're having furniture sent down, are you, Mauly?"

"Quiet so. I have to furnish my own study," said Lord Mauleverer. "I gave Liberty's the order. They've undertaken it. I suppose I had better see the man."

Lord Mauleverer walked over towards the School House. A crowd followed at his heels. It seemed as if the Greyfriars fellows didn't want to lose sight of his lordship for a moment. Certainly no new boy had ever made such a sensation in the school before.

A great van had drawn up before the House. It was laden to the roof. A man with a pencil behind his ear touched his gold-braided cap to Lord Mauleverer.

"Shall we put the things in now, my lord?"

"Yaas, at once," said Lord Mauleverer. "Somebody show this gentleman where my study is. Is there a page or something here?"

"Oh, I'll do it!" said Skinner. "This way, sir."

The foreman was conducted to the study. Big boxes were unplied from the van. Carefully-packed furniture was carried in tenderly. Half Greyfriars stood staring at the astonishing sight. Lord Mauleverer certainly intended to "do himself down well," as Bob Cherry expressed it.

Silks and velvets and satins and costly rugs made the juniors gasp as they saw them carried in. Lord Mauleverer's furnishings seemed really more suitable for a Royal palace than for a junior study at a public school. Mr. Quelch looked out of his study once and then closed the door again. He did not say a word; he felt quite unequal to dealing with the Earl of Mauleverer.

"Aren't you going to keep an eye on them, Manly?" asked Bob Cherry, as the new junior strolled out into the Close with his hands in his trousers-pockets.

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"I leave it entirely to them," he replied. "I don't know anything about it; you know. Never interfere with a workman—that's my way, you know."

"Jolly expensive way, I should think."

"Not at all! They're doing the whole thing for two hundred and fifty pounds!"

"Eh?"

"My hat!"

Billy Bunter, who heard his lordship's remark, stood with his mouth wide open, as if he found it impossible to shut it. Two hundred and fifty pounds for furnishing a junior study was something quite new.

"Oh, I say!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows! I say, Lord Mauleverer. I—I—"

"Yaas?"

"I've got something rather important to say to you," said Bunter, sinking his voice. "If you wouldn't mind walking with me a few minutes—"

"Oh, certainly!"

"You see," Bunter explained, "I'm expecting a postal-order this evening—owing to some delay in the post, it hasn't come yet, and I'm being put to some inconvenience."

"That's hard cheese," said Lord Mauleverer sympathetically.

"Yes, isn't it? The postal-order is for a pound—I mean two pounds. Do you think you could manage to lend me the two pounds, and have the postal-order when it comes? It would really be cashing it in advance, that's all, you see."

"Oh, certainly!"

"I say, that's very decent of you!" gasped Bunter, wishing he had named a larger sum. "I—I say, now I come to think of it, the postal-order was to be for three pounds. It's from a titled friend of mine, you know."

"Very good!"

Lord Mauleverer took out his purse.

"I'll take it in a banknote, if you don't mind," said Bunter.

His lordship smiled.

"There are no banknotes for three pounds," he said.

"I—I said five pounds, didn't I?" gasped Bunter.

"No; you said three."

"I—I meant five. It was really a cheque I was expecting, not a postal-order. If you could make it five—"

"Certainly!"

Billy Bunter could scarcely believe his eyes as the new boy handed him a crisp five. The fat junior's little round eyes seemed to bulge out behind his big, round spectacles.

The banknote rustled in his fat fingers. But Bunter was feeling more regret than satisfaction. He could have kicked himself! It dawned upon him that he might have had ten just as easily as five.

"I—I say, Mauleverer!" he gasped. "I—I made a little mistake. It was really ten pounds, you know—I mean twenty. It was

twenty pounds that I was expecting tonight. Could you make it twenty?"

"You fat fraud!" said Harry Wharton, coming up in time. "You're not expecting twopence! How dare you try to rob Mauleverer in this way!"

"Begad!" said his lordship.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Cut off!"

"Look here, Wharton, you mind your own bizney. Lord Mauleverer can advance me twenty pounds on my postal-order—I mean my cheque, if he likes. I——"

Wharton raised his foot, and Bunter retreated.

"Beast!" he gasped. "I——"

Harry made a motion towards him, and he fled. Lord Mauleverer looked after him, and then looked at Harry Wharton.

"Was that a fiver you handed him?" asked Wharton.

"Yaas!"

"In advance upon a postal-order, I suppose?"

"Yaas!"

Wharton laughed.

"Well, the postal-order won't come, and you won't see the fiver again. That's an old game with Bunter."

"But he promised it this evening, dear boy."

"You'll get to know Bunter in time."

"Begad!" said his lordship, evidently astonished.

"Hallo, my lord," said Coker, of the Fifth, coming up with Potter and Blundell and Bland of the same Form. "Hallo! Glad to see you."

Lord Mauleverer looked at him.

"Thanks very much!" he said.

"We're in the Fifth," Coker explained. "I'm Coker. We want you to come to tea in our study."

"Thanks; I've had my tea, you know."

"Well, come and have a chat," said Coker. "Look here, it isn't every day that a fag in the Remove is asked into a Fifth-Form study, I can tell you."

"It's awfully kind of you!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Well, come on!"

"Everybody's awfully jolly to me."

"Oh, you're such a nice chap, you know. Come on," said Coker, passing his arm through Lord Mauleverer's.

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Ogilvy, of the Remove. "You're not going to collar our new chap. He's in the Remove!"

"Get away, you fag!"

"Rats! He belongs to us! Don't you, Mauly?"

"Oh, certainly!" said Lord Mauleverer, looking a little puzzled. "Quite so, begad!"

"He's coming to my study," said Coker.

"Rats! He isn't!"

"Get away!"

"Get away yourself!"

"Close round," said Coker to his friends.

"We're taking him in."

"You're jolly well not going to take him in," said Ogilvy.

"Let him alone!" roared Bulstrode.

"Let our new kid alone!"

"Hands off!"

"Mauly's staying with us!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Stick to him!"

Lord Mauleverer looked bewildered among the various claimants. Coker took him by one arm, and Potter by the other, to walk him off. His lordship was going, but the Removites did not mean to let him go. There was a rush, and Ogilvy fastened upon Coker, and Russell grasped Potter, and Skinner and Stott seized upon his lordship.

"Ow!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "Help! Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stick to him!"

Coker & Co. tried to rush the new junior off. Lord Mauleverer was swept off the ground, and carried bodily away in the midst of the Fifth-Formers. The Removites closed round in a crowd, and collared his lordship wherever they could. Skinner got hold of one ankle, and Frank Nugent of another, and Johnny Bull grasped him round the waist. But Coker had an arm, Potter another arm, and Blundell had his collar.

In the midst of the competitors, Lord Mauleverer struggled and gasped breathlessly.

"Ow—ow! Help! Let go! Begad! Oh!"

"Bring him along!" roared Coker.

"Yarook!"

"Stick to him!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"O—ow! Help! Yow! Yowp!"

The Removites were in greater numbers. The Fifth-Formers were rushed off their feet, and they rolled over on the ground, Lord Mauleverer rolling with them.

The Removites collared the gasping nobleman, and rushed him to the house. His

lordship had only a very faint idea by this time as to whether he was on his head or his heels, alive or dead.

"We've got him!" yelled Nugent.

"Hurrah!"

"Bring him along!"

"I guess we take the cake!"

"Hurrah for us!"

Lord Mauleverer was rushed into the house. In the midst of a triumphant crowd of Removites, he was carried up the stairs. Coker & Co. rushed in pursuit, but the staircase was crammed with Removites, and Lord Mauleverer was conveyed safely to the Remove passage.

At the end of the passage the Fifth-Formers had to stop. Into the sacred precincts of the Remove quarters they could not venture. It would have fared hard with them if they had penetrated there, when the Remove were on the warpath.

Lord Mauleverer staggered to his feet.

His collar and tie were torn out, his hat was gone, his jacket was ripped up the back, his trousers torn in several places. He was red and perspiring and dusty, and utterly bewildered.

Bob Cherry patted him on the back.

"It's all right, Mauly—"

"Ow!"

"We'll look after you!"

"Begad!"

"You're safe now!"

"B-b-b-begad!"

"Kick those Fifth-Form bounders off the landing!" said Bulstrode.

There was a rush, and Coker & Co. were driven off yelling. Lord Mauleverer was safe among his friends; but probably at that moment he echoed the wish of the ancient gentleman, whose prayer was that he might be saved from his friends.

Certainly, Lord Mauleverer was quite glad to get to bed that night.

CHAPTER 9.

His Lordship Proposes a Little Run!

"H IGHCLIFFE have scratched," said Harry Wharton, as the Remove came out of the Form-room after lessons next morning.

Bob Cherry grunted.

"They knew they'd be licked," he said.

"They say Ponsonby's seedy."

"Well, they could play some other skipper, I suppose."

"And Monson and Vavasour are seedy, too—all got bad colds."

"Piffle!"

"Well, I think it's piffle, too," said Johnny Bull. "They beat us once, but they know they're not likely to repeat it. I suppose they want to make the giddy glory last as long as possible."

"Oh, they can scratch if they like," said Wharton, with a snort. "I've a jolly good mind to scratch the fixture altogether, and wipe them off the slate. They're a set of cads, anyway, and always up to some rotten game."

"That's true enough."

"Still, we can get up a match with the Upper Fourth this afternoon," said Wharton; "or, if we want something lively, we could run out and have a row with the Courtfield fellows."

"Faith, and that's a good idea, intirely," said Micky Desmond.

"Perhaps!" said Lord Mauleverer.

There was attention at once for his lordship. It was clear that he was going to suggest something.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry.

"Have you got a suggestion to make for the afternoon, my son?"

"Yaas. It is a half-holiday, isn't it?"

"Yes, every Wednesday and Saturday is a half-holiday here."

"Good! What would you fellows say to a run in a car?"

"A motor-car?" asked Nugent.

"Yaas."

"You don't mean to say that you've got a motor-car in your luggage?" demanded Johnny Bull.

Lord Mauleverer laughed.

"Oh, no; but motors can be had in Courtfield. There's a big garage there. I inquired about it before I came here, you see. I'm fond of motoring, and I can drive a car."

"My hat! Well, you can drive a four-in-hand, at all events," said Harry Wharton, "but you'd have to have a chauffeur, you know."

"Yaas, I should have one with me. What do you say to a big touring car to hold six or eight, and a long run in the country?" Lord Mauleverer suggested. "We could take lunch-baskets. I will order them from Courtfield."

"My dear chaps, runs in the country in big touring cars are rather beyond the means of juniors," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Oh, that's all right. I want to stand treat, you know. The whole thing could be done for about twenty pounds," said his lordship.

"Twenty rats!"

"I guess it's a good idea," said Fisher T. Fish. "You can put me down for a seat in the car, my lord duke."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"We're not going to sponge on you, Mauleverer," he said. "You've stood a big feed, since you came, and that's enough. But we can't have you standing treat all the time. It's not cricket."

Lord Mauleverer looked disappointed.

"I don't look at it like that," he said. "I've lots of tin. You see, I want to go myself, and naturally I don't want to go alone."

"Well, that's so, I suppose."

"I should like you fellows to come, but I don't want to stick you for a share of the exes. You couldn't stand it, could you?"

"Rather not," said Frank Nugent, laughing.

"Well, let this be my treat," said Lord Mauleverer. "It will really be a favour to me. You see, I shall enjoy it much more with a party of you fellows along."

"But—"

"I wish you'd say yes."

"Well, if you put it like that, we'll come," said Wharton. "Of course, we should be delighted. Only—"

"That's all right, then. I'll make a list of the names, and wire to Courtfield for a car to hold the lot of us," said Lord Mauleverer. He took out a gold pencil. "Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, Singh, Bulstrode, Fish, Bull, Desmond, and myself—that's nine. I should like that chap Linley to come, too. Where is he?"

"Marky!" shouted Bob Cherry.

The Lancashire lad came towards them with a smile.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Lord Mauleverer's getting up a motor-party this afternoon, and you're coming," Bob Cherry explained.

Mark hesitated.

"Thank you very much," he said. "But

I've got to work. You see, I've got to get ready for the exam."

"Oh, blow the exam," said Bob Cherry, "and bust the Greek! Hang the mathematics, and shoot the French and German. You're coming!"

"But I say, Bob—"

"That's settled, then; he's coming, Mauly," said Bob Cherry. "Put his name down."

Lord Mauleverer looked inquiringly at Linley, and the Lancashire lad nodded and laughed.

"Thanks," he said. "I'll come, and bust the Greek and blow the exam. I don't get a chance of a motor run every day."

"Oh, good!"

And Lord Mauleverer added the Lancashire lad's name to the list. Then he wrote out a telegram: By the time he had finished it, it numbered about forty words. That was an item which apparently escaped Lord Mauleverer's attention.

"I'll buzz down to the post-office on my bike and take that," said Frank Nugent. "The car will be here after dinner."

"Oh, good!"

In ten minutes the telegram was sent. Before that time all Greyfriars knew of the fresh departure on the part of his lordship, and discussed it with great interest. The fact that it would cost "only twenty pounds" or so made the juniors gasp. Lord Mauleverer was certainly living up to the reputation he had already won at Greyfriars.

CHAPTER 10.

How it Was Done!

BUZZ!

Zip—zip—zip!

There was a shout from the juniors crowded in front of the School House. Half Greyfriars had been waiting for the arrival of his lordship's car. It came swinging up the drive.

"Here she is!"

"Hurray!"

His Lordship & Co. were ready. A chauffeur jumped down and touched his cap.

"Lord Mauleverer?" he asked.

"That's right," said his lordship. "The lunch-baskets are in the car?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Oh, good! It's a handsome car, too!"

said Lord Mauleverer, with a glance at the big Daimler. "We shall have a good run, you fellows. Pile in."

"Ahem!"

It was the well-known cough of the Head. The juniors raised their caps respectfully as Dr. Locke came up. The Head looked in amazement at the big touring car.

"Dear me!" he said. "Whose—whose is this car?"

"I've hired it, sir, for the afternoon," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Good gracious! What for?"

"For a little run in the country, sir."

"Oh! But—but—"

"We have a reliable chauffeur," said Bob Cherry. "We shall be quite safe, sir."

"Ah, yes! But—but—"

"I hope there is no objection to our going, sir?" said Harry Wharton anxiously.

"Well—er—no," said the Head hesitatingly. "But—but surely this is a very expensive amusement, Mauleverer?"

"Oh, no, sir," said the viscount negligently. "I'm going to do the whole bizney under twenty, sir."

"Twenty shillings?"

"Ahem! Pounds, sir."

"Do you mean to say, boy, that you have the means to spend twenty pounds upon an afternoon's amusement?" the Head exclaimed, in amazement.

"Yaas, sir."

"Dear me! I—I shall really have to speak to your guardian, Mauleverer! It is not really right for a boy to have so much money to spend!"

"We—we may go, sir?" asked Lord Mauleverer anxiously.

"Oh, yes, certainly."

Lord Mauleverer & Co. piled into the car, and the chauffeur took it out through the gates.

The Head stood gazing after it with a very dubious expression upon his face. He entered the house, and stopped to speak to Mr. Quelch. The Remove master had been looking out at the car.

"That is extraordinary, Mr. Quelch!" said the Head.

"Indeed it is, sir."

"It is enough to ruin a boy's character to have so much money to spend."

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"I have thought so myself, Dr. Locke, and I was going to speak to you about it,"

he said. "But it certainly appears that Lord Mauleverer spends his money in a very generous and harmless way. There is no sign of any vicious tastes on his part."

"But they might easily arise, Mr. Quelch, considering the amount of attention and flattery he must receive, under the circumstances."

"Quite true, sir."

"I shall speak to Sir Harry Braithwayte about it," said the Head. "I shall write to him at once on the subject. It is my duty."

And the Head went into his study, still looking very dubious and thoughtful.

Meanwhile, the juniors were out on the road, and the car was buzzing along in fine style. Lord Mauleverer had told the chauffeur to "let her rip," and she was accordingly ripping.

"My hat! This is ripping!" Wharton exclaimed.

"Gorgeous!"

"I guess it's O.K.!"

"Mauly, you're a brick!" said Bob Cherry, slapping the new junior on the back. "You're an acquisition! You're a treasure! You're a corn in Egypt, as old Inky says."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer smiled contentedly. He had a simple and kind nature, and the sight of happy faces round him was sufficient to make him happy. Certainly, boundless wealth could not have been in better hands than Mauly's.

The ground flew under the feet of the juniors—or, rather, under the wheels of the car. Mile after mile raced by. They had passed Highcliffe College, they whizzed through Courtfield, they came out on the coast road, and dashed along in sight of the sea for a great distance. Then over the hills, and through a deep wood, with big, leafless branches shadowing the car as it followed the road.

"Oh, it's ripping!" said Nugent.

"Stunning!"

They stopped in the heart of the wood, where a bridge ran over a stream, to have their tea. They camped under the big trees, and boiled water to make tea, and Johnny Bull poached eggs in a frying-pan over a spirit-stove.

"How far aro we from Greyfriars?" Wharton asked.

"Thirty miles," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Thirty miles! By Jove!"

"And we haven't come straight—we've been round!" said Nugent. "My word, this beats biking, my sons!"

"Yes, rather!"

The luncheon-baskets were well supplied. There were four of them, and they had cost thirty shillings each. Lord Mauleverer did not do things by halves, evidently. And for the next twenty minutes youthful appetites were given full reign, and the contents of the baskets grew beautifully less in consequence.

CHAPTER 11.

The Road Hogs!

"**T**IME'S up," said Nugent, looking at his watch.

It was time for the return.

Lord Mauleverer intended to take in a wide sweep of country in the return journey. The juniors crowded into the car, and Lord Mauleverer sat at the steering-wheel, the chauffeur by his side. Lord Mauleverer was to drive the car home.

Even after the experience with the coach-and-four, the juniors were a little doubtful of his lordship's powers in handling a big car; but they were soon reassured. Lord Mauleverer drove splendidly, and his sleepy look dropped from him like a cloak when he sat with the steering wheel in his hands. The car started, and zip-zipped away in fine style.

The juniors chatted, and sang sometimes, and shouted in sheer high spirits, as the wind rang past their cars.

Up and down the slopes, under big trees and between high hedges and widely-stretched green fields, the car ran rapidly on.

They drew near to Greyfriars at last, as the sun was sinking in the west over the shoulder of the Black Pike.

"There's Highcliffe," said Bob Cherry, with a nod towards a red-brick tower that rose into view in the distance over the trees.

"My hat! And there are the Highcliffians!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, a minute or two later. "Look out, Mauleverer!"

The big Daimler had swept past the gates of Highcliffe College, and was rushing on

towards St. Jim's, when a lighter car, with four fellows in it, came sweeping round a corner towards them, on the wrong side of the road.

The juniors knew the occupants of the car at once.

They were Ponsonby, Vavasour, Monson and Gadsby, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe; and the man at the steering-wheel was very like Gadsby in face—Gadsby major, an old Highcliffian, who sometimes came down to see his brother—and who recklessly led the Highcliffe juniors into ways that were not good for them. Gadsby major had evidently been looking upon the wine when it was red, to judge by the way he drove. He was tearing along at top speed, a dangerous thing to do in a narrow lane, where the road was barely wide enough for two large vehicles to pass one another in safety. And he came round the corner with a reckless sweep, that brought his light Napier on the wrong side of the road, and without even sounding his horn.

"The madman!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

The juniors sprang up in their seats.

A collision seemed inevitable. And Gadsby major, who either had not seen the danger or who was too excited to think about it, did not even put on his brakes.

Lord Mauleverer turned his car towards the hedge, as the only possible way of avoiding a terrible catastrophe.

The Napier came rushing on, and there was a grinding crash!

Crash! Gr-r-r-rind!

A wheel had caught. But for Lord Mauleverer's prompt action, the cars would have smashed each other to splinters. As it was, a wheel had collided, and the lighter car was whirled round and flung across the road. The big Daimler stood it better. Lord Mauleverer had jammed on his brakes; the car crashed along the hedge, and stopped. The juniors were struggling in a heap in the car, but they were not thrown out, nor was the car overturned.

The Highcliffe fellows had fared worse.

Their car was on its side, and all four of them were in a deep ditch that flowed beside the road on that side; perhaps, fortunately for them, it was a ducking, but it had saved their bones.

Gadsby major was sitting in the ditch,

with his head out, looking completely stupefied.

Lord Mauleverer jumped down, with his chauffeur, both very much shaken, but unhurt. Harry Wharton & Co. piled out of the car, breathless and shaken up.

"Anybody hurt?" his lordship exclaimed anxiously.

"No! I'm all right."

"I guess I'm O.K."

"All serene, Mauly."

"We might all have been killed if you had been a second late, Mauly," said Bob Cherry. "You were splendid!"

"Yes, rather!"

Lord Mauleverer ran across to the overturned car. Harry Wharton & Co. followed him, and the Highcliffians were dragged out of the ditch. They stood shaking the mud and water from their clothes, and uttering furious exclamations. Although the accident was wholly and solely the fault of their driver, they appeared to regard it as a special injury directed at them by the Greyfriars fellows.

"You idiots!" roared Ponsonby. "You ought to be locked up!"

"You dangerous young fools!" said Gadsby major. "How dare you let a boy of fifteen drive a car?"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Harry Wharton sharply. "You were driving on the wrong side, you were going twice the speed limit, and you didn't sound your horn. You'll have to pay for the damage to Mauleverer's car."

"I guess so."

"As for you chaps, you've got off cheaply with a ducking, with a fool like that at the steering-wheel," said Wharton bluntly.

Gadsby major turned red with rage.

"You young whelp—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Harry. "You've no right to drive a car if you can't keep sober. And these chaps deserve more than they've got—the bounders! This is the bad cold that all three of you had—Ponsonby, Vavasour, and Monson! You scratched the footer match because Gadsby major came down to take you out in his car—and told us a yarn about it. This jolly well serves you right."

The Highcliffians were silent. They had nothing to say; they were too clearly bowled out for that. Even Ponsonby looked a little ashamed of himself.

Gadsby major was still swearing. That

was one of the little ways in which that fashionable young man was instructing his young brother and the smart set of Highcliffe.

"Who's going to pay for this damage?" he demanded.

"My dear fellow," drawled Lord Mauleverer, "you were to blame, and you will have to do the best you can. There is considerable damage done to my car. I shall have to walk the rest of the way to Greyfriars. You are a road hog, and a clumsy ass, by gad!"

"Look here!" shouted Gadsby major, taking a step towards the earl.

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton. "If you lay a finger on Mauleverer, we'll put you head-first into the ditch, and the others after you."

And Gadsby major thought better of it. The Greyfriars juniors looked at their own car. The wheel was too badly damaged for them to proceed.

"That ass ought to be made to pay for that," said Wharton, frowning.

Lord Mauleverer smiled.

"Oh, I shall pay!" he said. "It is nothing. But the real trouble is that we shall have to walk to Greyfriars! Oh, dear!"

CHAPTER 12.

Black But Not Comely!

DR. LOCKE stepped into Mr. Quelch's study on the following day. He had a letter in his hand, and a thoughtful expression upon his face.

"A reply from Lord Mauleverer's guardian, sir?" asked the Remove-master, as he placed a chair for the Head.

Dr. Locke nodded.

"Yes. A most peculiar letter. Listen!"

"I will, with great interest."

The Head read the letter aloud:

"Dear Dr. Locke,—I thank you for your letter, and for the opinion you have kindly expressed. I do not agree with it. I have carefully watched my nephew's character, and I think there is too firm a foundation of honesty and goodness in it for him to be in any danger of being led astray by bad associates. He avoids them of his own accord, and without any advice from others. As for the bad effect of unlimited pocket-money upon a boy, I grant that it would

be true in most cases, but not in Mauleverer's. He uses his money only for good and kind ends, and a little extravagance is permissible in the heir to half a million a year. I firmly believe that in case of any necessity my nephew would show that his carelessness and extravagance would drop from him like a cloak, and he would buck up like the little man that he is. Poverty is not likely to come to him, but I have long been turning over in my mind a plan for putting him to the test to satisfy many of his friends and relations who had expressed the same doubts. When this has been done I think you will be satisfied. It would be difficult, under the terms of his father's will, to keep him short of pocket-money, but when I have applied the test I have mentioned I think you will admit that it is quite safe to trust him in every way.—With kind regards,

“HARRY BRAITHEWAYTE.”

“That is very curious,” said Mr. Queich. “I have observed the boy since he has been placed in my Form, and I must confess that he strikes me as he appears to do his uncle. He is a genuinely good lad, though he has some fastidious ways which can easily be forgiven under the circumstances.”

“Sir Harry does not say what the test is,” the Head remarked thoughtfully. “Well, I have done my duty in expressing my opinion, and we shall see.”

And he left the Form-master's study.

Lord Mauleverer was in the hall as he passed down. The new Removite was talking to Skinner of the Remove.

“Dear me!” he said. “Yes, I know they're jolly nice white mice, but it's extraordinary that you should have given a guinea each for them.”

“You can have them for half that,” said Skinner. “I know you will be kind to them; that's why I want you to have them.”

“Skinner!”

The Head's voice made Skinner jump.

“Ye-e-es, sir!” he gasped.

He had not seen the Head coming, or he would certainly not have offered Lord Mauleverer that remarkable bargain at that precise moment.

“Are you trying to swindle Mauleverer, Skinner?” demanded the Head, knitting his brows.

“Oh, sir!”

“Then what do you mean?”

“I—I was having a little joke with him,

sir,” stammered Skinner. “Of course, sir, it was only a joke.”

“You had better not indulge in any little jokes of that kind in the future, Skinner,” said the Head. “You may go, but I have an eye on you.”

“Ye-es, sir.”

And the Head passed on frowningly. Skinner walked away, and Lord Mauleverer, looking a little puzzled, went towards the stairs. Bolsover met him there, and linked arms with his lordship. Lord Mauleverer was far from wishing to link arms with the bully of the Remove, but he had no choice in the matter, for Bolsover was nearly twice his size, and Bolsover was determined.

“Hallo!” said Bolsover, with a genial manner that showed that he meant to make himself very unpleasant. “Hallo! Just the chap I was looking for!”

“Really, my dear fellow—”

“I've been for a walk in the lane,” Bolsover explained. “My boots have got fearfully dirty. Boots here cleans them only once a day. If they get dirty again we have to look after them ourselves.”

“Really! Oh, dear! I don't think I could possibly look after my boots.”

“No need. What you've got to do is to look after mine!” said Bolsover, with a grin. “Come along!”

“Oh, dear! What do you mean, Bolsover?”

“You're going to clean my boots—that's what I mean!”

“Impossible!”

“Ha, ha! We'll see about that!”

“My dear fellow—”

“Are you going to walk, or shall I carry you?” asked Bolsover genially.

Lord Mauleverer looked at him, and then looked round for help. But there was none at hand. He decided to walk.

In a few minutes they were in the boot-room, where Trotter daily negotiated some hundreds of boots. Trotter's appliances were ready to hand, and Bolsover pointed them out to Lord Mauleverer, and then kicked off his boots.

His lordship gazed at them helplessly.

“I—I can't, you know!” he gasped.

“Time you learned, then!”

“But, you see, my dear fellow—”

“Chap who can't clean his own boots oughtn't to be allowed to live,” said Bolsover. “Nothing degrading in it, looked at the right way—my way! Ha, ha!”

“Oh, no; certainly not! If I considered

that there was anything degrading in cleaning boots, I should certainly not allow Trotter to clean mine," said his lordship simply. "I should be more degraded in making him do it than he in doing it. But you see that I don't know how—"

"I'll show you," grinned Bolsover. "It will take you down a peg or two, which is a very good thing for a giddy lord. You stick the boot on your left paw—so—and take the blacking-brush in your right paw—so—and buzz away at it. If you don't do it, I'll take the blacking-tin and smudge it over your face and hair—see? You can make your choice about the matter."

"Really, you know—"

"Oh, go ahead! I can't waste time over it."

And Lord Mauleverer, with many misgivings, started.

Bolsover stood and watched him with a grin upon his face. It was very amusing indeed to the bully of the Remove to have his boots cleaned by a lord.

Mauleverer brushed away industriously.

Bolsover's boots were very dirty, and required a lot of brushing, and the new junior panted with exertion. He was not used to exerting himself.

"Now put the blacking on," said Bolsover.

"Oh, certainly! But—"

"And then rub away—hard!"

"V-v-very well."

The unfortunate Earl of Mauleverer rubbed away—hard. A voice was heard from the distance—the powerful voice of Bob Cherry.

"Mauleverer! Mauly! Where are you? Why don't you come down to the footer, you bouncer? Mauly—Mauly!"

"Here I am!" called out Lord Mauleverer.

"Shut up!" hissed Bolsover fiercely.

But it was too late.

There was a tramp of feet outside, and Bob Cherry, with Bulstrode and Harry Wharton, looked into the boot-room in amazement.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The noble lord is cleaning his boots!"

"They are Bolsover's boots," explained Lord Mauleverer. "I'm so sorry to keep you waiting, but Bolsover insisted."

"Oh, he insisted, did he?" said Bob Cherry, with an angry glint in his eyes. "So you are fagging Mauly, are you, Bolsover, after what we've told you?"

"I'll do as I like!" blustered Bolsover. "You jolly well won't!" said Harry Wharton. "We've warned you to let Mauleverer alone, and if you won't do it you'll have a giddy lesson. Collar him!"

"What ho!"

The three juniors ran at the bully of the Form. Bolsover put up his hands, but he was dragged over in a moment, and bumped on the floor.

"Now hold him," gasped Bob Cherry, "while I put the blacking on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow!" roared Bolsover. "Stop it! Oh! Ooooh!"

Bob Cherry had taken the blacking-brush, thrust it into the blacking, and was putting the latter on Bolsover's face with a liberal hand. Wharton and Bulstrode held the bully of the Remove pinned down by main force during the operation. Bolsover struggled fiercely, but he struggled in vain.

"Ow! Oh! Oooooch!"

"Better keep your mouth shut!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ugh! Groo!"

"There, I warned you! You wouldn't have got any in your mouth if you had kept it shut. Shut up!"

"Groo—ooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover's face soon closely resembled that of a Central African negro. His eyes glared out furiously from his blackened countenance. Lord Mauleverer looked on with a grin.

"There!" said Bob Cherry. "Will that do?"

"You haven't polished it yet!" grinned Bulstrode.

"Good! Give me the brush!"

Bob Cherry polished the blackened countenance. Bolsover roared and struggled. His features were pretty roughly handled in the process of blacking and shining.

Bob Cherry desisted at last, gasping with the exertion.

"There!" he exclaimed, "I think that will do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode. "I think it will!"

"What do you think, Wharton?"

"Oh, ripping!"

"What do you think, Mauleverer?"

"Begad, I think it's stunning!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"What do you think, Bolsover?"

"Ow!"

"That's not an intelligible answer. I insist upon knowing whether you think it is quite satisfactory."

"Ow! Yow! Yah! Groo!"

"Then I'll go on with it—"

"Yaroo! Leave off! Yow!"

"Is it all right, then?"

"Ow! Yow! Yes—yes! Oh, yes! Oh!"

"Very well. If you're satisfied, I am."

And Bob Cherry rose from his task. Bolsover was released, and he sprang up furiously and clenched his fists. Harry Wharton looked at him steadily.

"Keep your wool on!" he said. "Mind, for two pins we'd give you another dose, and worse! You'd better be careful, I think, Bolsover!"

Bolsover thought so, too. He stood quivering with rage while the chums of the Remove walked out of the room with Lord Mauleverer. The latter was chuckling.

"I don't think the cad will rag you again in a hurry," Bob Cherry remarked, slipping his arm through Lord Mauleverer's. "Now come down to the footer."

Bolsover did not leave the boot-room immediately. There were no facilities for washing there, and he did not care to venture out with his face in that state. But there was no help for it, and he made up his mind to it at last.

He peered round the door, to make sure that the passage was clear, and then bolted. He made for the stairs to reach a bathroom, and met Fisher T. Fish. The American junior stared at him blankly.

"Great snakes! There's a blessed nigger in the school!" he exclaimed. "I'm not having niggers here! Get out, you black coon!"

Biff! Bolsover's fist bowled the American over, and he sprawled on the stairs, and the blackened bully rushed up.

"Boy! Who—what are you? What—"

It was Mr. Quelch. Bolsover, in his hurry, had almost rushed into him. The Remove-master stared at him in amazement.

"A negro—here! Why—what— Oh, I perceive that you have blacked your face! Ah, it is Bolsover!" said Mr. Quelch, recognising the bully of the Remove by his size. "Bolsover, how dare you play a trick like this upon me!"

"I—I—"

Bolsover was too enraged to speak clearly. He stammered—or, rather, jabbered—wav-

ing his hands excitedly. Mr. Quelch caught him by the shoulder and shook him.

"Bolsover, this is disgraceful! A boy in the Second Form would be ashamed of playing such a silly prank as blacking his face and going about the house in such a state! Go and clean yourself at once!"

"I—I—I—"

"And bring two hundred lines to my study before bedtime!" said the Remove-master sternly. "Not a word! You are a disgrace to your Form! Not a word, I say! Go and clean yourself at once!"

"I—I—I—"

"Go!"

And Mr. Quelch sailed on, with rustling gown. And Bolsover, bursting with rage, tore off to a bath-room, where for the next quarter of an hour he was very busy.

CHAPTER 13.

Bunter the Burglar!

LORD MAULEVERER took the Russia-leather pocket-book from his jacket, and placed it under the pillow on his bed. It was his usual habit when he turned in. Even he was not careless enough to leave a wad of banknotes lying about.

Billy Bunter sat on his bed, taking his boots off, and he blinked through his big spectacles at the new junior. The sight of the pocket-book seemed to dazzle Bunter.

"I say, Mauly—" he began.

Lord Mauleverer looked at him.

"Would you mind calling me Mauleverer?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Mauly! I'm treating you as an old friend, you know."

"I don't like it," said his lordship.

"But Bob Cherry calls you Mauly—and Wharton—"

"Yaas," said his lordship. "But Wharton is Wharton, and Cherry is Cherry, and you are—Bunter, bogad!"

"Oh, really, Mauly! Look here, what I was going to say is, I'm expecting a postal-order to-morrow morning, and if you cared to advance me five pounds—"

"I don't!"

"Look here, you've got plenty of money, Mauly—"

"Heaps!"

"Then why can't you lend me five quid?"

"I'd give it to you if you asked, and told the truth," said his lordship. "But you've broken your promises. You were telling whoppers about expecting cheques and postal-orders. I can't stand liars. I don't want to have anything more to do with you."

"Oh, really, Mauly——"

"Please shut up!"

Bunter blinked angrily and shut up. He had, in fact, killed the goose that was prepared to lay golden eggs. He turned in, grunting angrily. He had another idea in his mind for gaining possession of Lord Mauleverer's money—a rather wild and reckless scheme, but which he thought would probably answer with a simple youth like Lord Mauleverer.

The Remove went to bed, and Loder turned the lights out. Loder was looking very annoyed and cross. Lord Mauleverer had steadily remained away from his enticing company. The black sheep of the Sixth had waited in vain for a chance to introduce him to the noble game of poker, and to initiate him into the mysteries of nap for pounds. Loder and Carne felt that they had been defrauded, and they were very much annoyed. Loder would willingly have expressed his feelings by spanking his lordship there and then, but he knew that the whole Remove would pile on him if he did. Lord Mauleverer was by this time easily the most popular fellow in the Form.

Loder retired from the dormitory with a frowning brow, and several voices called out—after the lights were out—little remarks in reference to his well-known pursuits. The juniors knew far more of the proceedings of the black sheep of the Sixth than the masters did.

"Is it nap or banker to-night, Loder?"

"Put a quid on for me each way, old boy!"

Loder slammed the door, and the Removites chuckled.

Billy Bunter was a heavy sleeper as a rule. He could fall asleep the moment he got into bed, and remain asleep till he was dragged out by violence, however long a period elapsed. But this particular evening he remained awake, keeping his spectacles on, and blinking through them into the darkness of the dormitory.

Billy Bunter had a deadly purpose in his mind.

He waited till all the Remove were fast asleep. Half-past eleven had chimed out,

and the chime had a hollow echo in the sleeping school.

Then the fat junior put a fat leg out of bed. The other fat leg followed it, and then the fat Removite himself.

Through the high windows of the dormitory the moonlight streamed in, and it revealed Billy Bunter dimly. The fat junior groped under his pillow, and took out what appeared to be a roll of black crêpe. He unrolled it, and adjusted it upon his plump face, it was revealed as a crêpe mask.

Bunter's aspect changed considerably when the crêpe mask was adjusted over his fat features. It certainly gave him a fearsome look in the moonlight.

Another grope, and he extracted an old tobacco-pipe. With the stem protruding from his hand, it was quite easy, in the darkness, to mistake it for the barrel of a small pistol.

Bunter gave a soft grunt of satisfaction, and stepped on tiptoe towards Lord Mauleverer's bed.

His lordship was fast asleep.

He lay upon his side, breathing steadily, the placid sleep of the just. Billy Bunter stopped at his bed and gave him a gentle shake.

Lord Mauleverer's eyes opened at once.

"What?" he murmured.

"Wake up!" said Billy Bunter, in a deep and thrilling voice. "I mean, awake!"

"Eh?"

"Awake!"

"W-what?"

"Sit up!"

Lord Mauleverer sat up in bed. He gazed at the black-masked face in horror and alarm.

Billy Bunter levelled the tobacco-pipe at him.

"Hands up!" he said.

"What?"

"Your money or your life!"

"What—what?"

"Tremble!" said Billy Bunter, making a threatening motion with the tobacco-pipe. "One pressure of my finger, and you are a dead man! Mark my words, I am desperate! Your money or your life!"

"My—my hat!"

"No—your money!"

Biff!

"Yaroop!"

The midnight raider staggered forward as a pillow caught him on the back of the

head, and he plunged wildly and helplessly upon Mauleverer's bed. The tobacco-pipe clattered on the floor. The pillow had been hurled by Bob Cherry, who was sitting up a few beds away, and grinning.

Lord Mauleverer gave a yell as Bunter fell sprawling upon his bed; but he had presence of mind and plenty of pluck, and he grasped the fat burglar immediately.

"I've got him!" he shouted. "Help!" Bunter struggled fiercely. But the new junior was stronger than Bunter, and much more active. He held on grimly.

"I've got him!" he gasped. "He's a burglar! He's dropped his pistol! Come on! Help me to capture him!"

"Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Yow! Leggo!"

Bunter dragged fiercely at Lord Mauleverer, who refused to let go. He rolled out of bed after Bunter, and the fat junior fell to the floor, and Mauleverer fell upon him. There was an alarmed yell from the burglar.

"Ow! Mind my glasses!"

"Dear me!" gasped his lordship.

He had never heard of a burglar in glasses before, and certainly he never expected a burglar to ask him to mind his glasses in the midst of a deadly struggle.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Go easy, Mauly! It's Bunter!"

"What—what?"

"It's Bunter! I know his voice when he was jawing you," roared Bob. "It's one of his little games. Don't quite kill him."

"Dear me!"

Lord Mauleverer rose to his feet and released Bunter. The Owl of the Remove lay gasping breathlessly.

Some of the juniors had candle-ends alight now, and they gathered round Bunter. The crêpe mask had been torn aside, and was hanging from one of Bunter's ears, and the fat junior's crimson and perspiring face was revealed.

"Bunter!"

"What's the little game?"

"I—I thought he was a burglar!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "He certainly levelled something at me, and demanded my money or my life!"

"Ow! It was only a j-j-joke!" gasped Bunter. "Can't you take a j-j-joke?"

Wharton jerked him to his feet with a heavy hand.

"You young scoundrel!" he said. "You can call it a joke, but if you had scared Mauleverer into giving you his money, I think you would have carried the joke on!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Anyway, we don't want jokes of this sort in the Remove dorm., and every chap who is out of bed had better give you a spank."

"Ow! Ow—ow—owp!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good egg!"

The Removeites caught on to the idea at once. Every fellow who was out of bed bestowed a ringing spank upon the Owl of the Remove, and a great many more tumbled out of bed in hot haste for the purpose. Billy Bunter roared and wriggled, but there was no escape for him, and he had to go through with it. When the castigation was finished, he crawled into bed.

"Exit Dick Turpin!" said Nugent cheerfully. "And the next time you start the midnight raiding bizney, Bunter, you'll get it in the neck!"

Billy Bunter groaned. He was not likely to set up in business as a midnight raider again.

CHAPTER 14.

The Special!

"TELEGRAM for Mauly!" said Bob Cherry.

"Mauly—Mauly! Come hither!" Lord Mauleverer came hither, with a grin. The telegraph messenger was waiting, with the telegram in his hand.

"For Lord Mauleverer, please," he said.

"Thank you, my lad."

Lord Mauleverer opened the telegram. Billy Bunter hovered very near him. Bunter knew that money could be despatched by telegraph, and that, to Bunter, was the only possible reason why anybody should send a telegram. If Lord Mauleverer was to receive a remittance from the post office, Bunter meant to be on the scene.

But the expression upon the boy's face showed that it was not a communication of that sort. His handsome, kind face became suddenly startled and troubled, and his fingers closed more tightly upon the telegram.

"Bad news?" asked Wharton, with a concerned look.

It was only when they saw Lord Mauleverer looking troubled that the juniors realised how much they had come to like the good-natured new boy.

"I don't know," said Lord Mauleverer slowly. "This is from my uncle's lawyers, Messrs. Have & Hookit. I'll read it to you fellows, and you can tell me what you think of it."

And Lord Mauleverer read out the telegram:

"Lord Mauleverer, Greyfriars College.— Serious news re your financial position. Fear terrible loss. Your uncle absent. Please come at once. Very urgent."

The juniors looked grave enough.

Lord Mauleverer hardly seemed to realise the import of the message; but the juniors, as they listened, realised it clearly enough.

If the solicitors said so much, it was pretty certain that they meant more; and it looked as if the millionaire schoolboy was ruined.

Ruined!

That was the thought that came into most minds, and it had various effects upon the different fellows. Bolscever laughed. Snoop sneered. But most of the fellows looked serious and sympathetic. Those who had chummed up most with Lord Mauleverer realised that it was a time to show that it was not his money that had attracted them to him. Wharton touched him on the shoulder.

"Buck up, old chap," he said. "It mayn't be as bad as it sounds. I don't see how all your money could have gone, either."

"Half a million a year. It would take a long time to blow the capital, I should think," Johnny Bull remarked.

"Yes, rather."

"But you must go at once, as the lawyer says," said Harry Wharton. "Better trot along and ask the Head's permission."

"Yes, I suppose I'd better."

"Better send an answer first," said John Bull.

"Yes, yes, I forgot that, begad!"

Lord Mauleverer scribbled down a reply, and handed it to the telegraph-boy, with a pound note.

"I haven't change, sir," he said.

"Keep the change, please," said Lord Mauleverer.

And he walked away with Harry Wharton. It was not easy to alter old habits, and Lord Mauleverer was likely to continue to give pounds away so long as he had any left.

Dr. Locke looked at his lordship's telegram, and gave permission at once for him to leave the school for as long as was necessary. Lord Mauleverer left the study, and sent Trotter to tell Gosling to get a trap ready. It did not occur to him to walk to the station. But Gosling was only too ready to oblige his lordship in any way.

"By the way, what about a train?" asked Harry Wharton. "It's a quarter to nine now, and there won't be any up trains till half-past."

"Begad!"

"You'll have to wait——"

"Can't be done! I've got to get there."

"I guess you can't hoof it to London, said Fisher T. Fish.

"I must have a special train."

"A—a—a which?"

"A special train. Trotter can go down to the station on somebody's bike and wire for one. They will manage it for me, I assure you."

"I—I dare say they will," gasped Wharton; "but—but, my dear chap, think of the cost."

"Oh, never mind that!"

"But if you've lost money——"

"Time enough to economise when I know I've lost it," said Lord Mauleverer cheerfully. "It can't all be gone. Besides, I can't imagine myself hard up. I expect it will be all right. Trotter!"

And Trotter was despatched. He came scorching back on the bike a little later, with the news that all was arranged.

Gosling brought the trap round. Quite a crowd of juniors assembled round to see them off, Mr. Quelch allowing his class a brief liberty for the purpose. Mr. Quelch, though he had seen many things to disapprove of in Lord Mauleverer's manners and customs, could not help liking the lad, and he was very sorry to hear the bad news, and very willing that his lordship should leave Greyfriars with the comfortable impression that he was well liked there, and had the sympathy of his Form-fellows. The juniors raised a cheer as the trap drove off, and Lord Mauleverer waved his hand; and Harry Wharton & Co. returned to the classroom, thinking more of Lord Mauleverer

and his new trouble than of their lessons for the morning.

The trap bowled down the lane, and a more misanthropic person than Lord Mauleverer would have been cheered by the bright sun and the fresh breeze, and the trees and green fields. They dashed into Friardale, and Lord Mauleverer descended at the station with a cheerful face. Even if the bad news was true, it was not necessary to be miserable yet, that was what he thought.

Gosling grinned expectantly for his tip. He had learned to expect large tips from Lord Mauleverer. The new junior did not fail him. He tossed the school porter a pound note, and walked into the station.

The stationmaster bowed almost to the ground before the youthful nobleman. A fellow who was not only a lord, but a millionaire in addition, and who could afford special trains when he wanted to go up to town, was surely worthy of any stationmaster's deepest respect.

"Is my train ready?" asked his lordship.
"Yes, my lord! Quite ready, my lord," said Mr. Punce. "All ready, my lord! Would your lordship care to have a lunch-basket placed in your lordship's carriage?"

"Yaas. I don't suppose I shall feel hungry, but I might. Yaas, please."

"Very good, my lord! Is there anything else I can do for your lordship?"

"Nothing else, thanks very much."

"Yes, my lord! This way, my lord. Jones, don't push that trolley near his lordship, you fool! This way, my lord!"

And Lord Mauleverer was ushered upon the platform.

The special was waiting.

Lord Mauleverer was conducted to his carriage. There was a shout from the station entrance, and a crowd of fellows came pouring upon the platform. They were mostly in footer attire, and some of them carried bags. Lord Mauleverer glanced at them, and among them recognised Gadsby, and Ponsonby, and Vavasour, and Monson. They were evidently a party from Highcliffe School.

"Oh, I told you there was a train!" exclaimed Ponsonby. "It's all right. If there's an up-train, it stops at Cheswold, and we're all right, and we shall be in time for the match."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Vavasour.

"Sorry, gentlemen," said the station-

master, who was closing Lord Mauleverer's door with his own august hands—"sorry, but this is a special!"

"What?"

"It's a special train."

"But—but—but—"

"It's Lord Mauleverer's train, gentlemen. Right, guard!"

"Mauleverer!" yelled Ponsonby. "That Greyfriars bouncer! Yes, there he is grinning at the window! Mauleverer, we're going by this train. You're going to stop at Cheswold, do you hear?"

"Right away!"

"Tumble in!" yelled Gadsby.

"Heave him out!"

"Stand back there, gentlemen!"

The special train moved out of the station. Lord Mauleverer kissed his hand from the window at the enraged and disappointed Highcliffians.

That action gave the finishing touch to the wrath of Highcliffe. They shook their fists after the train, and stamped on the platform, and raved; and the special train disappeared down the line, leaving them so occupied, and Lord Mauleverer was gone on his journey to London.

A savage and discontented crowd of footballers poured out of the station, to seek some other method of conveyance to their destination, and to vow terrific vows of vengeance upon Greyfriars and all who dwelt therein!

CHAPTER 15.

Vanished Millions!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. waited with keen anxiety for the return of Lord Mauleverer. They took a very deep interest in the fortunes of a new junior, who had made himself so well-liked in a few days at Greyfriars. To a fellow like Mauleverer, with the habits he had formed, it would certainly be a terrible blow to lose his money—and that was what the lawyer's telegram meant, if it meant anything. And the chums of the Remover were very concerned for him. When morning lessons were over they looked out for Lord Mauleverer, but it was not till after dinner that he appeared.

When he was seen at the school gates, there was a general rush to greet him. He looked tired, and a little worn, and his dusty boots indicated that he had walked

from the station. The juniors surrounded him at once with eager inquiries.

"What's the news?"

"What's happened?"

"Get it off your chest, Mauly, old boy!"

"Is all the tin gone?"

Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"Yaas," he replied laconically.

"Great Scott!"

"It's true, then?"

"Yaas, it's true," said Lord Mauleverer.

"The mines have failed—the company busted—there are liabilities to the full amount of the assets, as the lawyer says, and I've got nothing left but the clothes I stand up in."

"The sorrowfulness is terrific, my worthy friend," said Hurree Singh softly.

"It's hard cheese."

"Poor old Mauly."

"Yaas, it's rather hard cheese," agreed his lordship. "The worst of it is, that my poor old uncle, Sir Harry Braithwayte, has lost all his tin in the same business, and has gone quite stony, too. I don't comprehend how it comes about, but the lawyers do, I suppose; and old Mr. Have says that it is so. I suppose he knows."

"Have you seen your uncle?"

"No; he's laid up with the gout at present. I dare say he's been rather knocked over by this, you know."

"You don't seem to be much knocked over," said Harry Wharton, in wonder.

"Well, you see, I'm thinking of my uncle chiefly," said Lord Mauleverer. "I'm young and strong, and he's old and gouty, and he will have a fearfully rough time."

"What are you going to do?"

Lord Mauleverer laughed a little.

"There's only one thing to do—leave school and work."

"Work!" echoed the juniors.

They could not imagine Lord Mauleverer working.

His lordship nodded calmly. He had evidently thought out the whole matter already.

"Yaas! I can't stay here without any money. The fees are paid for this term, but it's no good hanging on; and there's my uncle, too. He will be sold up. His very house will have to go. I shall have to look after him."

The coolness and courage with which the boy spoke touched most of the juniors. Harry felt his eyes moisten. Lord Maul-

everer seemed the very last fellow in the world to face the battle of life—the least of all equipped for the struggle—and, perhaps, he felt that himself. But he was grit all through, and did not complain, and he did not shrink from the inevitable. He had thought out his problem, and he was prepared to face the music.

Wharton slipped his arm through Lord Mauleverer's.

"It's rotten hard on you," he said, "and you're a plucky kid. Most fellows would be bowled right over by this."

"Well, it's not much good being bowled over, is it?" said his lordship. "After all, I've got health and strength, and I've had a good time. I've often thought that every chap ought really to work for his living, you know; and I've got to now, at all events. I'd better go and see the Head."

And Lord Mauleverer went to see Dr. Locke, to acquaint him with his plans, and he left the crowd in a buzz with the news. It was soon all over Greyfriars.

Never had the school had such a topic of interest. From the youngest fag to the head of the Sixth, it was discussed and discussed again.

The effect was different upon different fellows. Loder and Carne were very pleased that they had not succeeded in taking up Lord Mauleverer. Coker & Co. found that they had no special hankering after his society. Snoop sneeringly said that, as a matter of fact, he had never fully believed in the millions all along, and he was glad that the fellow had been shown up in his true colours. Billy Bunter was of opinion that Lord Mauleverer was little short of an impostor, and ought to be kicked out of any decent school.

But it was good to see that most of the fellows rallied round Lord Mauleverer in his misfortune.

He had been kindness and generosity itself while he was a millionaire, and now that he had fallen upon evil times, everybody—who was, anybody—wanted to help him.

The Remove, with a few exceptions like Skinner and Snoop and Vernon-Smith, decided that they were going to back up old Mauly. Exactly how they were to back him up was not defined. But the wish to do it was something, and the general atmosphere of kindness and friendship must have been comforting to the unfortunate junior.

He came out of the Head's study, looking very grave and composed.

"The Head thinks I'd better stay here over to-day, at all events," he said. "He wants to hear from my uncle before I leave school. I suppose he's right."

"Oh, yes," said Wharton. "There may be a chance yet—"

Lord Mauleverer snook his head.

"Not much chance. The lawyer was quite clear about that. He said that everything would have to go—only that the money I have in my personal possession could be saved, if I chose—as well as my personal property—bike, and motor-bike, and the things in my study, you know. Of course, I told him that if the debts had to be paid, I should give up everything."

"You're not called upon do that," said Bulstrode. "Have you got much money?"

"About a hundred pounds, I think."

"Phew!"

"I'm going to send it off by registered letter to my uncle, to do as he thinks fit with it," said Lord Mauleverer. "If it isn't wanted to settle debts, it will make a bit of nest-egg for the poor old boy. I want to write him a letter, too, to tell him what I think about the matter. Blessed if I know what to say! You chaps can help me, if you like."

"Come into the Common-room," said Harry.

The chums of the Remove gathered round Lord Mauleverer at the table in the junior Common-room. Pen and paper were placed before the junior, and he gnawed the handle of the pen.

"Dear Uncle Harry," he began.

Then he gnawed the pen again.

"You see," he remarked, "it was partly my guardian's fault that the investments were so risky. I suppose the poor old chap's getting old, and isn't so careful as he was; but I don't want to reproach him. That would be rotten, wouldn't it?"

"I think you're taking it very well," said Wharton. "Most chaps, I think, would be pretty wild about it."

"I know I should be," said Bulstrode.

"Well, it's not much good getting wild with the old boy," said Lord Mauleverer. "It wouldn't bring the money back again, and would only make him feel rotten—and I expect he feels rotten enough about it already."

"Well, yes, that's so."

Lord Mauleverer knitted his brows thoughtfully, and started at last.

"Dear Uncle Harry,—I've seen Mr. Have and know all about it now. I'm all right! Don't worry! I suppose it couldn't be helped, and I know you've always done the best you could for me."

"That's rather good," Lord Mauleverer explained to the juniors. "He clearly hasn't done the best possible, but he's done the best he could, and so that's a diplomatic way of putting it, don't you think so?"

"Good!" said Harry, with a smile.

Lord Mauleverer's pen travelled on again.

"I enclose the tin I have on me. If it isn't needed to pay the debts, keep it in hand in case you want it. I shall be all right, as I am going to sell my things, and they will fetch in a great deal of tin, I expect. I am going to take in the 'Daily Mail' and look for a situation now, and I hope soon to be in work, and to be able to keep up some sort of a place where you will be able to live with me. Of course, we shall have to stick together, and face this. I hope you're not worrying about having lost the money, because I'm sure it couldn't be helped, and it doesn't knock me over at all. Dr. Locke thinks I'd better not leave till to-morrow, but then I shall come straight to you, and I hope you will be well enough to see me. I hope you are keeping your pecker up. So no more at present, from your loving nephew, Mauleverer."

"Think that's all right?" asked his lordship, looking round anxiously. "I never was much of a fist at letter-writing."

"I think it's ripping," said Bob Cherry. "It will make your uncle feel much better when he gets it, I should think."

"It will make him jolly proud to have a nephew like you, I think," said Wharton.

"Oh, draw it mild!" Lord Mauleverer went through his pockets and took out a dozen loose pound-notes and extracted a bunch of banknotes from the pocket-book. "Good! I've got a hundred and twenty quid altogether. It will come in jolly useful for nunky. I expect I shall raise another hundred when I sell my things."

He crammed the money into an envelope with the letter, and rose from the table.

"I shall have to go down to the post-office and register this," he remarked.

"Why not send Trotter with it?"

"Well, I can't afford any more tips, and it's outside his duty," said Lord Mauleverer, with a shake of the head. "I don't want to impose on him."

And Lord Mauleverer walked down to the post-office himself with the letter, but not

alone. A dozen or more of the Removites walked with him to keep him company. As Bob Cherry remarked, it was best to keep him occupied, so that he wouldn't have time to brood over his losses. Not that Lord Mauleverer showed the faintest disposition to brood. He had taken a wonderful practical view of the situation.

He bought a "Daily Mail" in Friardale, after despatching the letter, and occupied himself as he walked back to the school in looking over the columns of "Situations Vacant."

The juniors, as they saw him so engaged, did not know whether they wanted more to laugh or to cry. Lord Mauleverer looking for a situation was something they could not really accustom themselves to at all.

CHAPTER 16. | Poor Mauly!

LORD MAULEVERER turned up to afternoon classes as usual. Mr. Quelch would willingly have excused him in the circumstances, but his lordship did not want to be excused, and, indeed, it would not have been good for him to be idle. The more he had to fill his mind just then, the better it was for him. He went through his work that afternoon in a quiet, thoughtful, and calm way that amazed the juniors, and brought him many an approving glance from the Form-master. The blow that had fallen upon him brought out all the best qualities in his nature, that much was clear.

After lessons, Lord Mauleverer proceeded to inspect his property. There was certainly enough of it to fetch a good price, if sold to advantage. Some bargain-hunters at Greyfriars had already cast an eye upon it. Skinner had offered his lordship a pound for his bicycle. As it had cost twenty guineas, and was practically new, Skinner did not stand to lose by that offer. But the offer was not accepted. Lord Mauleverer did not know much about business, but he knew a little too much for that. Walker of the Sixth offered to take his motor-bike off his hands for five pounds, to be paid in monthly instalments—another offer that was declined with thanks. Carne of the Sixth looked into his study and offered ten pounds for his clock, his carpet, and his curtains. He went away without them.

"You see, the blessed clock alone cost thirty guineas, and it ought to fetch something," Lord Mauleverer explained to his friends. "Everybody's awfully good to me, but they don't understand the value of things, I suppose."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I rather think they do—only too well," he replied. "I wish we could afford to buy up the things at cost price; but of course, we can't! You'd better have a dealer down and do the best you can with him."

"Yaas, that's a good idea."

"Better come and have tea now," said Bob Cherry.

Lord Mauleverer glanced at his watch.

"Not time yet," he said. "Tea in Hall is at six."

"You're jolly well not going to have tea in Hall," said Bob Cherry warmly. "What on earth do you want with weak tea and doorsteps?"

"I'm not going to feed in the study any more. I can't afford it."

"Great snakes! I guess that's a change for Mauly!"

"It's better to take the thing sensibly and get used to it," said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "I think I've been a bit extravagant, but that's all over now. I'm going to be jolly careful. I shall need to. I don't expect to get more than fifteen bob a week to start with, in my first situation."

"You'll come and have tea in our study, though," said Harry Wharton.

Lord Mauleverer hesitated.

"Look here, you chaps, I'm not going to sponge on you because I've come a mucker!" he exclaimed. "I draw the line at that."

"Rats! You've stood us enough feeds. I should think," said Bob Cherry wrathfully. "If you say another word I'll buff you!"

And so Lord Mauleverer had tea with the chums of the Remove, and they stood as handsome a feed as their combined funds would permit.

Loder and Carne met the chums of the Remove as they came down after tea. They stopped to speak to Lord Mauleverer. There was a bitter sneer on Loder's face.

"So the blessed millions have vanished?" he remarked.

"Yaas," said Lord Mauleverer.

"And you're as poor as a church mouse?"

"Yaas."

"I wonder if the millions ever existed at all!" sneered Carne. "My opinion is that

you were a rotten young swanker, and putting on side all the time."

"That's my idea, too," said Loder.

Lord Mauleverer flushed.

"I'm sorry you should think so," he said. "It isn't the case. I never meant to put on any side. If I did I'm sorry."

"You never did!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "And Loder and Carne don't think so, and they don't believe what they're saying, either. They're a pair of ghastly cads!"

"Hear, hear!" shouted Bob Cherry.

The two seniors turned furiously upon Wharton. Harry clenched his fists, and looked at them with flashing eyes.

"Yes, you can come on, if you like!" he exclaimed. "For two pins we'd collar you and bump you, though you're in the Sixth, you rotten cads!"

"By George, I'll—"

"You'll shut up, Loder." It was Wingate's voice breaking in. "I heard what you said, and it was rotten caddish. It's like you to hit a fellow when he's down. I believe you were keen enough to take Mauleverer up a day or two ago."

Loder gritted his teeth.

"Mind your own business, Wingate! I—"

"Oh, get out!" said the Greyfriars captain contemptuously. "You make me sick! And if you say another of your rotten things to Mauleverer, I'll invite you into the gym. to have the gloves on! Scat!"

And the cads of the Sixth "scatted." They did not care to enter into an argument with Wingate. The captain of Greyfriars dropped his hand upon Lord Mauleverer's shoulder.

"You're a plucky kid," he said. "All the decent fellows here are sorry for what's happened, and you mustn't take any notice of the others. You're taking this wonderfully well. Your people ought to be proud of you."

"That's just like Wingate," said Bob Cherry, as the Greyfriars captain walked away. "You can always depend on old Wingate to back a chap up when he's down. As for Loder, he's a worm!"

"Skuse me, young gentlemen."

It was Gosling. Gosling held his hat in his hands, and bowed almost reverentially before Lord Mauleverer. The juniors looked at him with unusually kindly eyes. Gosling had doubtless heard of his lordship's misfortune, and had come to express his respectful sympathy.

"Skuse me, my lord! I posted that letter for you yesterday, and you told me to put a stamp on it."

"Begad, so I did," said his lordship, "and I never paid you for the stamp! I'm glad you reminded me, Gossy. What? Here's the money."

He laid three halfpence in Gosling's hard palm. The porter looked at it, and looked at Lord Mauleverer, and then looked at the coins again.

"Ho!" he remarked.

"It was a three-halfpenny stamp, wasn't it, Gossy?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes," said Gosling.

"Well, there's your money."

"Ho!" said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—the young gents are saying that Lord Mauleverer ain't got any money left. Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"My dear old chap," said Lord Mauleverer kindly, "it's all right. Anything I've given you is yours; that's all right. Don't worry about that."

Gosling stared.

"I ain't worrying about that," he said, with a wonderful lack of respect in his manner now. "Wot I says is this 'ere. It ain't in my reglar dooty, postin' letters for junior boys. I can tell you that, my lord. That's wot I says!"

Lord Mauleverer looked at him. He did not seem to understand that Gosling was demanding a tip in spite of his altered fortunes. The juniors glared at Gosling.

"You horrid old worm!" said Bob Cherry. "I think you've had enough out of Mauly! Did you ever get a fiver for a tip from anybody else?"

"Wot I says is this, 'ere—"

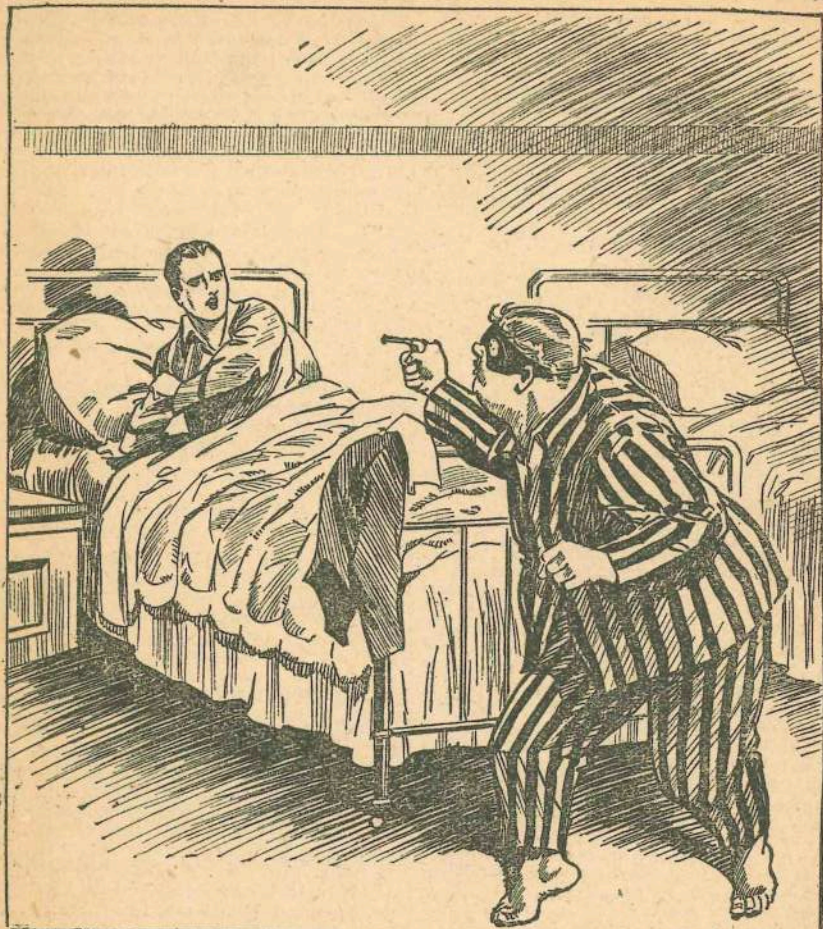
"It's all right," said Mauleverer, and he dropped a shilling into the porter's hand. "There you are. I'm sorry I can't afford to make it more."

Gosling grunted. He was hardly satisfied with a shilling. But the juniors were hardly satisfied, either—with Gosling. They showed their dissatisfaction in a practical way. At a sign from Harry Wharton, they laid hold of Gosling. The porter was whirled out of the doorway.

"Oh!" he roared. "Leggo! Yah! Oh!"

"Kick him out!"

And Gosling was kicked out. The shilling rolled away into a drain, and Gosling rolled on the drive. He picked himself up, snorting, but he did not venture into the House again. He had had enough.



Lord Maulverer sat up in bed, and gazed at the black-masked face in horror and alarm. Billy Bunter levelled the tobacco-pipe at him. "Hands up! Your money or your life!" said Bunter. "One pressure of my finger, and you are a dead man!" (See Chapter 13.)

CHAPTER 17.

Great News!

"MAULY, old boy——"
 "Yaas, my dear fellow."
 "Your uncle's here."

The Remove had come out of the Form-room after second lesson in the morning. Outside, on the drive, stood a big, handsome Rolls-Royce car, with a chauffeur standing beside it. Lord Mauleverer looked out at the car.

"Begad! That's Sir Harry's car!" exclaimed.

"He's here!" said Bob Cherry. "Trotter's just told me that he's shown Sir Harry Braithwaite in to the Head."

Lord Mauleverer looked puzzled.

"It's jolly queer, his coming down in the car," he remarked. "I should have thought that the car would have been taken. I'm anxious to see him."

There was an exclamation in the passage. Lord Mauleverer turned round, as a ruddy-faced, portly gentleman came towards him with the Head. Lord Mauleverer ran towards the ruddy gentleman.

"Uncle Harry!"

The old gentleman grasped his nephew by both hands, and shook them as if he would never be tired. There were tears glistening on his eyelashes.

"Uncle, it's all right! I'm jolly glad to see you!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Don't let it worry you! We shall pull through somehow."

"My dear boy, there is nothing to pull through," said Sir Harry.

The baronet took a letter from his pocket and drew a bundle of banknotes from it. He passed them to Lord Mauleverer.

"There is the money you sent me," he said. "The letter I shall keep—and I shall never part with it. I shall keep it to show to anyone who dares to breathe a word of detraction in connection with my dear nephew—the bravest and pluckiest lad in England."

"But—but——"

"I have explained to the Head," said Sir Harry. "He has told me how well you have stood this trial, though I knew it well enough from your letter, and from what Mr. Have told me. You must forgive me, my boy."

"Forgive you, uncle! I know you couldn't help——"

"I mean, forgive me for this little deception," said the baronet. "I am ashamed of

it now—but it was not to satisfy myself that I did it. I knew what you were like, my boy; I knew you had a character that nothing could spoil. But many people had said—friends and relations, you understand—that petting and spoiling and too much money would ruin your character. Even Dr. Locke had doubts about it—and I made Mr. Have arrange this little plan to show them that they were wrong."

"Uncle! What little plan?"

"I did not intend Mr. Have to tell you anything that was not true, but I left it to him to arrange," said Sir Harry. "I suppose he did his best. You were to be given the impression that all the money in the family was gone, so that all could see how you would bear the loss. And all have seen it, my dear lad."

The juniors understood now, and Bob Cherry gave a shout.

"Then it isn't true—Mauly hasn't lost his money, and he isn't to leave Greyfriars, sir?"

Sir Harry shook his head.

"No! Lord Mauleverer has not lost a penny——"

"Uncle!"

"Not a penny—and if you knew more of business, lad, you would know that your fortune could not be swept away in that manner," said the baronet, with a smile. "It was a little plan to prove that you were real grit, lad—and I'm sure you will forgive it."

Lord Mauleverer's face was very bright.

"Then we're not ruined, uncle?"

"Not a bit of it."

"Begad!" was all Mauly could say then.

Sir Harry was still shaking his nephew's hands. He let them go at last, and then Dr. Locke shook hands with the junior.

"I did not know the facts of the case until your uncle explained them to me this morning," he said. "I congratulate you, Mauleverer, both on your good fortune and on the proof you have given of a steady, brave, and noble character."

"Oh, sir!"

"Boys of the Remove, you should be proud of your Form-fellow!" said the Head.

"We are, sir—we are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Hurrah!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

Lord Mauleverer burst into a happy laugh.

"Oh, it's ripping, by gad!" he exclaimed. "As—as I'm not poor after all, we'll have a feed to celebrate this—a really ripping feed, and Sir Harry shall join us—won't you, uncle?"

The baronet laughed.

"Yes, certainly!" he exclaimed. "With the greatest of pleasure."

"Hurrah."

"Come on, my dear fellows," said Lord Mauleverer. "We'll make it a stunning feed—worthy of the occasion!"

"Hurrah!"

And they came on—in crowds. And a stunning feed it was.

CHAPTER 18.

Bob Cherry Mean: to be Kind!

"ONE good turn deserves another!" Bob Cherry stated that old and well-established maxim with an oracular air.

It was exactly a fortnight after the "Mauleverer sensation."

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were sitting in the window-seat, at the end of the Remove passage at Greyfriars, talking football, when Bob Cherry halted before them, and interjected his remark into the conversation.

Wharton and Nugent looked at him inquiringly.

"One good turn," repeated Bob Cherry, "deserves another."

"I believe I've heard something like that before," said Frank Nugent, in a very thoughtful way. "Now I come to think of it, a stitch in time saves nine."

"And evil communications corrupt good manners," said Nugent solemnly.

"You ass—"

"And procrastination is the thief of time."

"You silly ass!" said Bob Cherry. "What on earth are you chucking mouldy old proverbs at me for?"

"Well, you started it," said Nugent. "I thought it was a game!"

"Ass!" said Bob Cherry politely. "I've been thinking it out, and I've decided that one good turn deserves another—"

"Yes; and I remarked that a stitch in time saves nine—"

"Shut up! I was thinking of Lord Mauleverer. He's given us some good times

since he's been here," said Bob Cherry. "Well, one good turn deserves another—"

"And a stitch in time—"

"Dry up! Mauleverer is rather a slacker, and as we owe him a kindness, I think we can't do better than make him play footer. I've been thinking it out, and I think that it's up to us to wake him up, and make him play, and generally make a man of him. What do you fellows think?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I think a good logging footer match would kill him!" he said. "He's too lazy to live, anyway."

"Kill or cure!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "That's what I was thinking. Come along to his study, and let's have him out."

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent, laughing. And he slipped off the window-seat. "It will be funny, at all events."

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry.

The chums of the Remove grinned as they went along the passage to Lord Mauleverer's study. The schoolboy millionaire was very popular in the Remove; but that he was a slacker there was no possible doubt. He meekly submitted to the vials of Mr. Quelch's wrath in the Form-room, and was content with almost the bottom place in the class. He would look on at any game with friendly interest, but he would politely decline to join in it. He had even been heard to remark that chess was a fearful fag. As for football, the very name of the game seemed likely to upset his delicate nervous system. If Bob Cherry intended to make a footballer of him, he had all his work cut out.

Micky Desmond came out of his study with a footer under his arm.

"Comin' down to the practice?" he asked.

"We're going to fetch Mauly," explained Bob Cherry.

Micky stared.

"Faith, and what are ye fetchin' him for?" he asked. "He won't take the trouble to walk down to the ground to watch!"

"We're going to make him play!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can come and lend a hand if you like. We may have to carry him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The four juniors arrived at Lord Mauleverer's study. Bob Cherry knocked at the door, but there was no reply from within.

"Faith, and he's gone to sleep," grinned Micky Desmond.

Crash!

Bob Cherry jammed his foot against the door, and it sprang open. There was an exclamation in the study.

"Begad!"

"He's at home, anyway!" grinned Nugent.

"Come in, my dear fellows," said a drawling, lazy voice. "Don't make a beastly row; it affects my nerves."

The chums of the Remove entered the study.

Lord Mauleverer was reclining on a sofa under the window, with a silken cushion under his head, and another under his feet. He was wearing a pair of Turkish slippers, and he had changed his jacket for a gorgeous dressing-gown. He moved his head slightly as the juniors came in, and gave a languid nod.

"Didn't you hear me knock first time?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yaas."

"Why didn't you answer?"

"Tired."

"What's made you tired?"

Lord Mauleverer reflected.

"Well, I've been lying down a long time," he said, at last.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So that's fagged you out, has it?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yaas."

"Good! We're going to help you to get over it. One good turn deserves another, Mauly——"

"And a stitch in time saves nine," said Nugent.

"Cheese it, Nugent, you ass! You're a good sort of an ass, Mauly!" said Bob Cherry. "We're your friends, and we're going to stand by you."

"Yaas! Thanks!"

"Not at all. One good turn——"

"A stitch in time——"

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry. "One good turn deserves another. You've been jolly good to us since you've been here, and we're going to teach you to play footer in return!"

Lord Mauleverer started.

"What?"

"Footer! You know what footer is, I suppose?"

"Yaas. It's a game."

"Yes, it's a game," said Bob Cherry, nodding. "Right so far. We're going to teach you to play it. Come on!"

"My dear fellow——"

"We're just going down to practise."

"All serene! Good-bye!"

"And you're coming with us!"

"Eh?"

"You're going to play."

"My dear fellow——"

"If you improve very much, Wharton will give you a chance of playing for the Form," said Bob Cherry temptingly. "You'd like to play in a Form match, wouldn't you?"

"Well, I'd rather look on, if you don't mind."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where are your footer boots?" asked Bob Cherry, looking round the study.

"I—I haven't any."

"Then I'll lend you some of mine."

"My dear fellow——"

"Get out of that dressing-gown!"

"Begad!"

"Jump up!"

"Can't!"

"Why not?"

"Tired."

"I'll give you something to cure all that," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. And he rushed at the dandy of the Remove, grasped him round the body, and rolled him off the sofa upon the floor.

Bump!

"Ow! Begad! Yow!"

"Feel better?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yow! No! Worse!"

"Then I'll give you some more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad! Leggo! I—I'm all right now!" yelled Lord Mauleverer.

"Feel as if you can get up without my dragging you up by the ears?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Yaas!"

"Buck up, then!"

Lord Mauleverer stood upon his feet, and gasped. He did not resist as Bob Cherry jerked off his flowery dressing-gown. Johnny Bull, of the Remove, looked into the study, and chuckled.

"What's the row?" he asked.

"We're taking Mauly out to play footer."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get a pair of footer boots for him."

"Right-ho!"

Bob jerked off Lord Mauleverer's slippers, his lordship hopping as he did so. Johnny Bull returned with the boots. They were several sizes large for the dandy of the Remove, but they were jammed upon his feet and fastened there. Lord Mauleverer submitted helplessly.

"Now you're ready?" said Bob Cherry.

"My dear fellow——"

"March!"

"Can't! Fagged!"

"All right! Line up behind him, you fellows," said Bob Cherry. "If he can't walk down to the footer ground, we shall have to dribble him there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, when I say 'Kick,' all kick together," said Bob Cherry. "One, two, three——"

Lord Mauleverer did not wait for the word "Kick." He was outside the study in a twinkling, and the juniors followed him, roaring with laughter.

CHAPTER 10.

Well Run!

"GREAT Scott!"
"Mauly!"
"He's going to play footer!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nearly all the Remove were on the junior football ground. It was Wednesday, a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and a clear, sharp December afternoon. There were two matches going on in different parts of the playing-fields. The Upper Fourth were playing the Shell, and the Fifth were playing the Sixth. The Removites were at practice; but the news that Lord Mauleverer had come down to play quite took their attention away from shooting and passing. Lord Mauleverer looked very unhappy as he came down in the midst of the chums of the Remove. He was too good-natured to say "No" to anybody, and Harry Wharton & Co. would not have taken "No" for an answer on this occasion. Bob Cherry meant to be kind, and his chums meant to back him up, and there was no escape for the unfortunate dandy of the Remove.

"My hat!" said Bolsover major, "where did he get those boots?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"One of them would be enough for you, Mauly!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, rats!" said Johnny Bull warmly. The boots belonged to Johnny Bull; and they certainly were a good size. Lord Mauleverer's feet seemed to be floating about in them as he walked.

"Now, then; on the ball, Mauly darling!" exclaimed Micky Desmond.

"Go it, Mauly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat, this will be worth watching!" exclaimed Tom Brown. "Give him the ball!"

Lord Mauleverer was propelled upon the field. Micky Desmond dribbled the ball towards his lordship.

"Now, stop it when I kick!" he exclaimed.

"Yaas!"

Biff!

The footer flew, and Lord Mauleverer stopped it—with his face. He uttered a startled exclamation, and sat down violently upon the footer ground. There was a yell from the Removites.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad!"

"Faith, and ye're a howlin' ass!" exclaimed Micky, in astonishment. "Why didn't ye stop the ball intirely?"

"He did!" chuckled Bolsover major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry rushed to Lord Mauleverer and picked him up. The schoolboy earl rubbed his nose ruefully.

"Begad!" he murmured.

"Here's the ball," said Bob Cherry. "Now, I'm going to give you a lesson in shooting——"

"Begad, I haven't a gun, you know! And surely we're not allowed to shoot here, with so many fellows about?" murmured his lordship.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shooting for goal, you ass! You place the ball—so!"

"Yaas?"

"And then you kick it."

"Do you really?"

"Yes, you ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "You do, really! You've got to get it between those posts—see—in the net."

"Yaas."

"Well, kick!"

"Yaas."

Lord Mauleverer seemed to gather all his strength for a supreme effort. He kicked the football, and it rolled away from his toe a couple of yards. Lord Mauleverer looked rather pleased with himself.

"Begad, you know, this isn't a difficult game," he remarked. "I can do that."

The juniors shrieked.

"That isn't all!" said Bob Cherry witheringly. "That isn't the total that's required for winning League matches. You're not quite up to playing Cardiff or Arsenal yet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put some beef into it, you ass! Look here, like this!"

Bob Cherry sent the footer spinning into the net. Hazeldene threw it out, and Lord Mauleverer essayed to do the same. The ball dropped half-way, and the schoolboy earl turned to walk off the field.

"Where are you going?" roared Bob Cherry.

"In."

"What for?"

"Finished."

Bob Cherry made a sign to Nugent, and they caught the slacker by either arm.

"You're not finished yet," grinned Bob Cherry. "You are going to learn to run now. Come round the field at top speed."

"I—I can't!"

"Why can't you?"

"Tired."

"Well, we'll see," said Bob Cherry. "The top half of you is coming, anyway, and if the lower half doesn't follow, I fancy you will have a pain. Gee-up!"

Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent broke into a run. As they were holding Lord Mauleverer's arms in a grip of iron, the top half of him, as Bob expressed it, had to accompany them. The lower half was set into unaccustomed motion, and Lord Mauleverer ran as he had never run before.

"Hurray!" shouted Wharton. "Go it!"

"Ow!"

"What's the matter?"

"Tired."

"Oh, you'll run off that tired feeling!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "Hurry,

up! Get a move on! Run, you bounder, run!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Buck up!"

Bob and Nugent were going at top speed now. Lord Mauleverer's legs went like clockwork, and he ran, and ran, till he felt as if his legs were dropping off. When he ceased to run, the two juniors did not stop, and Lord Mauleverer was dragged along the field till his legs began to run again of their own accord.

The juniors roared with laughter as they watched the peculiar sight. Twice round the field Lord Mauleverer and his self-appointed trainers went, till the exhausted slacker begged for mercy.

Bob Cherry panted as he halted at last.

"There, that's not so bad!" he exclaimed.

"Don't say you can't run again! You can run all right! Now we'll do some kicking."

"I—I'm tired! I think I shall be ill!"

"Oh, you'll get over that! Now see if you can kick this footer into goal. If you don't, I'll kick you in!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Go it, Mauly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer stood gasping for breath. His face was crimson with exertion, and his breathing was hard and fast. Bob Cherry dropped the footer before him, and the unhappy slacker kicked it. The ball swerved off his foot, and, instead of shooting towards the goal, caught Bob Cherry under the chin. Bob gave a surprised roar, and sat down on the football field.

"Oh, you ass! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer broke into a run. Bob Cherry jumped up and roared after him.

"Stop! Where are you going?"

"In!" gasped Mauleverer, without stopping.

"You're not! Come back!"

"I'm done!"

"You're not; you've hardly started yet. Stop him!"

Lord Mauleverer dashed on. He had discovered that he could run, and he was running now for all he was worth.

"After him!" roared Bob Cherry.

Five or six juniors dashed in pursuit. Fear lent Lord Mauleverer wings. He raced on at an amazing speed, considering his previous efforts, and dashed into the

School House. His heavy footer boots went clump-clump up the stairs, and he ran breathlessly into the Remove passage. A fat junior stepped out of his study to see what the terrific clumping was about, and met the flying junior in full career. There was a wild roar from Billy Bunter as he was rolled over like a ninepin. Lord Mauleverer rolled over him.

"Oh, dear! Begad!"

"Yowp!" roared Bunter. "Oh, you ass! I'm hurt! Yah!"

"Sorry, my dear fellow. Oh, here they come!"

Bob Cherry & Co. were thundering up the stairs. Lord Mauleverer leaped to his feet and dashed on as they came streaking along the Remove passage. Bob Cherry, in his wild haste, did not observe Bunter, who was just getting up. He rolled over him, and there was a fresh yell from Bunter as Bob Cherry descended upon him. Three or four fellows added themselves to the heap, unable to stop in time.

Lord Mauleverer, saved from capture by that timely respite, fled into his study and slammed the door, and locked it on the inside.

Bob Cherry struggled under the mass of struggling juniors.

"Gerroff!" he roared.

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "I'm injured! I'm dying! I—I'm dead! Ow!"

"Gerroff!"

"Yow! Keep your elbow out of my eye, fathead!" said Johnny Bull sulphurously.

"Yah! Keep your silly eye off my elbow!"

"Grooh! Gerroff!"

Bob Cherry disentangled himself from the heap, and ran on, gasping. He reached Lord Mauleverer's door, but it was locked against him, and there was a confused sound within of the schoolboy millionaire piling furniture against the door. Bob Cherry kicked hard.

Crash!

"Go away!" came a faint voice from within.

"Come and play footer."

"Go away! I'm tired."

"Come out!"

"Rats!"

Crash!

A table, a sofa, two chairs, and a book-case were crammed against the door from within. Bob Cherry burst into a laugh.

"He's barricaded himself in!" he re-

marked. "Never mind, we'll give him some more footer to-morrow. This is a case of kill or cure."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Bob Cherry & Co. retired, laughing breathlessly. Lord Mauleverer remained barricaded in his study till dark, when he felt himself safe from compulsory football. When he came down in the evening he looked more weary than ever, and he cast glances of pathetic reproach at the chums of the Remove—which only made them chuckle.

CHAPTER 20.

Rather Hasty!

TEMPLE, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, came into the Common-room after tea with an air of being very well satisfied with themselves.

Indeed, Bob Cherry's description of their manner as "swank" was not altogether unjust. Temple, Dabney & Co. were very pleased with themselves. They had beaten the Shell in the Form match that afternoon. Beating the Shell was not a very difficult task, for the Shell at Greyfriars did not number many great footballers in its ranks. But, as Johnny Bull said, it was something for Temple Dabney & Co. to beat anything. They walked in with their noses very high in the air, and bestowed lofty glances of condescension upon the Remove fellows.

"Lemme see," Temple remarked. "I believe we're playing you Remove kids next Wednesday, ain't we, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Yes; what you call playing," he assented.

Temple frowned.

"We've beaten the Shell this afternoon," he remarked.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"You Remove kids won't have an earthly," said Fry. "The fact is we've been thinking that you'd better scratch us, and play the Third instead. Paget and Tubb are about your mark. I've put it to Temple that it's a bit below our dignity to waste time playing kids—after we've beaten the Shell."

There was a growl of wrath from the Removites. The Fourth-Formers' "swank" was really unjustifiable. At cricket and at football the Remove had beaten them time and again, and a single victory over the

Shell was really not ground enough for this lofty attitude.

"You fearful ass!" said Bob Cherry, with a withering look. "I'd undertake to lick the Upper Fourth, playing a team of the biggest duffers there are in the Remove!"

"What-ho!" said Harry Wharton, with equal emphasis.

Temple, Dabney & Co. laughed good-humouredly.

"Cheeky kids!" said Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

"You'd better scratch," said Fry. "We're willing to let you off. We would be pleased to make you look asses, but it's a waste of time, as we've beaten the—"

"Oh, blow the Shell! The Shell can't play for toffee!" said Harry Wharton. "I'd undertake to lick your team hollow, with Mauleverer in goal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple grinned.

"Would you?" he exclaimed quickly. "All right, I'll take you at your word! We'll play you—your side with Mauleverer in goal!"

"Well—hem—"

"You're not going to back out?" said Temple. "If you're only gassing—"

"Rats! We'll play you—Mauly in goal!" said Harry Wharton at once.

"Done!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "We should lick you, anyway. But this will make it interesting—a case of fifty goals to nil!"

"Sixty or seventy!" grinned Fry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all arranged, then," said Temple. "You play us with Mauleverer in goal! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Fourth-Formers strolled away, chuckling.

Harry Wharton stood silent, and his chums looked at him with very expressive looks. As soon as the Fourth-Formers were gone, they proceeded to express their opinions verbally.

"Ass!"

"Fathead!"

"Chump!"

"Duffer!"

"Burbler!"

"Yah!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Wharton, colouring. "I—I suppose I spoke rather hastily. But who'd have thought that Temple would jump at it like that?"

"Anybody would!" growled Johnny Bull. "They know they can't lick us, with all their gas; and this gives 'em the chance of their lives."

"Mauly in goal!" groaned Nugent. "Mauly in goal! Why didn't you say Bunter?"

"Mauly—in goal!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Well, it's done now!" said Wharton.

"And we're done, too!"

"Done brown!"

"Clean as a whistle!"

"Spoofed!"

"Licked!"

"We shall have to take care that they don't get anywhere near the goal, that's all!" said Harry desperately.

"If you'd said anywhere but goal!" said Tom Brown, with a snort. "Anywhere else! We could have put him anywhere in the field and played a man short. But in goal!"

"At one goal a minute that will be ninety goals to nil," said Hazeldene, with the air of a fellow making a careful calculation.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, and it's a silly omadbaun ye are, Wharton darling!" said Micky Desmond.

"May as well chuck up the match," said Bolsover major. "It will only be a walk-over for the Fourth! Yah!"

"Rot!" said Harry Wharton. "Even with a duffer in goal we shall give them a tussle. And I dare say Mauly will stop some of the shots."

"Suppose he stops half of them, that will leave forty-five to nil!" said Hazeldene.

"Oh, don't be an ass! We shall have to try hard."

"So will Mauly!" said Bob Cherry determinedly. "We're in for it now, and Mauly is going to lead the strenuous life for a bit. Lucky I've taken his football education in hand already!"

"Promising pupil, I must say!" jeered Bolsover.

"Oh, you can teach even a mug a lot in a week," said Bulstrode. "We'll have Mauly at it early and late. He will simply have to buck up, and get on his mettle."

"We'll put it to him," said Bob Cherry. "Where is he? Mauly! Mauly!"

Lord Mauleverer looked round feebly. He was seated in an armchair by the common-room fire, in an attitude of mental and physical exhaustion.

"Hallo, my dear fellows!" he said in a faint voice.

The juniors surrounded him. Lord Mauleverer looked a little alarmed; but he was too tired to move.

"How do you like footer?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"I don't like it at all," said Lord Mauleverer. "It's too much like work."

"Would you like to play in a Form match next Wednesday?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Thanks, no!"

"Sorry for that, for you're going to play!"

Lord Mauleverer shook his head in alarm.

"My dear fellow, it's impossible. I was ill once through exerting myself. I've never done it since. I simply can't do it!"

"We know you can't do it," said Bob Cherry, "but you've got to. Our champion ass has undertaken to play the Upper Fourth with you in goal."

"Oh, dear!"

"You've got to learn to be a goalkeeper by next Wednesday," said Tom Brown, with a grin. "You shall have all the training you want."

"Thanks, I don't want any."

"All you need, then," grinned Nugent.

"Oh, dear!"

"It's settled now, Mauly," said Harry Wharton seriously. "I've undertaken to play you in goal, and if you let them score you'll be letting the Remove down. You don't want to do that. You must buck up, for the sake of the Form!"

Lord Mauleverer groaned.

"Well, if you put it like that, Wharton, I'll do my best!" he said. "I don't want to let the Form down. But I don't know whether I can keep goal, I've never tried!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You want to go through a course of physical exercises," Bob Cherry explained. "You can soon learn to stop a ball. We can begin now. Nugent, old man, buzz off and fetch a footer, and we'll put Mauly through his first paces now."

"I—I—begad—"

"Right-o!" grinned Nugent; and he ran out of the common-room. The schoolboy millionaire cast an imploring glance at Bob Cherry.

"Not now!" he pleaded. "I'm tired, you know. I've exerted myself frightfully

to-day. I can't even get up from this chair."

"Really?" asked Bob Cherry, taking a grip with both hands on the back of the armchair.

"Yaas, really!"

"Then I'll help you!"

"I say! Ow—ow—oh! Yah!"

Bob Cherry tilted up the armchair, and Lord Mauleverer slid out in a heap upon the hearthrug. He did not get up; apparently he was too tired. He sat where he fell.

"Gerrup!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Can't!"

"Why can't you?"

"Tired!"

"Now, all together!" said Bob Cherry. "When I say three, jump on him!"

"Good!"

"One!" counted Bob Cherry. "Two——" Lord Mauleverer got up.

CHAPTER 21.

In Training!

FRANK NUGENT came into the junior Common-room with a footer under his arm. The juniors were all gathering round now, to look on at Lord Mauleverer's training. His lordship had a hopeless look. He felt that he was in for it, and he cast a wild glance at the door. But the way of escape was barred.

"This way!" said Bob Cherry, taking his lordship by the arm, and backing him up against the wall. "Stand there!"

"Yaas."

"We're going to kick this ball at you—"

"Begad!"

"And you've got to stop it!"

"Oh, dear!"

"If you don't stop it, it will biff you, and very likely make your aristocratic boko another shape."

"Oh!"

"Ready?" demanded Bob Cherry, placing the ball in position.

"No!"

"When will you be ready?"

"Not at all, I'm afraid, my dear fellow. You see——"

Bob Cherry snorted.

"On guard!" he called out.

"My dear fellow—— Ow!"

Bob Cherry kicked the ball with a deadly aim. Lord Mauleverer put up a feeble hand—too late. The footer biffed upon his nose, and the back of his head smote the wall with a sounding crack. There was a yell from the juniors.

"Goal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad! Oh, dear!"

"Throw that ball out, goalie!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Can't. Tired!"

Nugent tossed the ball back, and Lord Mauleverer made a rush for the door. Micky Desmond and Johnny Bull caught aim, and backed him to the wall again, as if they were backing a horse into the shafts of a cart.

"Take your place, goalie!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ready?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, dear!"

Whiz! The ball flew directly at Lord Mauleverer's head. But the instinct of self-preservation had awakened in his lordship now, and he caught the ball and stopped it. The chums of the Remove gave him a cheer.

"Well saved! Hurrah!"

"That's all right!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "You'll be fit to keep goal for Cardiff soon. Chuck that ball back."

Lord Mauleverer tossed the ball back. Bob Cherry plied him with shots, and as each of them was aimed directly for Lord Mauleverer's noble features, he had no choice about exerting himself. When he failed to stop the ball it alighted upon his face, and he was surprised himself at the nimbleness he soon showed. The juniors stood round in an interested crowd, cheering the amateur goalkeeper.

"Good egg!" said Bob Cherry at last.

"You pay for training, I must say that. I'll have you between the sticks to-morrow morning before school, and you'll be surprised at the improvement. You're going in for strict training between now and next Wednesday!"

"Oh, begad!"

"You're getting on famously, Mauly!" said Harry Wharton encouragingly.

"Yaas."

"Now for a little physical exercise," said Bob Cherry. "Run round the room at top speed, and jump over all the obstacles I put in the way."

"Can't!"

"Tired?" asked Bob sympathetically.

"Yaas."

"I'll soon cure that. Two or three of you chaps run after him and kick him as hard as you can whenever you get in reach. It's surprising how he'll be able to run. That tired feeling will soon pass off, Mauly."

"Oh, dear!"

"We're doing this for your good, you know. Now then, start!"

Lord Mauleverer groaned and started. Micky Desmond and Nugent and Tom Brown followed him, with their boots all ready to help him on in his wild career. Chairs were overturned for him to jump over them, and juniors stood ready to stop him from going round them. Lord Mauleverer had not known before that he could jump; but with the pursuers behind him he found that he was able both to run and to jump quite well.

The Removites roared as he tore round the common-room at a breakneck speed, gasping for breath the while. Wingate, of the Sixth, looked in at the doorway to discover what the uproar was about, and he stared at the careering Mauleverer in amazement.

"What on earth are you kids up to?" he exclaimed.

"Only training Mauly for footer," said Bob Cherry. "He's keeping goal for us next Wednesday. He's got a tired feeling, and we're showing him how to work it off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the captain of Greyfriars retired, laughing. Lord Mauleverer rushed on. He had paused for a moment, hopefully, as Wingate looked in; but Micky Desmond's boot had reminded him of his danger, and he tore on again. Round and round the room he went at frantic speed, leaping the obstacles in fine style.

"Well run, Mauly!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, allowing the panting nobleman to halt at last. "You are getting on famously."

"Oh, dear!"

"Now a few more exercises, and you can have a rest. Have you ever stood on your head?"

"Great Scott!" gasped Mauleverer.

"No!"

"Then it's time you learned! Stand on it!"

"My dear fellow——"

"Take hold of his ankles and help him!" said Bob Cherry.

"Begad! Leggo! I—I'll try!" gasped his lordship.

"Buck up, then!"

Lord Mauleverer stooped down gingerly and placed his hands on the floor, carefully spreading his handkerchief first to make sure of not soiling his delicate palms. Then he dragged his feet into the air, about a foot from the ground.

"Higher!" roared Bob Cherry. "You're not to make a letter V! Shove your feet right up into the air!"

"Oh, dear!"

Lord Mauleverer made a great effort, and his legs shot up, and he turned completely over—so suddenly that his heels crashed upon the chest of his instructor, and Bob Cherry was sent spinning.

"Yow!" gasped Bob as he sat down.

Lord Mauleverer rolled over him.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites.

"Groo! Draggimoff!"

The juniors dragged Lord Mauleverer to his feet. Bob Cherry sat up. There was a rustle of papers as a number of Treasury notes dropped out of his pockets.

"Oh, you ass!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Groo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I believe I've dropped some money!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wharton. "I believe you have. About ten pounds, I think."

Bob Cherry staggered up and rubbed his chest. Two or three of the juniors groped on the floor for the money that had dropped out of Lord Mauleverer's pockets. The schoolboy millionaire was always well provided with money. He never knew how much he had, but he always had a great deal.

"Ow!" groaned Bob Cherry. "It's not so easy training a silly ass after all! I think we'll chuck it for this evening."

"Oh, good!" groaned Lord Mauleverer. "I—I'm quite exhausted, really, you know."

"Nine pounds," said Wharton, counting the money that had been gathered up.

"Is that all you dropped, Mauly?"

"How should I know?" asked Lord Mauleverer innocently.

"Oh, you ass! Don't you know how much you had in your pockets?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, you'd better look and see if there's any more on the floor, ass!" said Nugent.

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"No fear. I dare say that's all."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer slipped the nine Treasury notes into his pocket, and collapsed into the armchair. He sat there, pumping in breath.

"Tagged?" asked Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"Yaas."

"All right. You can get a good rest to-night, and I'll have you up at half-past six for a run before rising-bell."

"Oh, dear!"

"I'm your trainer now, you know. I'm not going to neglect you. If you're not in form next Wednesday it won't be my fault," said Bob Cherry.

Lord Mauleverer did not reply. He groaned.

CHAPTER 22.

A Mystery of the Night!

LORD MAULEVERER did not move from the armchair until Gwynne, the prefect, came to drive the Remove off to bed. Perhaps he was too tired; perhaps he was lost in awful contemplation of the prospect of getting up at half-past six in the morning for a run before rising-bell. When the prefect came in, Bob Cherry shook the schoolboy earl by the shoulder, and Lord Mauleverer looked up pathetically.

"Bed-time!" said Bob cheerily. "Up you go!"

"Can't!"

"Eh?"

"Tired!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Oh, we'll help you up to bed if you like!" he said. "You take one ankle, Nugent, and I'll take the other. The rest of him will follow, I expect, unless he comes to pieces."

Lord Mauleverer simply jumped up.

"I—I can walk up all right," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha! Come on, then!"

Lord Mauleverer trotted away. The Remove went up to their dormitory, Bob Cherry stopping at Mark Linley's study to borrow Linley's alarm clock. Linley sometimes rose very early to study, and he had

an alarm clock, which had the unusual gift of going off at the time it was set for. Bob Cherry took it into the dormitory and placed it near the head of his bed.

"What's that for?" asked Lord Mauleverer feebly.

"Half-past six."

"I mean, what are you getting up early for?"

"To have you out for a run."

"Oh, dear!"

"You'll get used to it," said Bob Cherry kindly. "This is making a difference to you already. In a week's time you will be a giddy champion, and you will simply howl for football."

"Begad!"

Lord Mauleverer inserted himself into his silk pyjamas and turned in. He fell asleep almost at once. His unusual exertions had tired him out, but his sleep was troubled. Gwynne turned out the lights and retired, and there was the usual buzz of conversation in the dormitory before the fellows went to sleep. They discussed the coming Form match with the Fourth, and the fellows passed free and uncompromising comments upon Harry Wharton's rash undertaking to play Temple, Dabney & Co. with Mauleverer in goal. Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Did you speak, Mauly?"

"He's asleep," said Nugent.

There came a mumbling voice from Lord Mauleverer's bed.

"Begad! I'm tired, you know! Groo!"

"Mauly, old man!"

No reply.

"He's talking in his sleep," grinned Bob Cherry. "Poor old Mauly! I said that this would be a case of kill or cure, and I think it will."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, Mauly, and go to sleep!"

"Groo!"

Lord Mauleverer relapsed into silence again. The Removites dropped off to sleep one by one, and there was silence in the dark dormitory.

Once or twice there came a troubled mutter from Lord Mauleverer's bed, but the ears of the Removites were deaf to it now.

Bob Cherry, as a rule, was a sound sleeper. But this night he did not sleep so soundly as usual. Perhaps it was the aggressive ticking of the alarm clock near

to his head. He woke up about midnight with a vague impression upon his mind that someone was moving about in the dormitory.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry sleepily. "Who's that?"

There was a creak of a bed and silence.

Bob Cherry raised himself upon his elbow, and blinked round into the long, dark room. There was a glimmer of starlight at the high windows. He heard a quarter roll out from the clock-tower. It was a quarter-past twelve.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Silence!

Bob Cherry was settling down to sleep again, when it struck him that he could no longer hear the ticking of the alarm clock. He raised his head again and listened.

His impression was correct, the ticking of the clock was silent. Bob Cherry gave a dissatisfied grunt.

"Groo! The blessed thing's stopped!"

He sat up in bed and groped on the washstand for the alarm clock to set it going again. But only vacant space met his groping fingers. The clock was no longer there. Bob Cherry gave a soft whistle.

He thought he understood now.

The alarm clock had been removed, and it was easy to guess who had removed it; at least, so Bob considered. He jumped at once to the conclusion that Lord Mauleverer had taken it away, so that he should not be awakened at half-past six in the morning. He concluded at once that it was Lord Mauleverer whom he had heard getting into bed.

Bob Cherry chuckled softly. He did not mean to allow the schoolboy millionaire to escape the early morning run so easily as all that.

"Mauly!" he shouted.

His powerful voice echoed through the sleeping dormitory. There came no reply from Lord Mauleverer, but two or three fellows woke up.

"What's the row?" came Harry Wharton's sleepy voice.

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo! I'm calling Mauly!"

"What on earth for?"

"He's collared my alarm-clock."

"Good!"

"Good, is it?" growled Bob Cherry. "I'm

jolly well going to make him bring it back.

Mauly! Mauly! MAULY!"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Bolsover major.

"You'll wake up the whole giddy dorm."

"And the House, too!" yawned Newland.

"Do be quiet!"

"Rats! Why don't you answer, Mauly?"

"He's asleep," said Ogilvy.

"Bosh! Mauly! Mauly! MAULY!"

"Shut up!" howled Bulstrode, and Tom

Brown and Hazeldene, and three or four

more juniors, awakened from slumber by

Bob Cherry's stentorian tones.

"Mauly! Mauly! MAULY!"

"He's asleep, you ass!"

"Rats! He can't be asleep. Somebody's

taken my alarm clock! It must be Mauly!

He can't be asleep! Mauly! Mauly!

MAULY!"

"Cheese it!"

"Shut up!"

"Blow your alarm-clock! Go to sleep!"

Bob Cherry jumped out of bed. He

sought for a candle-end, and lighted it, and

approached the bedside of the schoolboy

earl. If Lord Mauleverer was sleeping, he

was sleeping very soundly, for the calling

had not awakened him, though nearly every-

body else in the Remove dormitory was

awake by this time.

"Now, then, Mauly! You humbug!"

growled Bob Cherry.

He approached the candle-light to the face

of the schoolboy earl. Lord Mauleverer's

eyes were closed, and he was breathing

peacefully. He certainly looked as if he

were asleep, and Bob Cherry was puzzled.

"He's asleep, right enough," said Snoop.

"Well, I'll soon see! Mauly, I've got a

pin here. If you don't wake up I'm going

to stick it into you. See?"

Lord Mauleverer did not move.

One of his arms was thrown outside the

coverlet, and Bob Cherry approached the

point of the pin to the white skin and

touched it. Still Lord Mauleverer did not

stir.

"My aunt! He must be asleep!" said

Bob Cherry, puzzled. "Mauly! Mauly!

Mauly!"

"Oh, do shut up!" grunted Bolsover.

Bob Cherry did not mean to beaten. He

jabbed the pin slightly into Lord Maul-

everer's skin, and the schoolboy earl started

and awoke. He blinked at Bob Cherry and

the glimmering candle in amazement.

"Oh!" he ejaculated. "Wharrer marrer?"

"Tain't rising-bell. Grooh!"

Bob Cherry frowned at him.

"Have you been asleep?" he demanded.

"Yaas!"

"You haven't been out of bed?"

"No, my dear fellow!"

"Honour bright?" asked Bob Cherry,

"Yaas!"

"Well, somebody's raided the alarm-

clock," said Bob Cherry. "If it wasn't you,

who was it?"

"Begad, I'm sure I don't know, my dear

fellow! I haven't opened my eyes once."

"Honest Injun?"

"Yaas!"

"Oh all right!" Bob Cherry knew that

Lord Mauleverer was incapable of an

untruth, even for the sake of avoiding early

rising. "But if it wasn't you, what silly

ass was it? Which of you rotters has got

my alarm-clock?"

"Oh, go to bed!" growled Bolsover

major. "I hope he's smashed it, whoever

it is! Shut up, and let a fellow get a wink

of sleep!"

"I want my alarm-clock!"

"You want a thick ear, you mean!"

roared Bolsover. "If you don't shut up,

we'll turn out and bump you up and down

the dorm. Go to bed!"

"Faith, and Bolsover's right! Let us go

to sleep, Cherry darling!"

Bob Cherry growled, and looked round in

the hope of finding the alarm-clock. But he

could not see it; it had evidently been

carefully put out of sight. The candle-end

was burning down to his fingers, and Bob

Cherry blew it out and went back to bed.

The Remove dormitory was plunged into

slumber again. Whoever had stopped the

alarm-clock had his way, if he wanted to

avoid any stirring in the dormitory before

rising-bell. It was not till the rising-bell

was clanging out on the dusky morning that

Bob Cherry opened his eyes.

CHAPTER 23.

A Startling Discovery!

CLANG! Clang!

Bob Cherry opened his eyes,

yawned portentously, and sat up in

bed. The dim December morning

was glimmering in at the high windows of

the dormitory.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's rising-bell!"

"Yes, it sounds like it," yawned Frank

Nugent. "Of course it might be a convent bell or a muffin bell—"

"Ass! Lord Mauleverer has lost his run this morning, owing to some dummy taking my alarm-clock away! Somebody's going to have his silly head punched this morning!"

Bob Cherry turned out of bed.

"Mauly!" he roared.

"Yaw-aw-aw!"

"Mauly, you slacker!"

"Yaw-aw!"

"Turn out, or I shall come and help you!"

Lord Mauleverer yawned again and turned out. The clang of the rising-bell had ceased, and all the Remove were up with the exception of Billy Bunter. Bunter always stayed in bed till the last possible moment.

"Now, where's that alarm-clock?" asked Bob Cherry. "The chap who took it away may as well own up now. Where is it?"

Nobody replied.

"I want to give it back to Marky," said Bob Cherry testily. "Look here, the silly ass who has got it had better shell it out."

"Must be Mauly!" said Snoop.

"Begad, it isn't!" said Lord Mauleverer earnestly. "I never woke up in the night at all, excepting when Bob Cherry stuck a pin in me. Great Scott!"

"What's the matter with you?" asked Harry Wharton, as Lord Mauleverer uttered that sudden and startled exclamation.

"Somebody's been larking," said Lord Mauleverer. "Look here!"

He pointed to his coat. He had left it carefully folded up on a chair overnight. It was lying crumpled on the floor now, and a pound note lay upon the floor beside it. Lord Mauleverer picked the jacket up ruefully; he was very careful with his clothes, and he picked up the Treasury note and slipped it into the pocket. Then he uttered another exclamation more startled than before.

"By Jove! Look here, the fellow who has been larking had better own up," he said. "It's no joke to play tricks with a chap's money!"

"Money!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Somebody's taken my quids!"

"By George!"

"Are you sure?" exclaimed Nugent. "You know what a silly ass you are with foney. You lost a banknote once, and found out afterwards that you used it for a lookmark."

"Somebody's taken eight quids out of my pocket!" said Lord Mauleverer quietly.

"Phew!"

The juniors, half-dressed and excited, surrounded the schoolboy earl at once. Lord Mauleverer had turned out the lining of his jacket pocket, and he was holding the solitary note in his hand.

"Sure they were there?" asked Harry Wharton at last.

"You fellows saw me put the quids in my pocket last night," said Lord Mauleverer. "They're the quids I dropped when that ass Cherry was making me do rotten exercises in the Common-room. You saw me put them into my coat pocket."

"Yes, I remember that."

"I remember it, too," said Lord Mauleverer. "You were jawing me about being more careful with my money, and that impressed it on my mind. There were nine quids in this pocket when I went to bed, and I remember hearing them rustle when I folded up my bags."

"Oh!"

"I came up straight here from the Common-room, and didn't even stop in my study. I was too tired to do anything but sit there till we came to bed," said Lord Mauleverer. "The money was here. I suppose it's been taken for a lark. I don't like larks played with money. It's unpleasant."

"I should jolly well think it is," said Bob Cherry emphatically. "It's liable to look a good bit like stealing. The chap who has scoffed Mauly's quid notes had better shell them out at once, and be sharp about it."

The Removites looked at one another dubiously.

No one came forward to "shell out."

"Hang it all!" said Harry Wharton, breaking a painful silence at last. "If any chap here has got the money, he'd better hand it back at once. If there's any delay about it, the chap will get suspected of trying to steal it."

"I guess so," remarked Fisher T. Fish.

"I guess the fellow had better come up instanter. Yep!"

"Who was it?" demanded Bob Cherry looking round.

"Same chap who stopped the alarm clock, perhaps," suggested Morgan.

"By Jove, yes! Who was that?"

No reply.

"Look here," said Wharton, anxiously. "We must have this out before it gets further than this dormitory. We don't want the fellows saying that there's a thief in the Remove."

"Phew!"

"Begad, no!"

"Let every fellow answer in turn," said Harry Wharton, glancing round at the crowd of startled and anxious faces. "Now, then!"

Each of the Removites spoke up. And each declared that he had not touched the pound notes in Lord Mauleverer's pocket. Harry Wharton looked very worried.

"That settles it, so far as the Remove is concerned," he said. "It must have been a fellow from another dormitory."

"Hold on! We haven't asked Bunter yet!"

"Have him out."

Billy Bunter was snoring. He ceased to snore, and roared loudly as two or three pairs of hands grasped him and bumped him out of bed upon the floor. The fat junior roared and blinked furiously at his assailants.

"Ow, ow, ow! Beasts! Lemme alone! Yow! Yah! Beasts!"

"Wake up, you fat idiot!" growled Bob Cherry. "Mauly's missed some money! Have you taken it?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! If you think I'm a thief—"

"I'm not saying you're a thief, you idiot!" roared Bob Cherry. "Somebody's taken eight quid out of Mauly's trucks for a silly joke. Did you do it?"

"Ow! No, I didn't! Ow!"

"If you did, Bunt, own up at once," said Harry Wharton. "If this gets outside the dormitory it will be serious."

"Yow! I don't know anything about it," growled Bunter peevishly. "I dare say Mauly's lost it. You know what a silly ass he is; he's always losing money."

"He couldn't have lost it in this case. He had it in his pocket when he came up to bed. Somebody's moved his jacket in the night, and taken the money."

"Groo! Well, I don't know anything about it. I didn't do it. Yah!"

And Billy Bunter began to dress himself sulkily.

"Of course it's a rotten joke," said Harry Wharton, though with failing confidence. "It can't be stolen! But it must have

been a chap from another dorm.—perhaps one of those silly asses in the Fourth!"

"Perhaps!" said Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, in a very peculiar tone. Vernon-Smith and Snoop and Bolsover major had been whispering together for the last few minutes. Harry Wharton gave the Bounder of Greyfriars a sharp look.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "If you know anything on the subject, you'd better say it out at once, before the matter becomes public."

"I don't know anything," said Vernon-Smith coolly. "But the money isn't the only thing missing. There's an alarm clock—"

"Pooh! Nobody would steal a bob alarm clock!" said Ogily.

"A three-and-sixpenny alarm clock!" said Mark Linley, with a smile.

"It was taken for a lark," said Bob Cherry uneasily.

"Lark be hanged!" said Vernon-Smith. "Money isn't taken for a lark, excepting by a lunatic. Whoever took that money doesn't mean to give it back; he's stolen it. It serves Mauly right for not taking proper care of it. But that's not the point. The thief has got to be bowled out; and it's no good talking rot about a fellow coming in from another dorm. and taking the quids. A fellow from another dorm. wouldn't know where to look for Mauleverer's clothes in the dark, even if he knew the money was there."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"If you mean anything," he said slowly, "you mean that some fellow here has stolen Lord Mauleverer's money?"

The Bounder nodded.

"Exactly!" he said coolly.

"Impossible!"

"I don't see it," said the Bounder sarcastically. "This Form may be next door to perfect; but I suppose there are some fellows here who aren't exactly angels. There are some who are jolly hard up, too."

Mark Linley and Penfold both flushed. They were the two scholarship boys in the Remove, and it was well known that they were not well provided with money. Billy Bunter looked very uncomfortable, too. Bunter was always in a state of impecuniosity, and his methods for relieving

his financial distress were not always very particular.

"Look here, it's no good throwing out rotten hints like that," said Harry Wharton sharply. "I still think it's a lark—a silly rotten lark, but nothing worse than that. It stands to reason that a fellow who would steal eight quid wouldn't steal a cheap alarm clock at the same time. And it's simply absurd to suppose that two fellows were up in the night, one stealing money, and the other pinching an alarm clock. That's rot!"

The Bounder smiled.

"Oh, run on," said Harry angrily. "I can see you've got something more in your mind, and you may as well get it off your chest."

"I don't believe there were two fellows up in the night," said the Bounder deliberately. "That's absurd; they might have run into one another. And I don't believe that a fellow going out to steal money would bother himself with an alarm clock. But—"

"But what?"

"But a fellow might hide his own alarm clock, as an excuse for getting out of bed, and bagging someone else's money," said the Bounder icily.

There was a gasp from the Removites. All eyes were turned upon Bob Cherry. Bob turned very red, and then pale. He did not seem to grasp the full meaning of the Bounder's words for a moment. But the unpleasant smile upon Vernon-Smith's cold, hard face quickly enlightened him as to the Bounder's meaning.

"Why—you—you—" Bob Cherry stammered. "You—you cad, do you mean to hint that I might have taken Mauly's quids?"

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm only stating the facts as they are!" he said. "It's for you to explain!"

"Explain!" roared Bob Cherry, his face flushing crimson. "You low cad, I'll explain to you—in a way you can understand!"

He made a spring at the Bounder. Vernon-Smith put up his hands quickly; but he might as well have tried to stop the charge of a bull. In a second Bob Cherry had his head in chancery, and he was pounding away furiously at Vernon-Smith's features, while the Bounder struggled vainly.

CHAPTER 24.

The Investigation!

"STOPPIT! Help! Ow! Yoop!"
 "Hold on, Bob!"
 "Chuck it!"

The dormitory door opened, and Wingate looked in.

"Why aren't you kids down?" he demanded. "Why—what—stop that at once!"

The Greyfriars captain strode among the juniors and dragged Bob Cherry away from the Bounder. Vernon-Smith staggered away, gasping, with the red streaming from his nose.

Bob Cherry made an effort to get at him again, but Wingate's grasp closed upon him like iron, and he was held back by main force.

"Stop it!" said Wingate sharply. "What's all this about?"

"He's called me a thief!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Mauly's lost some quids, and that beast says I may have taken them. Lemme get at him!"

"Hold on!" said Wingate quietly. "This isn't a matter to be settled by punching noses. It will have to be inquired into. How did you lose your money, Mauleverer?"

Lord Mauleverer explained, looking very much distressed.

"Do you think Cherry's taken it?"

"Certainly not," said Lord Mauleverer promptly.

"Why do you think Cherry may have taken it, Vernon-Smith?"

"He made an excuse for getting out and going to Lord Mauleverer's bed in the middle of the night," said Vernon-Smith savagely, dabbing his streaming nose with his handkerchief. "I didn't say he took it—I said he would have to explain—and then he jumped at me like a tiger."

"Yes, you rotter, and I'll give you some more, too, if you repeat what you said," howled Bob Cherry.

"I do repeat it!" said the Bounder, between his teeth. "I believe you took the money!"

Bob Cherry made an effort to wrench himself loose from Wingate's grasp.

"Let me go!" he said hoarsely.

Wingate tightened his grip upon the excited junior.

"Hold on!" he said quietly. "You had better be careful what you say, Smith."

This matter will come before the Head, if the money's not found, and you will have to stand by your accusation, and you'll suffer if you can't prove it. You can't bring accusations like that against a fellow without an atom of proof."

"All the fellows here know what happened last night," said the Bounder, sullenly.

"Well, what happened? You tell me, Wharton."

"Bob had set an alarm clock," Wharton explained. "In the middle of the night he woke up and found that it had been moved. He thought Mauleverer had taken it, because he was going to wake Mauleverer up specially early. Mauleverer was asleep; and Bob went to his bed to make sure of it. That's all. Mauly was really asleep; and it must have been somebody else who moved the alarm clock."

"There's no great harm in moving an alarm clock," said Wingate. "Who did it?"

There was no reply.

"Don't you know who did it?" asked the captain of Greyfriars.

"No," said Harry, "nobody admits having moved the clock, and we don't know where it is. It doesn't appear to be in the dormitory at all."

Wingate looked puzzled.

"That's very queer," he said. "A chap might steal eight pounds, I suppose, if he was cad enough; but nobody would steal an alarm clock. He couldn't expect ever to make use of it without being detected; and it wouldn't fetch much to sell."

"That's what I say," snarled Vernon-Smith. "I believe Bob Cherry hid the alarm clock himself, as an excuse for getting to Mauleverer's bed. He planned it all last night, I believe."

"I suppose that isn't true, Cherry?"

"True!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Of course it isn't! I woke up and couldn't hear the clock ticking, and I knew somebody had taken it away. I thought Mauly was shamming sleep, and woke him up. I don't know any more about it."

"You didn't touch his clothes?"

"No!"

"Did you notice whether they were on the chair, or on the floor?" asked Nugent. Bob Cherry shook his head.

"No. I only had a glimmer of light with a candle-end, and I was looking at

Mauly. The chair where he puts his clothes was on the other side of the bed, too."

"You could have got to it easily enough," said the Bounder, with a sneer.

Bob Cherry breathed fury.

"Hold your tongue, Smith," said Wingate sharply. "You have no right to start a suspicion of this sort. It's possible that Cherry hid the clock as an excuse for getting near to Mauleverer's bed on a pretence; and it's equally possible that somebody else took the money, and hid Cherry's clock so as to throw suspicion on him."

"Yes, by starting this yarn about him," said Johnny Bull fiercely, with an accusing glare at the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith started. Apparently the matter had not struck him in that light before.

"Only a dishonest chap would be quick in accusing another chap of stealing," added Frank Nugent.

"Faith, and there's something in that," Micky Desmond remarked. "What have ye got to say to that, Smithy, darling?"

Vernon-Smith flushed.

"I say that Cherry's trying to sneak out of it, and his friends are trying to throw suspicion on me, to shield him," he said hotly, "and you know jolly well, Wingate—"

"That's enough," interrupted the Greyfriars captain curtly. "I know nothing whatever about it; and you don't, either, unless you took the money yourself."

"You dare say—"

"Well, you've dared to say it about Cherry; and Cherry has a better reputation in the school than you have," said Wingate caustically.

Vernon-Smith ground his teeth.

"I've got plenty of money," he said. "I've no need to steal. Everybody knows that Bob Cherry's father is a poor devil of a half-pay officer, and as poor as a church mouse. I've got lots of money."

"Perhaps this is how you get it?" suggested Nugent.

"Why, you—you—"

"Come, that's enough of slanging one another," said Wingate. "The money has got to be found before you leave the dormitory, any of you. It's lucky that Mauleverer found out his loss before any of you went down. Begin a search of the dormitory,

all of you, and see if the money and the clock can be found."

The Removites obeyed.

The whole Form joined in the search, and the dormitory was ransacked from end to end. But neither the missing notes nor the alarm clock could be discovered.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, came into the dormitory while the juniors were busily engaged. The bell had rung for breakfast by this time, and the Remove-master had been surprised and annoyed to find an empty table in the dining-room, where his Form should have been.

"What is the matter here, Wingate?" he exclaimed, looking at the captain of Greyfriars and the crowd of excited half-dressed juniors in amazement.

Wingate explained.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch, frowning. "This is very annoying. This is not the first time that trouble has been caused by your carelessness with money, Mauleverer."

"I'm very sorry, sir," said the schoolboy millionaire, looking very distressed. "But we generally have some money in our pockets, sir. A fellow doesn't expect that anybody is going through his pockets in the night."

"Well, no. But such a large sum! However, it must be found. Wingate, will you send Gosling here? Before the boys leave the dormitory I will have every one of them searched, and their boxes as well."

"Yes, sir."

Wingate quitted the dormitory, and in a few minutes Gosling, the school porter, made his appearance. Mr. Quelch directed him to search the clothes of the Removites, and their boxes, and Gosling went through the search slowly and systematically. The juniors gave him all the assistance they could, eager enough to help in finding the money. Breakfast was forgotten; and it was past the time for morning lessons to commence when Gosling finished his search. It had been in vain! There was no sign in the Remove dormitory of the missing money; and, stranger still, no sign of the missing alarm clock.

Mr. Quelch looked very perplexed.

"The stolen articles cannot be in the dormitory," he said, at last.

"It must have been a fellow from another dormitory, sir," said Johnny Bull.

Mr. Quelch shook his head.

"I consider that very unlikely, Bull. The

truth seems to be that whoever took the money and the alarm clock removed them from the dormitory during the night. Did any of you hear any sound of a door opening, or anything of that sort?"

There was no answer.

"The door was not open when you rose in the night, Cherry?"

"No, sir. Something woke me up, though—and it might have been a sound of that sort," said Bob Cherry. "But I didn't notice it. I am sure I heard somebody getting into bed, and I took it to be Mauleverer, as I thought he'd moved the clock away. But Mauleverer was fast asleep when I got up."

"It is very puzzling. I shall have the search extended to the Remove studies," said Mr. Quelch. "You had better go down to breakfast now. None of you may go to the studies—remember that—till they have been searched."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch left the dormitory. The Removites, puzzled, perplexed, and very much troubled by the mysterious affair, dressed themselves almost in silence, and went down to a very late breakfast.

CHAPTER 25.

Very Unpleasant!

A GLOOM hung over the Remove that morning. Getting in to lessons an hour late would have caused rejoicing on any other occasion.

But the Remove were very far from rejoicing now.

So long as Lord Mauleverer's money was missing, a cloud was on the Form; and suspicion attached almost equally to every member of it.

Bob Cherry, to a certain extent, was more under suspicion than the other fellows owing to the insinuations of the Bounder! But Vernon Smith, to his surprise and great mortification, found that suspicion was turned upon him also.

His theory that Bob Cherry had hidden the alarm clock, as a plausible excuse for approaching Lord Mauleverer's bed without exciting suspicion, was believed by some fellows. But the counter theory, that Vernon-Smith himself had robbed the schoolboy earl, and had hidden the clock,

with the intention of casting suspicion on Bob Cherry, was equally plausible. That was not how the Bounder had intended the theory to work out; and if he had foreseen that development of it, he would undoubtedly have held his tongue. But it was too late to think of that now; and the Bounder, to his rage and annoyance, found that all Bob Cherry's friends—and their name was legion—looked upon him with suspicion.

Until morning lessons were over the rest of the school did not hear of the matter; but within ten minutes after classes had been dismissed all Greyfriars knew it.

Temple, Dabney & Co. assumed very superior airs upon the subject.

They approached a group of Removites who were discussing the matter in the Close, and Temple made an elaborate show of buttoning up his pockets. He had no buttons to his pockets, as a matter of fact, but he went through the dumb show very elaborately.

"I hear you've got burglars in the Remove," he remarked pleasantly.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

The Removites glared at them.

"Oh, shut up!" said Bob Cherry savagely.

"Go and eat coke!"

"Buzz off!"

Temple, Dabney & Co. smiled serenely.

"This is what comes of allowing you kids to run wild," he said. "I always said that the Remove wanted keeping in order. Haven't I always said so, you chaps?"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Certainly," corroborated Fry, with a genial nod.

"Look here," said Harry Wharton, setting his lips, "we're bothered enough over this rotten affair, without any chipping from silly asses on the subject. Anybody who tries to score off us over this will get dotted on the boko! Understand?"

"The dofulness on the honourable bokos will be terrific!" remarked Hurrece Jamset Ram Singh, the nabob of Bhani-pur.

"Oh, we don't want to rub it in," said Temple blandly. "We know you ain't all thieves. Only a few of you, I suppose—Ooooh!"

Biff!

Temple dropped into a sitting posture in the quad, as Bob Cherry's knuckles crashed upon his nose. The exasperated Removites

made a rush, and Fry and Scott and Dabney rolled over Temple. The Remove fellows wiped their boots on them, and walked away wrathfully, leaving the heroes of the Fourth to sort themselves out at their leisure.

Coker, Potter, and Greene, of the Fifth, met Harry Wharton & Co. a little later. Horace Coker wagged his forefinger at them in a very exasperating way.

"Which of you was it?" he demanded.

"Yes, which was it?" said Potter. "It's a shocking thing. Seems to me that the Remove are a regular disgrace to the school. It's bad enough to cheek seniors, and that sort of thing; but really, I expected they'd draw a line at scoffing a chap's quids when he was asleep!"

"What is Greyfriars coming to?" said Greene, addressing space.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged a glance. Without a word, they charged the Fifth-Formers. Potter and Greene and Coker were bowled over like ninneps.

"Yaroooh!" roared Coker. "You young villains—Ow!"

"Yowp!"

"Groo!"

"Roll 'em over!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker & Co. struggled desperately, but they were rolled over in a puddle left by recent rain, and left sitting in it as the indignant Removites departed.

After that the chipping fell off a little. But Loder of the Sixth, feeling secure in the fact that he was a senior and a prefect, ventured to touch the forbidden subject. Loder, the bully of the Sixth, was very glad of a chance of scoring off his old enemies of the Remove. But the Remove were not to be scored off cheaply.

Loder met them in the passage, and stopped them.

"What's this I hear?" he demanded.

The juniors glared at him. They knew what was coming, and they were ready. Even prefects were not allowed to badger them on the sore subject.

"What is it you hear?" repeated Nugent. "If you listen while you're jawing, you hear the braying of a silly ass."

Loder scowled.

"You precious gang of young thieves!" he began.

Crash!

Loder went over in a heap on the floor, and two or three of the Removites rolled

over him. They left him gasping for breath and panting out threats.

"They'll learn to get off that subject in time!" Bob Cherry remarked, as the juniors went up to the Remove passage. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Gossy! Been searching for quids?"

"Yes, Master Cherry," said Gosling. "I ain't found anything."

"Have you been through all the Remove studies?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, Master Wharton!" grunted Gosling. "Which wot I says is this 'ere—it's a lot of extra work for a man as is 'ard-worked already."

"Better ask Quelch by a tip!" suggested Tom Brown.

Gosling grunted. He was not likely to do that.

"Wot I says is this 'ere——" he began. "Are you going to search any further?" asked Nugent.

"Yes. It seems that the 'Ead wants to 'ave the whole place searched," said Gosling discontentedly. "I've got to go through the Fourth Form dormitory, and then the studies. Wot I says is this 'ere——"

Gosling's grumbling voice died away on the stairs.

"Well, this is a pretty go!" said Harry Wharton ruefully. "The whole school will bless us! I shall begin to wish that Mauly and his quids were at the bottom of the sea."

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"What's the matter?"

"Look here!" roared Bob.

He pointed to the door of his study.

A sheet of cardboard was pinned on the outside of the door, and it bore an inscription, in the well-known writing of Temple, of the Fourth.

"This is the Thieves' Kitchen! Watches and cash pinched while you wait!"

The Removites breathed wrath.

"There'll be no end to it until the rotten money's found!" groaned Harry Wharton. "I think we'd better go and bump Mauly for having so much money!"

Bob Cherry tore the placard down, and tore it into pieces, with a gloomy brow. Certainly it seemed as if there would be no end to it. As the Removites went into

their Form-room in the afternoon there was a yell from a crowd of Fourth-Formers in the passage.

"Look out for your pockets!"

"You rotters!" roared Bob Cherry.

The Removites went gloomily enough into their Form-room. Lord Mauleverer was looking more distressed than anybody else. He had only one consolation: in the anxiety caused by the untoward happening in the Remove dormitory, his training was suspended. And even Bob Cherry had almost forgotten the Form-match, and the fact that Lord Mauleverer was to keep goal for the Remove.

CHAPTER 26.

Shifting the Suspicion!

"MY only Uncle Theophilus!" Bolsover major uttered that exclamation in tones of the greatest amazement. He had reason to be astonished. Gosling, the school porter, was coming downstairs, and in his hand he carried a well-known object. It was Mark Linley's alarm clock, the clock Bob Cherry had borrowed, and which had disappeared from the Remove dormitory under such mysterious circumstances the previous night.

"It's found, you fellows!" roared Bolsover.

There was a rush to the spot at once.

A chorus of questions assailed Gosling, and his progress towards the study of Mr. Quelch was impeded by an eager crowd of juniors.

"Where did you find it, Gossy?"

"Have you found the quids?"

"Where was it?"

"In whose pocket?"

"Wot I says is this 'ere," said Gosling. "I've found the clock, young gents, and I've found the money, too! Eight pund!"

He opened his horny hand, and showed eight crisp Treasury notes. There was a general exclamation.

"The eight quid!"

"Here's your money, Mauly."

"Where did you find it, Gossy?"

"Hurray!"

Mr. Quelch came out of his study. The excited voices had reached him—indeed, they could be heard all over Greyfriars.

"What is this, Gosling?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, as the fellows made way for him. "Have you found the missing articles?"

"Yes, sir," said Gosling. "An alarm clock and eight pund, sir."

"Very good—very good indeed! Where did you find them?"

"In a Remove pocket, I should say," murmured Temple of the Fourth.

"Oh, rather!" grinned Dabney.

"Silence!" said Mr. Quelch, frowning. "There is no doubt that this is the missing property. Do you boys identify that clock?"

"Yes, sir," said Mark Linley. "It is mine."

"Did you find the money and the clock together, Gosling?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you find them?"

"In the box-room, sir," said Gosling.

"Which box-room?"

"The one at the end of the Fourth Form passage, sir."

"The Fourth Form-room!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "My hat! How did the cash get there, Temple?"

"You ought to know," growled Temple.

"Why, you—you—"

"Silence! In what part of the room did you find these things, Gosling?"

"In a trunk, sir."

"An empty trunk?"

"Not quite empty, sir—there was photographic materials in it," said Gosling. "It was one of Master Temple's boxes, sir—leastways, there was his name on it."

Temple of the Fourth turned white.

"My box?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Master Temple."

"Impossible!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Be careful what you say, Temple," said Mr. Quelch sharply. "Gosling found these articles where he has stated."

"Well, sir, it's very odd that the thief should have put them in my trunk," said Temple, recovering himself. "That trunk isn't an empty one. I keep my camera and plates in it, and I go to it nearly every day. It's jolly odd that the thief should have put the things there to hide, because—"

"Very odd!" said Vernon-Smith, in a peculiar tone. "I believe I saw you doing some photography this morning, Temple."

"Yes, I did!"

"Then you've been to the trunk to-day?"

"Yes," said Temple, turning pale again.

"Oh!" said the Bounder. "Yes, you're right; it's jolly odd that the thief should

hide the things in a box you go to every day; and jolly odd you shouldn't have seen 'em when you went there to-day. Bob Cherry, I'm sorry for what I said in the dorm. this morning. It's jolly clear now that the thief came from outside the Remove dormitory."

Bob Cherry was silent.

Temple almost staggered.

"You—you—" he stammered. "I—I—do you mean that I took the money, you rotter? I don't know anything about it!"

"Were these things lying open in the trunk, Gosling?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir! There's a lot of things in the trunk, and these were under them. The pound notes were hidden under the old newspaper that's spread in the bottom of the trunk, and the clock was inside a cardboard box wot's been used for something else."

"Begad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

Mr. Quelch looked at him, struck by his tone.

"Mauleverer, have you anything to say about this?"

"I—I'd rather not say, sir!"

"Nonsense! What do you know about it?" Mr. Quelch exclaimed sharply. "If you can throw any light on the matter, speak up at once. This matter is very serious."

Lord Mauleverer looked at Temple in a helpless way.

"Go on," said Temple, "don't mind me. I've got nothing to be afraid of. I didn't take the money, and I don't know how it came there."

"Begad! I'm sure of that, my dear fellow!" said Lord Mauleverer. "But—"

"Speak out, Mauleverer!"

"Temple was showing me his camera, sir," said Lord Mauleverer reluctantly.

"I—I went with him to the box-room yesterday, and he showed me the camera, sir, and he was going to show me his negatives, but some of them couldn't be found. The box was in rather a muddle, sir, and—and I was going to help him turn it out to-day and put it in order—"

"Well?"

"That's all, sir," said Lord Mauleverer hesitatingly. "I—I—"

"Please be more explicit, Mauleverer!"

All the fellows were hanging upon Lord Mauleverer's words now. The schoolboy earl was very red and very troubled. He evidently wished fervently that his

cautious ejaculation had not drawn Mr. Quelch's eyes upon him.

"Well, sir, I—I offered Temple to help him, after dinner, to-day, sir," stammered Lord Mauleverer. "But he put it off. He said the box would be all right as it was, and he'd find the old negatives another time, and show them to me. He—he said he was too busy to see about it to-day. That's all, sir—it just came into my mind—but I'm jolly certain that Temple didn't know the money was there."

"Indeed! And what were you so busy about to-day, Temple, after dinner?" asked Mr. Quelch, fixing his eyes upon the captain of the Fourth Form.

"I—I was—was doing some writing, sir," stammered Temple.

"You had an imposition to do?"

"N-n-no, sir."

"You were writing exercises?"

"N-no, sir."

"What were you writing, then?"

"N-n-nothing of importance, sir," said Temple, turning red.

"Indeed! You were writing nothing of importance, and yet the writing made you too busy to do as you had arranged with Mauleverer," said Mr. Quelch caustically. "That is very peculiar, is it not, Temple?"

"I—I—I—"

"You had intended to turn out the trunk with Lord Mauleverer to-day?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you put him off?"

"Yes, sir."

"Because you had some writing to do of no importance?"

"I—I—I—"

"Your object was not to keep him away from the trunk, because since yesterday stolen goods had been secreted there?" demanded the Remove-master.

Temple flushed crimson.

"Certainly not, sir."

"You had better explain what this writing was, which was not important, and yet was important enough to cause you to put off turning out the box—so very unfortunately."

Temple hesitated.

"Well, sir, it—it was a jape," he said, fumbling in his pockets. "This is it, sir."

Temple drew a bundle of papers from his pocket. He handed them to Mr. Quelch. There were a dozen of them, and each of them bore the inscription, in large letters: "Beware of Pickpockets!"

"What does that mean, Temple?"

"It—it was only a jape, sir. I was going to pin those papers up in the Remove studies, sir, one in each study, after bed-time to-night, so that the Remove chaps would find them to-morrow," said Temple. "It was a joke, sir, in—allusion to the missing money. We all know that one of the Remove fellows took it."

"Do we know that?" exclaimed Harry Wharton indignantly. "It looks a great deal more as if a Fourth Form chap took it, now."

"Faith, and ye're right!"

"The rightfulness is terrific."

"Yes, rather!"

Mr. Quelch handed the papers back to Temple quietly.

"You had better put those papers in the fire, Temple. I do not approve of jokes of that sort."

"Very well, sir."

"However, the fact that you were busy with that foolish joke accounts for your not turning out the trunk, as you had intended," said Mr. Quelch. "But you can see yourself, Temple, that that might be either a reason or a pretext."

"Oh, sir!"

"The fact remains that the money and the clock were found in your trunk. Can you account for it?"

"No, sir."

"You did not put them there?"

"I did not, sir."

"You did not know they were there?"

"I knew nothing about it. I think Gosling must have made a mistake, and found them somewhere else," said Temple helplessly.

"Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Nonsense, Temple," said Mr. Quelch sharply. "They have been found in your trunk—concealed there—and it is a most unfortunate circumstance that this very day you should have put off allowing another boy to see the interior of that trunk."

"I—I didn't know——"

"What's the good of all that, Temple?" said Vernon-Smith. "Why don't you own up now you're bowled out?"

"You cad!" yelled Temple. "If you call me a thief——"

"Silence, Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Quelch, frowning. "You should have learned by this time the foolishness of making reckless accusations. It was only

this morning that you were accusing Cherry, and you are already convinced that that accusation was unjust."

"But that is quite clear, sir," said the Bounder.

"You fancied it was clear about Cherry."

"Well, sir—"

"This is certainly clearer, but it is not quite clear. We must not lose sight of the possibility that another boy may have hidden these articles in Temple's trunk for safety while the search was going on."

"But it was known that Temple was turning out his trunk to-day, sir," said Vernon-Smith. "There was a lot of joking about Mauleverer exerting himself to help him and somebody said he was going to borrow a pair of housemaid's gloves to save dirtying his hands. If the thief hid the money in Temple's trunk, he did it knowing that it was jolly well likely to come to light—unless it was Temple himself, and he could put off turning the trunk out—as he did do."

"Oh, pile it on!" said Temple bitterly. "I don't know anything about the rotten money, and I don't know how it got into my trunk. I certainly didn't put it there, but I suppose all you asses will think I did?"

"Begad, I don't think so, Temple," said Lord Mauleverer.

"You've been rather thick on us, and you can't grumble, Temple," said Bob Cherry. "You'd better stick up those pickpocket notices in your own study."

"Yes, rather!" said Nugent. "Button your pockets, you chaps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Please let there be no persecution on this subject," said Mr. Quelch. "There will be a strict investigation, and more facts may come to light. I do not regard the evidence against Temple as conclusive."

"Thank you, sir!" said Temple gratefully. "I can't account for the money being in that old trunk. Perhaps the thief lost his nerve, and shoved it there, so that it would be put on me if it were found. That's the only thing I can think of."

"You'd better think of something better than that!" said Vernon-Smith, with a sneer. "That's rather too thin, you know."

Mr. Quelch returned into his study, having handed Lord Mauleverer his money, and Mark Linley his alarm clock. Temple,

Dabney & Co. walked away together. Dabney and Fry and Scott were looking very dubious and dismayed, but they stuck to their chum. There was a howl from the crowd of juniors as the Fourth-Formers went.

"Beware of pickpockets!"

CHAPTER 27.

Harry Wharton's Idea!

GREYFRIARS was in a buzz of excitement over the robbery of Lord Mauleverer's money. All kinds of surmises were formed to account for the mysterious happening; but no theory seemed quite to suit the facts of the case. Temple's friends, of course, declined to believe that Temple had anything to do with it. Yet that there was a fellow in the school base enough to "plant" such a thing upon Temple, for no particular reason, was hard to believe. Temple had no enemy that he knew of; he had rows at times with Coker of the Fifth and Hobson of the Shell, and he had had hard words with the Bounder of the Remove. But there was no such enmity as sufficed to make it plausible to suspect any of them of such a base plot.

Many of the fellows surmised that the whole thing was the work of some "japer" with a decidedly perverted sense of humour; some foolish practical joker who was delighted to plunge the whole school into doubt and perplexity; and this indeed seemed the most likely theory.

Harry Wharton & Co. inclined to that belief. And yet when they discussed the matter in No. 1 Study after morning lessons, and turned over all the possibilities in their minds, they had to confess that they simply could not think of a fellow in the school who was foolish enough and reckless enough to play such an ill-natured and wicked jape.

"There's Snoop," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "He's mean enough. But he certainly wouldn't have the nerve."

"There's Bunter!" said Frank Nugent. "He's fool enough—but he wouldn't have brains enough to think of such a jape."

"Bolsover—Vernon-Smith—no!" said Harry Wharton. "They're pretty mean; but they wouldn't jape like that. Fisher

T. Fish is ass enough; but he's too good-natured to worry a chap by planting another fellow's money in his box. It jolly well isn't anybody in the Remove."

"Might be one of the fags," said Johnny Bull doubtfully.

"I can't think of one of them that would do it."

"What about Loder?" suggested Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior, in a very thoughtful way. "He's mean enough if he had a spite against Temple."

"But he hasn't, so far as we know," said Nugent. "Besides, if Loder of the Sixth got his paws on the eight pounds, he wouldn't let 'em go again. No fear!"

Harry Wharton nodded.

"It wasn't Loder," he said. "I simply can't think who it might be. All the same, I think it must be some fatheaded japer; there's no other theory possible."

"Yaas, begad!"

"I suppose it wasn't you, Mauily, you ass?" grunted Bob Cherry.

"Begad, my dear fellow—"

"Well, you could have got at it without waking yourself, you know," said Bob Cherry.

"Really, you know—"

"Look here," said Harry Wharton, sinking his voice. "It's a japer, I feel sure of that; and the silly ass is most likely chuckling at this minute over puzzling the whole school. As he's been so jolly successful so far, I shouldn't wonder if he tries the same game on again to-night. I'll stay awake for him."

"Good egg!" said Bob Cherry heartily. "I didn't think of that. Of course, he may be too cute to try it a second time; but if he does—"

"If he does we'll nail him."

"Two of us had better stay awake, in case one goes to sleep," said Frank Nugent sagely. "You and I, Harry."

"Right-ho!"

"My dear fellows, I'll keep watch, if you like," said Lord Mauleverer.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You'd be a lot of good, when you don't even wake up when a fellow collars things from under your pillow," he said. "No, Frank and I can do it."

"Yaas, it's a good idea."

"Mind, not a word outside this study," said Harry. "If it's a fellow in the Re-

move, after all, we don't want to put him on his guard."

"That's settled."

And the chums of the Remove kept their little scheme very dark.

Lord Mauleverer, indeed, soon had other matters to think of. His training was begun again. Before afternoon lessons, Bob Cherry took him for a sprint, and as he kept hold of Mauleverer's arm, the youthful nobleman had no chance to lag behind. Lord Mauleverer was breathing very hard when he took his place with the Remove in the afternoon.

But there was no doubt that his training was doing him good. Bob Cherry was perhaps a little bit inclined to overdo it; but his view was that Mauleverer couldn't have too much of a good thing. Certainly Mauleverer was getting enough, if not too much.

Immediately classes were dismissed that afternoon, Bob Cherry rushed his pupil down to the footer ground. It was in vain that Lord Mauleverer pleaded that he wanted his tea.

"This is your giddy self-denial week," Bob Cherry explained. "It will be too dark for footer after tea, too."

"Yaas!"

"I suppose that's what you had in your mind, you slacker?"

"Yaas!"

"Well, toddle into the goal, and stop one shots I'm going to send you," said Bob Cherry. "Luckily to-morrow's Saturday, and I'm going to keep you at it all the afternoon."

Lord Mauleverer groaned.

"It's doing you good," said Bob Cherry.

"Think of playing for your Form next Wednesday, and buck up! Ain't you fond of glory?"

"Yaas, but—"

"Don't you want to help us beat the Fourth?"

"Yaas, but—"

"Don't you yearn to become an athlete?"

"Yaas, but—"

"My only aunt, you're all buts!" said Bob Cherry. "Toddle into that goal before I dribble you round the field."

"Yaas."

Lord Mauleverer toddled into the goal. Five or six old footers had been brought out for practice, and Lord Mauleverer was given the task of stopping them as they

rained upon him by the best shots in the Remove.

He had to be active. The footers came buzzing and whizzing in, and every one that he did not stop clumped him most unpleasantly in some part of his person.

Crowds of fellows stood round looking on, and they cheered Lord Mauleverer, and laughed heartily at his peculiar antics in the goal. As Micky Desmond remarked, a cat on hot bricks wasn't in it with Mauly.

He leaped, he jumped, and twisted, and rolled, and staggered, and kicked, and punched, and kept it up until he hadn't an ounce of breath left.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the rain of footers ceased at last. "You're getting on famously. You'll be able to keep goal in a practice match to-morrow afternoon, and if you let anything pass we'll scalp you bald-headed."

"Oh, dear!"

"Now come and have some tea, and a bit of a rest," said Bob Cherry. "We'll have another sprint before bedtime."

"Oh, by Jove!"

"You can feel for yourself that it's better for your system, can't you, already?"

"Ow! I don't believe I've got any system left," groaned Lord Mauleverer.

"Ha, ha, ha! Come and have tea! I'm letting you off till the last sprint."

"Yaas. Oh, dear!"

And before bedtime that night Lord Mauleverer went round and round the old Close in his running garb between two good runners who did not allow him to lag. When he went to bed his lordship was fast asleep as soon as he had put his head upon the pillow.

CHAPTER 28.

A Weird Discovery!

THE buzz of voices died away in the Remove dormitory.

Silence fell upon the great lofty room, and gradually upon all Greyfriars.

The last light had been extinguished, the last sound of a closing door had died away. The great school building was plunged into silence and slumber.

There was a faint glimmer of starlight at the high windows of the Remove dormitory, a light dim and faint, but clear

enough to show up objects in the silent room.

Two juniors were still awake as the hour of midnight tolled out from the clock-tower. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were keeping watch.

They were very drowsy, but they struggled against the desire to sleep, and in spite of an occasional nod they remained awake, and more or less on the alert.

Midnight had passed, and there had been no alarm, no movement.

Frank Nugent laid his head upon the pillow to sleep at last. It was too difficult to keep awake in the drowsy silence of the dormitory. He meant to sleep with one eye open, but both of them were very soon tightly closed.

But Harry Wharton watched on grimly.

If the unknown raider came he was quite likely to come in the small hours of the morning, and if he came, Harry Wharton meant to discover him.

Lord Mauleverer had placed a wallet containing seven pounds under his pillow in the sight of all the Remove before going to bed. Harry Wharton rubbed his eyes occasionally to keep himself awake. One boomed out dully from the clock-tower.

Still silence, stillness!

But presently through the silence of the dormitory a faint sound came to the ears of the wakeful junior.

He started and listened.

Creak!

Wharton's eyes gleamed in the darkness. He was not sleepy now. Someone was getting out of bed! There was no doubt about it. Whoever it was did not seem to be troubling himself to be quiet. Wharton heard the creaking of the bed, the soft sound of bedclothes thrown back, and a faint sound of a bare foot on the floor.

He raised his head cautiously from the pillow, and looked in the direction of the sound. The dimness of the dormitory baffled him, but after a few moments he made out a shadowy form standing by the head of Lord Mauleverer's bed.

There was no doubt now!

The door had not opened, and he had heard someone getting up. It was a Remove fellow beyond the shadow of a doubt. But which one? Wharton could see nothing but the dim outlines of a form in pyjamas.

He lay quite still. He did not intend to alarm the marauder by letting him know that he was on the watch. When he discovered the fellow there was to be no doubt about what he had risen for in the middle of the night.

The dim form moved away from Lord Mauleverer's bed. It crossed silently towards the door of the dormitory. There was a faint sound as the door opened, another as it closed, and the figure was gone.

Harry Wharton stepped quietly out of bed and tapped Frank Nugent on the shoulder. Nugent awoke at once.

"What it is?" he murmured.

"He's up, Frank!"

"The japer?"

"Yes."

Frank Nugent sat up.

"He was bending over Mauly's pillow, and now he's left the dorm.," said Harry, in a whisper. "There's no doubt about it now. It's one of us!"

"Which chap?"

"I don't know. I'll turn the light on, and then we shall see who's gone; then we'll be after him, and see what he does with the money. I suppose he's going to put it in Temple's trunk in the box-room, same as before."

Nugent got out of bed. Wharton crossed to the electric-light switch just inside the door and pressed it. The dormitory was flooded with light in a moment.

"My Aunt Matilda!" yelled Nugent. "Look!"

He pointed to the empty bed.

It was Lord Mauleverer's! The fellow who had left the dormitory was Lord Mauleverer himself.

Harry Wharton gazed at the bed, stupefied.

"Mauleverer!" he gasped.

Nugent rubbed his eyes.

"It—it seems impossible!" he stammered. "Mauleverer himself! Mauly is the giddy japer! Mauly himself! He must be dotty!"

The voice and the flare of light awoke the other fellows. They sat up in bed up and down the dormitory loudly inquiring what was the matter. Harry Wharton ran to Lord Mauleverer's bed and threw back the pillow. A faint hope was in his breast that perhaps Lord Mauleverer had not taken the wallet away, that he might have

some other motive for his strange midnight excursion. But the wallet was gone.

"It's gone?" asked Frank.

"Yes, he's taken it."

"My only hat! Who'd have believed it?"

"What's the matter?" demanded Vernon-Smith. "There'll be a row if anybody sees that light from the window. What's the trouble?"

"It's the japer again."

"Phew!"

"Where's Mauleverer gone?" asked Bob Cherry, staring at the empty bed belonging to the schoolboy earl.

"He's the chap!"

"What?"

"Rats!"

"Impossible!"

"It's true enough!" said Harry Wharton, still utterly bewildered by the strange happening. "He's taken the wallet out from under his own pillow, and gone out of the dorm."

"My hat!" ejaculated Micky Desmond. "I'd never have belaved it of him."

"I'm going to see what he does with it," said Harry Wharton, opening the door of the Remove dormitory.

"Not much doubt what he'll do with it," said Vernon-Smith. "It's Mauleverer trying to put it on Temple all the time. Who'd have thought it?"

"I can't believe it," gasped Bob Cherry.

"He's not that sort."

"Must be potty!" said John Bull.

"The potfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, without troubling to dress, ran along the dormitory passage and down the first flight of stairs. Their bare feet made no sound. They guessed in which direction to look for Lord Mauleverer, and they were right. They reached the box-room at the end of the Fourth Form passage, and found the door standing wide open.

Starlight fell in at the wide window and lighted up the room with a dim glimmer. The figure of Lord Mauleverer showed up plainly in the twilight there.

He was bending over the big trunk belonging to Temple of the Fourth in which Temple kept his photographic materials. He had raised the lid, and was raising the paper at the bottom of the box in a corner, and placing the wallet under it.

Although they beheld it with their own eyes, the chums of the Remove could hardly believe what they saw.

Lord Mauleverer was a simple fellow in many ways. He had few faults. Among them no one had ever dreamed of numbering lying or deceit of any kind. That he was capable of planting a suspicion of theft upon a fellow, and a fellow who had never done him any harm, was incredible. Yet here he was, under the very eyes of the juniors, placing the wallet in Temple's trunk in the very spot where the money had been found before. Was it villainy, or was it an extraordinary jape—a joke of which the ill-nature was only equalled by the stupidity?

The chums of the Remove watched him speechlessly. Lord Mauleverer rose from bending over the box, and closed down the lid. Then Harry Wharton found his voice.

"Mauleverer!" he exclaimed sharply.

The junior did not reply. He was coming back towards the open doorway, directly towards the two juniors standing there, but he did not seem to see them. Some strangeness in his manner struck the juniors with a chill. A fearful suspicion darted into their minds that they had to do with a madman.

"Mauly!" faltered Wharton.

Still no reply.

Lord Mauleverer came on, and passed close by them. He was breathing regularly and steadily, and was evidently unaware of their presence. Nugent raised his hand to touch him, but dropped it again, some instinct warning him.

"Mauleverer!" he exclaimed.

The figure walked steadily on.

Harry Wharton and Nugent stood transfixed. The schoolboy earl closed the door of the box-room after him as he left it, and they were shut in. Wharton reopened it immediately, and they hurried out into the passage after Lord Mauleverer. They knew that this could not be acting—Lord Mauleverer was unaware of their presence. But if he had passed so close as almost to touch them, how could he be unaware of them? What did it mean?

They shuddered with a strange fear as they ran after the junior. He was returning to the Remove dormitory. He ascended the stairs with a steady step, and walked along the dormitory passage.

"Good heavens!" muttered Nugent in

horror. "What's the matter with him, Harry? Is he in a fit, or—is he mad?"

"I—I think he's asleep!"

"Asleep!"

"I think so!" said Wharton, with a shudder.

"Great Scott!"

The doorway of the Remove dormitory was crowded with fellows looking out. There was a buzz of voices, and a door was heard to open below. Someone had been disturbed evidently. Harry Wharton ran on past Lord Mauleverer, who was walking slowly, and did not see him, or betray any knowledge that he was there.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Bolsover.

"Quiet!" breathed Harry.

"What—what's the matter?"

"There's something wrong with Mauleverer. Don't touch him—don't make a row! I think he's walking in his sleep!"

"Phew!"

"Gammon!" said Vernon-Smith derisively. "Shamming, you mean, because he's found out!"

"Shut up!" said Wharton fiercely. "If

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he's asleep he mustn't be wakened—it's dangerous to wake up a somnambulist."

"Here he is!" breathed Bob Cherry.

Lord Mauleverer entered the dormitory, Nugent following him. In the glare of the electric light, Lord Mauleverer's face was clearly seen. The eyes were closed, the face calm, and the breathing was quite regular. He walked through the crowd of fellows, who made way for him with awe-stricken faces, and went straight towards his bed.

"Asleep, by George!" said Tom Brown.

Even Vernon-Smith was convinced. There was no room for doubt now—Lord Mauleverer was a somnambulist. There was a footstep at the door, and Mr. Quelch, in a dressing-gown, looked in with a frowning brow.

CHAPTER 29.

Lord Mauleverer is Surprised!

MR. QUELCH looked angry, as well he might. To find the Lower Fourth all out of bed at one o'clock in the morning, with the electric light on, was a surprise. Mr. Quelch was accustomed to some little vagaries in his Form, but he had hardly expected this kind of thing.

"What does this mean?" he demanded sternly.

"It's Mauleverer, sir," said Harry Wharton quickly. "He's walking in his sleep!"

"What?"

"Look at him, sir!"

Lord Mauleverer was getting back into bed, with strangely slow and deliberate movements.

Mr. Quelch strode quickly towards him. "Mauleverer!" he exclaimed sharply.

The somnambulist did not answer or turn his head. He laid himself in bed, pulled the bedclothes over himself, and placed his head upon the pillow. His face was turned to Mr. Quelch as he lay, and it was calm and peaceful, undisturbed in repose.

"Good heavens!" muttered Mr. Quelch. Lord Mauleverer lay quietly asleep. The Remove-master, after a long look at him, turned away from the bedside.

"How did you discover this?" he asked.

Harry Wharton explained.

The Remove-master uttered an exclamation

of astonishment as Wharton described the peculiar actions of the sleepwalker.

"Then it was Mauleverer himself who secreted the missing money in Temple's trunk!" he exclaimed.

"Must have been, sir. He must have been walking in his sleep last night," said Harry Wharton. "It's jolly queer!"

"I am glad that the discovery has been made," said Mr. Quelch. "There is no doubt about it now. Do not wake Mauleverer, it may be harmful. Go back to bed now."

The Remove turned in, and Mr. Quelch put out the light and retired.

But it was a long time before the Removites went to sleep. They were amazed, and as relieved as they were amazed, by the strange discovery of Lord Mauleverer's somnambulism. It relieved the whole school of the unpleasant suspicion that a theft had been committed. As Bob Cherry remarked, a sleep-walker couldn't be guilty of theft, especially of his own money.

"It's all your fault, Bob Cherry!" Vernon-Smith said, with a sniff. Vernon-Smith was very much annoyed at the proof of the groundlessness of all his suspicions. He had fixed them first upon Bob Cherry, and then upon Temple of the Fourth, and it was now clear that he was equally wrong in both cases.

"My fault!" exclaimed Bob Cherry warmly. "What do you mean, you ass?"

"It's the way you've been putting Mauleverer through it that's upset him in this way. He hasn't sleepwalked before that we know of."

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I shouldn't wonder if there's something in that, though Smithy says it! Might be unaccustomed to exercise that's upset his giddy nervous system."

"After next Wednesday he'll go sleep-walking down to the footer ground, and keeping goals in his sleep!" chuckled Tom Brown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer did not wake—all the talking had no effect upon his deep slumber; and, one by one, the Removites dropped off to sleep again.

When the rising-bell clanged out in the morning Bob Cherry was the first to wake. He cast a glance towards Lord Mauleverer's bed. His lordship was yet fast

asleep. Bob Cherry shook him as soon as he rose.

Lord Mauleverer opened his eyes and yawned.

"Hallo! Is that rising-bell?" he asked.

"I'm sleepy!"

"Look for your giddy quids, Mauly!" said Johnny Bull.

"Yaas, begad!"

Lord Mauleverer unsuspectingly turned his pillow back. Then he uttered an exclamation.

"It's gone!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"What's gone?" demanded Nugent.

"The wallet!"

"Go hon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer stared in amazement at the grinning juniors.

"Is this a lark?" he asked. "Has one of you hidden the purse?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad, you know—"

"Somebody's hidden it," grinned Bob Cherry. "And the name of the silly ass is Mauleverer!"

"My dear fellow, I don't see the joke—"

"You ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Did you know you were a giddy sleepwalker?"

"What!"

"Did you know that you were in the habit of making peregrinations round the house of a night in your pyjamas?"

"By Jove!"

"Have you ever sleepwalked before?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"You—you don't mean to say I sleepwalked last night?" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer in astonishment.

"Yes, you did!"

"Begad!"

"Have you ever done it before?" asked Harry Wharton.

His lordship nodded.

"Yaas, once. I'd almost forgotten it. I over-exerted myself once, you know, and it upset my nervous system, and made me quite ill, you know. My uncle found me sleepwalking, and since I've never over-exerted myself, you know. I suppose that ass Cherry's silly training has brought it on again. But what has my sleepwalking got to do with the wallet being missing?"

"You took it away and hid it in Temple's trunk."

"Impossible!"

"We saw you!" howled Nugent.

"You saw me shove the wallet in Temple's trunk?"

"Yes. Wharton and I both saw you!"

"Well, if you saw me, my dear fellows, I'll take your word for it," said Lord Mauleverer gracefully. "But I certainly don't remember it."

"I don't suppose you do, as you were fast asleep at the time, you champion ass!" said Frank, with a snort. "But you did it right enough. And you must have done the same thing the other night—it's clear enough now."

"Yaas, begad. I knew Temple couldn't have done it," said his lordship complacently. "I knew he wasn't that kind of a chap. It was all the fault of you fellows, you know."

"How do you make that out?"

"Bob Cherry first, by upsetting my nervous system with his weird ideas of training. Then you worried me to be careful of my money when I spilt it in the Common-room," said Lord Mauleverer. "That must have fixed it on my mind, you see, and made me dream about it. So when I started sleepwalking, I must have had some idea in my head about putting the money in a safe place. And I'd been going over Temple's trunk with him that day, so that's how I came to hide the giddy money there, I suppose. And as for the alarm clock, I know I was dreaming about that—it haunted me. When I went to sleep on Wednesday night I felt as if it were going off every minute. It's all Bob Cherry's fault! I think he ought to be bumped for giving the school all this trouble."

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Bob Cherry indignantly. "How was I to know that you were a silly somnambulist?"

"We knew the adjective, but not the noun," grinned Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better not do any more training," said Lord Mauleverer, getting out of bed. "You see, I may walk off somebody else's money next, or the Head's marble clock instead of Linley's alarm, and may shove 'em where they can't be found. Upon the whole, I won't go into training any more."

"Upon the whole, you'll go into training harder than ever!" said Bob Cherry, with emphasis. "This blessed somnambulism

comes of slacking and getting out of condition. I'll train you out of it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellow——" protested Lord Mauleverer feebly.

"What you want is exercise and plenty of it," said Bob Cherry, "and that's what you're going to have. As for any future performances of this sort, you can tie your hoof to the bedpost when you go to bed, and you won't be able to get out. But I'll train you into such an athletic state that you will soon get cured of these things. You rely on me! Jump into your things; you're coming out for a sprint before brekker!"

"But, I say, my dear fellow——"

"Buck up!" roared Bob Cherry.

And Lord Mauleverer groaned and bucked up.

CHAPTER 30.

On His Mettle!

LORD MAULEVERER looked very thoughtful that morning.

The discovery of his somnambulistic propensities had been somewhat of a shock to him, and it gave him something to think about. But he was thinking of other matters, too. He felt that his queer failing had caused the other fellows a great deal of trouble, and he apologised several times to Temple for the liberty he had unwittingly taken with his trunk. Temple only laughed. He was too deeply relieved by the discovery of the truth to feel exasperated with the unintentional offender.

"It's all right, my son," said Temple. "You couldn't help it any more than you can help being a silly ass when you're awake. Blessed if I know when you're the bigger duffer of the two—when you're asleep or when you're awake."

"My dear fellow, I'm awf'ly sorry——"

"Never mind," said Temple. "Keep your sorrow for Wednesday, when you'll be keeping goal against us. You'll need it for yourself then."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I feel that I owe you fellows something, you know," Lord Mauleverer explained. "I'm going to do my best for you on Wednesday to make up for the trouble I've caused."

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent.

When the schoolboy earl went to bed that

night he took the precaution of tying a cord from his ankle to the bedpost, and in the middle of the night some of the Removites woke up and heard a grunting and a creaking from Lord Mauleverer's bed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "Are you awake, Mauly?"

"Yaas! I've just woke up. Some silly ass has been trying to pull me out of bed by my ankle, I think."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad! It's the cord, I suppose."

"I suppose it is, fathcad! Go to sleep!"

"It's that beastly training, you know," said Lord Mauleverer sleepily.

"Rats!"

And slumber settled upon the Remove dormitory again.

As the day of the Form match came round, Harry Wharton's brow wore several times a worried look. Even the late exciting mystery of the missing notes was forgotten in the interest of the Form match. The Remove and the Upper Fourth played a series of fixtures through the season, and every match counted in the grand total; and Harry Wharton's rash undertaking to play Lord Mauleverer in goal, if it resulted in the loss of a match, would be long remembered in the Remove. If the match were won, of course then Wharton would score doubly by beating the Upper Fourth on such terms. But Harry could not help feeling anxious, and Temple had no intention whatever of letting him off the match he had rashly engaged to play. The only thing was, as Bob Cherry said, that Lord Mauleverer must buck up, and his lordship had promised that he would be on his mettle on the great day.

The morning of the great day dawned. Bob Cherry looked anxiously at Lord Mauleverer when they turned out at the sound of the rising-bell.

"How do you feel, Mauly?" he asked.

"My dear fellow, I'm tired, but I'm on my mettle," said Lord Mauleverer confidently. "I am going to do my best."

"Bravo, Mauly!"

And Lord Mauleverer looked quite confident when he went down to the football ground with the Remove team in the afternoon. Quite a crowd was gathering round the field. Fellows were giving up other occupations to see the dandy of the Remove keep goal. It was generally decided that it would be an exhibition worth seeing.

"You fellows ready to be licked?" yawned Temple.

"Quite ready!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully—more cheerfully than he was feeling, as a matter of fact. "If you've finished gassing, we'll begin."

Temple grinned and led his merry men on the field. Harry Wharton lost the toss and kicked off. There was a shout from the fellows thronging round the ground.

"Buck up, Fourth! Let's see Mauly save!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple, Dabney & Co. tried rushing tactics. The Fourth Form front line came sweeping on for goal, and they burst the junior defence. There was a yell as the ball shot in from Temple's foot.

"Goal! My hat!"

Was it a goal? Lord Mauleverer, looking very easy and elegant in goal, was waiting for the shot, and as it sailed his fist met it and the leather was neatly fisted out. That was all the backs wanted. In a second it was cleared to midfield. There was a buzz of astonishment round the ground.

"Great Scott! Mauly's saved!"

"Well saved, Mauly!"

"Bravo!"

"By Jove!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, his face lighting up. "By Jove and Jingo! Mauly isn't going to muff the match, after all! Good egg!"

"Good old Mauly!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Stick to it!"

"Yaas, begad!"

And Lord Mauleverer did stick to it. The Fourth-Formers declared afterwards that he was lucky. Lord Mauleverer declared that he was simply on his mettle, you know. Whatever it was, he saved and saved; and whenever Temple & Co. sent the leather in it always seemed to find a head or a hand or a foot to meet it and drive it out again.

Bob Cherry crowed with delight at the performance of his pupil. He took credit to himself for all the brilliant saves of Lord Mauleverer. Hadn't he trained him and brought him up in the way he should go?

In the first half the Fourth succeeded in putting the ball in once, and once only. The Remove scored two. In the second half Lord Mauleverer, who had confided to Bob Cherry in the interval that he was tired, did not behave as if he were tired. But he found unexpected resources of energy somewhere in his system. Perhaps, as Micky Desmond suggested, he had a lot of energy saved up through having slacked so long. At all events, he guarded his citadel well. True, the Remove defence did not give the Fourth-Formers many chances for steady shots at goal. But they came sometimes, and when they came Lord Mauleverer seemed all eyes and hands and feet, and he stopped them.

And the crowd yelled applause.

And when the referee blew his whistle at last and the match ended with the Remove score at five goals, and the Fourth Form at one, there was a rush made for Lord Mauleverer, and he was carried in triumph out of the goal he had so ably defended. The victorious footballers crowded round him, thumping him on the back and cheering.

"Hurray!"

"Bravo, Mauly!"

"You've done the trick, Mauly, old man!" His lordship grinned breathlessly.

"Yaas," he assented. "Yaas, begad!"

"How do you feel about it, Mauly?"

"Tired."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Lord Mauleverer was carried into the School House in triumph; and while Temple, Dabney & Co. hid their diminished heads, the Remove rejoiced. And the hero of the hour was The Schoolboy Millionaire.



CHRISTMAS SMUGGLERS!

Smuggling has not died out by any means. For a time it languished, thanks to the smart work of the three thousand coastguards who, working under the authority of the British Admiralty, were established in coastguard-stations all around our coast and patrolled their lonely beats so very efficiently, that the old home-bred smugglers of Cornwall and the Kentish coast took to fishing instead.

But during the last two years there has been a big revival in this ancient and adventurous "game," thanks to the *absence* of the old coastguard. Those smuggler-catchers have been disbanded, and in their place is a very different Coast Watching Force of less than five hundred men.

With the approach of Christmas, the activities of the up-to-date smugglers have been greatly speeded up. So much so that many more coast-stations for preventive men are to be built at once, as there are but two hundred and sixty stations remaining as a legacy of the former coastguards.

The new coastguards who will occupy these stations will help the Board of Customs coast preventive men (who at present are only one-half of the Coast Watching Force) to catch the new smugglers at their game. It is chiefly the life-saving duties of the old, disbanded force of coastguards that are now performed by the coast watchers, leaving hundreds of miles of lonely British coast absolutely unwatched and unprotected.

Smugglers' Secret Service!

The few preventive men—the real smuggler-catchers—patrol long stretches of coast on bicycles. But as the smugglers have a lively and most efficient secret service of their own, the movements of the preventive men are kept close track of. And so, in between the watching stations at favourable spots, the smugglers run their cargoes without fear of interruption.

The rugged coast of Cornwall, between Mevagissey Bay and Land's End, used to be the happy hunting ground of the bygone smuggling men. As that bit of coast is almost entirely unwatched to-day, the new smugglers have taken up and relighted the torch, as it were, and are doing a glorious trade!

Roughly there are three hundred miles of that rough Cornish coast, between Plymouth Sound and Bude, for their "playground." And so the Christmas trade in smuggled silks, tobacco, cigars and cognac is thriving. Little coasting vessels

and fishing craft mostly ply the goods between larger vessels standing off-shore and the snug little coves, whence the smuggled stuff is run inland, with the help of speedy motor lorries.

Snug Little Coves!

The smugglers of the Kentish coast do their illicit business with traders across the Channel by swift motor boat, which anchor some distance off-shore, for the purpose of taking aboard supplies, or for a night's shelter, so the skippers say. But when night closes down, and there are no coastguards to inquire as to their health and activities, they are visited by small, ghost-like row boats, which take from the motor boats the contraband goods and rush helter-skelter with the loot ashore.

But Cornwall and Kent are not having it all their own way. There is keen competition by the Sussex-coast smugglers. The old Sussex headquarters of smugglers was Selsey Bill. There, in bygone days, the "cutting out" of some too-nosy revenue cutter was a commonplace. In those days the entire Sussex coast was closely watched. Now only a small area of it is patrolled. The smugglers, in business again, are consequently having an easier time than ever their forebears had at smuggled-cargo running, with headquarters still at Selsey Bill!

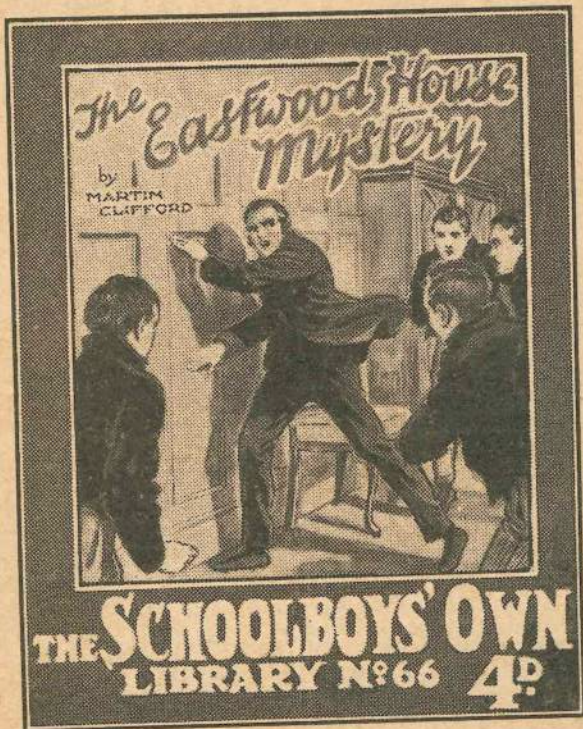
Incredible Speed!

The speed at which they work is incredible! Motor boats cleave the sea at dizzy pace, pitch their cigars, silks and other contraband ashore straight into waiting motor cars or lorries, and these hurtle off at once to some inland rendezvous where the stuff is temporarily cached and, as speedily as may be, distributed to the ready purchasers.

Another big advantage the new smugglers have is in the available methods of signalling from ship to shore—wireless. But wireless is not always possible or convenient. Then the time-honoured lantern lights are resorted to. Only a few weeks ago such lights were seen off Selsey Bill. It seemed so improbable that smugglers were about that it was thought the light must be from a vessel in distress. So the lifeboat put out to sea, and what they saw was—smugglers!

But with the opening of the new coastguard stations it is likely there will be many a grim "Merry Christmas" dropped next year from the lips of preventive men into the startled ears of Christmas smugglers!

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Printed and published on the first Friday in each month by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon St. London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., E.C.4. Subscription Rates: Inland and Abroad, 44d each. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Sole Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Limited. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Limited, and for Canada: The Imperial News Co. (Canada), Limited.