SPECIAL 4-PAGE CUP SEMI-FINAL SUPPLEMENT INSIDE!

No. 946. Vol. XXIX. Week Ending March 27th, 1926.

The Magnet Library of Complete School Stories

2d. EVERY MONDAY.

HOLDING UP THE RAIDER!

AFTER THE WRECK—THE RECKONING!

(An arresting incident from the magnificent long complete school story inside.)

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

"THE PHANTOM OF THE DOGGER BANK!"

THAT'S the title of the extra special treat in store for Magnetites the week after next. Yes, yes, it is a detective story, and Ferrers Locke does come into it—he's very much in the picture, as a matter of fact. From the foregoing, then, you have gathered that "The Case of the Langsdale Wanderers" comes to an end in next week's issue of the MAGNET, so this is the right season to be talking of its successor. For some years Ferrers Locke has figured in your favourite paper, and I feel sure he is as well received now as he was in the beginning. His latest case is truly a tricky one to solve. From the title you can see that it concerns the great North Sea fishing grounds, and as a starting-point the "Dogger" is rather unique in boys' fiction. I shall be able next week to give you more particulars of this fine serial, so look out for our little weekly gossip.

DAVID GOODWIN.

Talking of new serials reminds me that I promised you something definite in the way of news concerning a serial story by famous David Goodwin. I told you in last week's Chat that I had got into touch with Mr. Goodwin, and made it quite clear that Magnetites were yelling for a Goodwin yarn. He smiled in that nice way of his, and promised me on the spot a Goodwin story. More than that, he tackled the job that same day, and now I have in front of me the full synopsis of the story he proposes to give you chaps, and the opening chapters written up. And my word, chums, you're booked for something extra good. I won't make personal comparisons, for they are odious; but looking round for something, or, rather, someone to illustrate my opinion of this new story, I can only say—and I believe it will go home—that David Goodwin has beaten himself, for I've never had the pleasure of reading so fine a yarn from his pen. When does it start? Of course, I'm keeping you on tenterhooks! Sorry! Well, then, my chums, it is billed to start immediately "The Phantom of the Dogger Bank" finishes. Now, that's some programme to look forward to, isn't it? What-ho!

MR. RICHARDS AND INDIA!

While I am on this subject of programmes, let me whisper it that Mr. Richards is preparing now a special summer series of Harry Wharton & Co. yarns, the plot of which is staged in India—in Hurree Singh's native country. And old Inky is going to be well in the limelight. Keep your peepers open, Magnetites, for this year I'm going out to beat all records. I have other things up my sleeve—you'd go mad with joy if you knew them now—but you understand that it is not good policy for me to let on too much of what I've got written in my "book of words" so much in advance of the time when these things will see the light of day, as it were. Still, I can ask you all to keep the old flag flying and put your trust in me. Which reminds me that I'm rather niggardly in my thanks, for just recently the net sales go to prove Magnetites have been doing a little recruiting.

AMBITIOUS!

Really it is most gratifying to see our old paper leading the way in the boys' fiction market, and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your good-natured efforts. At the same time—you will think I'm a greedy fellow—I do ask you to continue. It helps you all in the long run as well as me, for the bigger the circulation the greater scope is mine to secure the very best stories, competitions, FREE GIFTS—and a pretty tale about these I could tell were my lips at this stage not sealed—and all those things necessary towards producing a really tip-top paper. Not that the MAGNET isn't a tip-topper. Not a bit of it! But I am ambitious, and doubtless you are the same, to see the MAGNET in every house in the kingdom. This we can do, and will do, if we pull together. When you meet a chap with a long face you can bet your sweet life he isn't a MAGNET reader. Just you try and cure him. You won't have to say much. Shove a copy of the old paper into his hands, and then have a squint at him about an hour later. I'll bet his blues will disappear for keeps. You will have enrolled a new chum under the MAGNET banner, you will have done a good turn, you will have helped to add another brick to the already colossal structure we are building against the skyline, representative of the MAGNET's steady progression, eminence, and high quality. Stick to it, chums!

F.A. Cup Semi-Finals!

Don't miss this week's ALL SPORTS! Everything you want to know about the Semi-Finals—facts about the clubs, their prospects, and all about the teams. Be sure to ask for

ALL SPORTS

Every Thursday - - 2d.

SENT TO COVENTRY!

A keen Magnetite who signs himself "J. K." sends me a ripping letter of congratulations about the MAGNET, the Football Suplement, and Bunter. He asks me for the meaning of the term being "sent to Coventry." It comes from very old times when, owing to the disturbed state of the country, a strong garrison was thrown into Coventry. The Coventry people resented this attention, and gave the cold shoulder to the military. So it got about that being sent to Coventry meant that you got the cut direct if you were in the Army.

TWENTY TABLE FOOTBALL GAMES OFFERED EVERY WEEK!

All you have to do to win one of these fascinating games—a picture of which is shown on page 27—is to send in a "par"—not more than three hundred words in length—describing any incident which you consider interesting, seen or heard on the football ground. Now, this is delightfully simple; one can hardly call it a competition, as it is within the reach of everyone. For the best twenty efforts sent in each week, I am going to award twenty topping table games. The picture on page 27 gives you an idea of the game. Note the miniature footer boots attached to the fingers of the hand. Practically the same tricks and movements as played on a proper football field apply to this table game. There's a football, there are two sides, there are the footer boots. What more would you have! Now pile in with those pars; you can send in as many as you like. All efforts must be addressed "Pars." No. 4. The MAGNET Library, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

Your Editor reserves the right to publish any prize-winning paragraph. Now get busy!

For Next Monday.

"THE CIRCUS SCHOOLBOY!"
By Frank Richards.

Another ripping story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, featuring also, Pedrillo, the boy acrobat. Don't miss it, chums!

"THE CASE OF THE LANGSDALE WANDERERS!"

Look out, too, for the concluding chapters of this popular footer and detective story. There's a big surprise in store for you before the curtain rings down on this Langsdale drama. 'Nuff said!

FOOTBALL SUPPLEMENT No. 10.

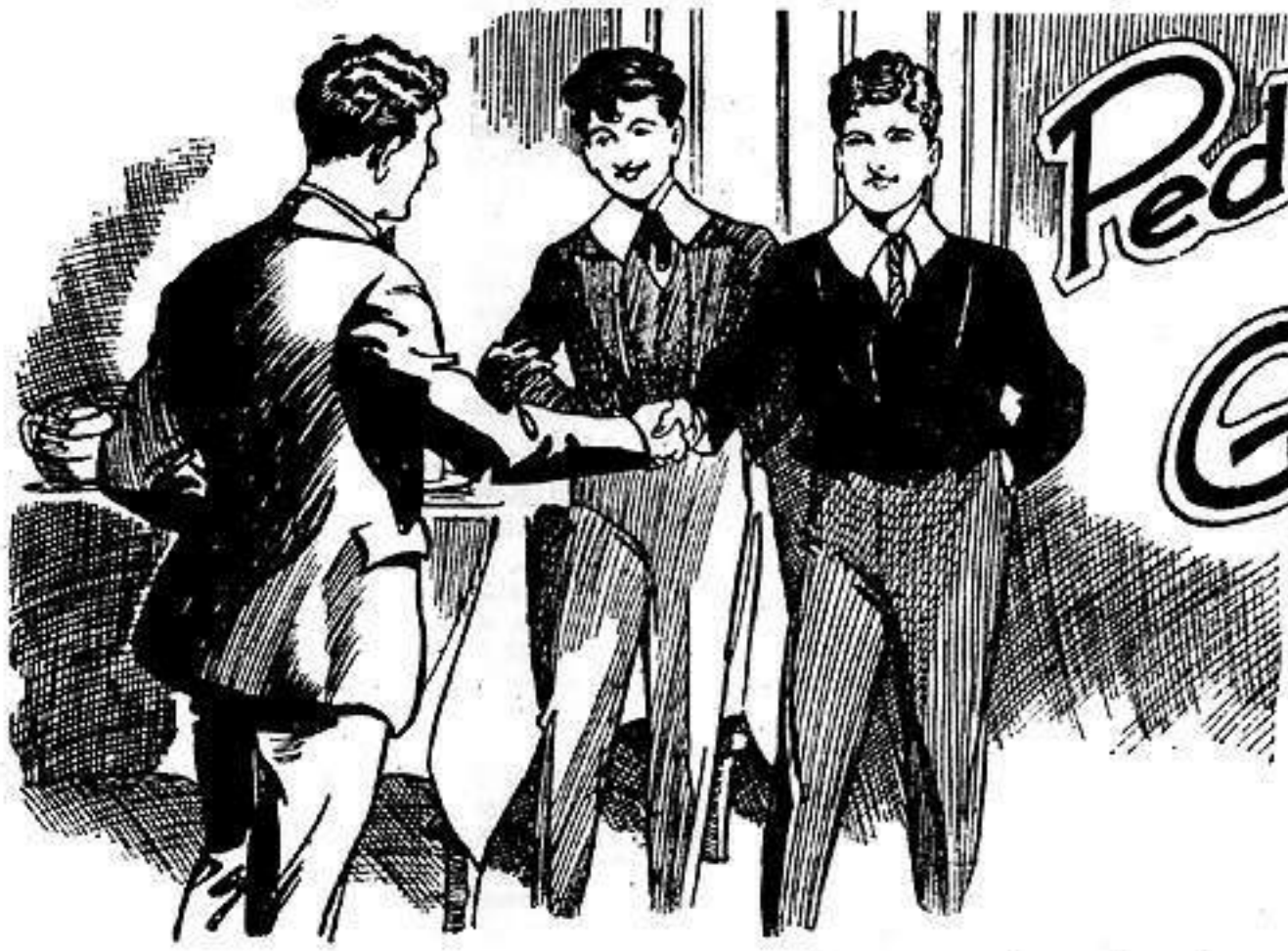
No. 10—and it'll be better than the first nine numbers, this new supplement of ours! Mind you read it, boys!

THE PORTRAIT GALLERY!

In next week's issue will be found an excellent picture of George Blundell, the bluff, good-natured skipper of the Fifth at Greyfriars. See that you add his cheery chivvy to your collection. All the best, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

DECIDEDLY AWKWARD! ***Hobson of the Shell is forbidden by his father to speak to Pedrillo, the circus boy acrobat, who is temporarily staying at the school. Being a dutiful son, Hobson agrees to observe his father's wishes, but he does not bargain on having Pedrillo thrust upon him as a study mate!***



Pedrillo of Greyfriars!

A Grand New Long Complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, featuring Pedrillo, the boy acrobat.

BY

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter's Wonderful Wheeze!

"SENOR!"

"Eh?"

"Yo lo tengo!"

It was William George Bunter of the Greyfriars Remove who made those surprising remarks.

The Remove were coming in for third lesson; and Harry Wharton & Co., as they walked in, found that Bunter was already in the Form-room.

That was extremely unusual; Bunter was generally the last to turn up for any lesson, and he had received more lines for being late than any other fellow in the Lower Fourth.

But there he was, sitting at his desk, with a book before him, and a fat grin on his face.

Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, had not yet come in. Bunter addressed his remarkable remarks to Harry Wharton & Co., who stared at him blankly.

"What's this game?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Potty?" inquired Nugent.

"Muy bien!" answered Bunter.

"What on earth——" began Johnny Bull.

"Con gusto!" went on Bunter cheerily.

"Is that Latin?" inquired Johnny Bull.

A smile of lofty disdain wreathed the fat features of Billy Bunter.

"You're jolly ignorant, Johnny Bull, not to know Spanish from Latin!" he said.

"Oh, it's Spanish, is it?" said Johnny. "And what are you babbling Spanish for, you howling ass? You're not learning Spanish, I suppose? If you've got any time on your hands you ought to put it into learning English, and then you may leave off mixing your nominatives and accusatives, and splitting your giddy infinitives."

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"But what does it mean?" asked Bob Cherry. "You never learn anything unless you're going to be licked for not learning it, Bunter. Is this a game?"

"It's a wheeze!" said Bunter.

"Blessed if I see where the wheeze comes in!" said Bob, utterly astonished. "You're learning Spanish for a wheeze? My hat!"

Billy Bunter had succeeded in astonishing the Famous Five.

Really it was very surprising.

Bunter's English left much to be desired, and only the dread of Mr. Quelch's cane could drive him to the study of Latin, while his French made Monsieur Charpentier tear his hair. Yet here he was, apparently mugging up Spanish, a language that was not included in the Greyfriars curriculum, and of which he was not under the necessity of knowing a single word! It really was amazing!

"Where does the wheeze come in?" asked Harry Wharton.

Bunter chuckled a fat chuckle.

"We've got Latin prose in third lesson," he said. "I fancy I'm going to get out of it. See? Quelchy is never satisfied with my Latin prose."

"He would be jolly easily satisfied if he were!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"But tell us the wheeze," said Bob. "I'm not jolly keen on Latin prose, and if there's a way of dodging third lesson I'm on to it. I'd rather punt about a footer on a fine morning like this."

"No end of a wheeze," said Bunter impressively. "You see, being the only fellow at Greyfriars who can speak Spanish——"

"Can you speak it?" grinned Frank Nugent.

"Well, perhaps I'm not what you would call fluent," said Bunter cautiously. "You can't become fluent in a language by reading it up for an hour or so——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fluentfulness would not be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But Quelchy doesn't know any Spanish, of course, so it will be good enough for him," explained Bunter.

"My only hat! You're going to talk Spanish to Quelchy?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Just that!" grinned Bunter.

"And that will get you off third lesson?"

"I hope so—and a good many more lessons, too!" said Bunter cheerily. "I can tell you it's the wheeze of the term! Mind, you fellows are not to bag it; it's my wheeze, and I'm sticking to it. I thought of it first, you know, and it's mine!"

The chums of the Remove gazed at him. So did a good many more of the Removites who heard his astonishing remarks.

Peter Todd tapped his forehead significantly.

"Quite off!" he remarked.

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"Wandering in his mind," said Vernon-Smith.

"The question is—has he any mind to wander in?" asked Skinner.

"But let's hear the giddy wheeze," said Bob. "Quelchy will be coming along in a minute or two. Cough it up, Bunter!"

"Mind, you're not to bag it!" said Bunter. "You see, a lot of fellows couldn't work the same jape. Quelchy wouldn't give the whole Form permission to go and sit with an invalid, of course."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

"I suppose you fellows haven't forgotten the accident at the circus at Friardale last week?" said Bunter. "You know that Spanish acrobat—what's his name——"

"Pedrillo!" said Bob.

"That's it! That acrobat kid, Pedrillo, took a tumble, and the Head let him be brought here to the school hospital. Now he's recovering——"

"But what——"

"How——"

"What the thump——"

"Don't you see?" grinned Bunter. "Here's a poor fellow—a blessed foreigner, who most likely can't speak a word of English—laid up in our sanny. The nurse doesn't speak his lingo, of course; and old Dr. Pillbury wouldn't

[Copyright in the United States of America.]

know any Spanish. Think of the poor, unfortunate fellow lying there, you know, unable to speak to a soul! Pathetic, ain't it?"

"But what——"

"Well, you know what a kind-hearted chap I am——"

"Great pip!"

"Always thinking of others——"

"My only hat!"

"Always sacrificing myself for the good of other fellows——"

"Ye gods!"

"Being that kind of generous and kind-hearted chap, you know, I thought of going to see the poor, unfortunate invalid and talking to him in his own language."

"Phew!"

"Quelchy is a bit of a crusty old bird," said Bunter. "But he must have a heart—stands to reason he must. He's bound to realise what a godsend it will be for that blessed foreigner—I mean that poor unfortunate, unhappy invalid—to have a jaw with a chap in his own language. See? Well, then, as I know Spanish, I'm the man."

"Oh!"

"But you don't know Spanish!" howled Bob Cherry.

"That's all right if Quelchy thinks I do. I know enough Spanish for Quelchy, if not for Pedrillo."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Quelchy is bound to be touched when I tell him I'm going to comfort the sick and afflicted, and all that. He's sure to be touched——"

"I shall think he's touched, certainly, if he's taken in so easily as all that!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Think of that poor foreigner lying there——" said Bunter.

"While you're lying here!" remarked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up, Skinner! You fellows watch me work the oracle," said Bunter. "I've been practising Spanish a lot—it's easy, if you only want to gas a few words, you know. I think it's jolly kind of me to think of that blessed—I mean, that unfortunate invalid. It's cost me money, too. I gave threepence for this book second-hand at old Lazarus'."

"And you're really going to try that game on Quelchy?" asked Harry Wharton blankly.

"Yes, rather! Knowing that I speak Spanish, he will be glad to send me to have a friendly talk with that unhappy invalid in sanny," explained Bunter. "It may surprise him to learn that I'm a Spanish scholar——"

"It may! Ha, ha, ha!"

"But when I sling some Spanish at him it will be all right. You fellows watch."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Quelchy!"

"Not a word!" breathed Bunter.

The Spanish manual disappeared into Bunter's pocket. The Removites hurried to take their places as Mr. Quelch's step was heard in the corridor.

The Remove master came into the Form-room.

All eyes were turned on Bunter.

In the way of inventing dodges for eluding work Bunter had a fertile brain. Many and various were his stunts for that noble purpose. But certainly even William George Bunter had never before developed so surprising a stunt as this.

Undoubtedly, if it was discovered that a Greyfriars fellow could speak Spanish, it was likely that that fellow would be allowed, and even requested, to visit the injured acrobat from Zorro's Spanish Circus who was now lying in the school sanatorium. It was not unlikely that such a useful fellow might be excused a class or two for the purpose. But——

As Bunter's knowledge of Spanish was derived from a few hasty blinks at a Spanish manual, the success of his remarkable wheeze was really quite doubtful.

Certainly, Bunter was not bothering about his ability, or inability, to carry on a conversation with the Spanish acrobat.

Once he had secured leave from class he was not likely to spend many of the minutes of his leave by the bedside of the stranger from afar.

What he was bothering about was getting out of the Form-room before third lesson started, and escaping the horrors of Latin prose.

Bunter's fat face was confident. But the other fellows doubted very much whether so old and downy a bird as Henry Quelch would be so easily caught. And they watched with breathless interest as Billy Bunter proceeded to work the oracle.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Trying It On!

"MR. QUELCH! Sir!" Bunter stood up in his place and blinked at his Form master through his big spectacles.

The Remove master glanced at him.

"You may sit down, Bunter."

"But, sir——"

"If you have anything to say, Bunter, be brief!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch impatiently. "What is it?"

"Being a fluent Spaniard, sir——"

"What?"

"I mean, a fluent speaker of Spaniards—I mean, Spanish," stammered Bunter, a little disconcerted by the steady stare of Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes, "I—I thought——"

"What do you mean, Bunter?"

"That unfortunate blessed foreigner, sir——"

"What?"

"I—I mean, that poor unfortunate invalid, sir, in sanny," said Bunter. "I—I keep on thinking of him, sir, lying there with nobody to speak to. He must be feeling frightfully lonely and down, sir, so far from his native country, and—and nobody talking his language, sir. I—I feel very much for him, sir. It really keeps me awake of nights——"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch blankly.

"So I—I thought, sir, as the doctor says he's getting better, that he might like me to sit by his bedside, sir, and talk to him in his own lingo——"

"In what?"

"I mean his own language, sir. It would buck him no end—I mean, it would cheer him up a lot, sir. And being so fluent in Spanish——"

"I was not aware, Bunter, that you had any knowledge of the Spanish tongue," said Mr. Quelch, staring at the fat junior.

"Oh, yes, sir; it's my favourite study," said Bunter.

"If that is the case, Bunter, I am very glad to hear it——"

"I—I thought you would be, sir," said Bunter, encouraged.

"But as you are the very reverse of a studious boy, I doubt your statement very much," went on Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

"Oh, sir! I—I'll speak some Spanish to you if you like, sir," stammered Bunter. "I've got it all at my finger-tips. I—I really speak Spanish rather better than English, sir."

"Even that would not prove a close acquaintance with the language," said Mr. Quelch grimly.

"That's sare," murmured Bob Cherry.

"I—I thought, sir, that if you approve, I'd walk across to sanny now and cheer the poor unfortunate fellow up by talking to him in his own lingo—language, sir."

"You would be willing to miss third lesson for this purpose, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch, evidently in a sardonic vein.

"I—I wouldn't mind, sir."

"I believe that statement, at least. I am quite sure that you would elude any lesson, Bunter, at the cost of any prevarication."

"Oh, sir!"

"But if you speak Spanish, as you say——"

"Certainly, sir."

"If so, Bunter, you are entitled to commendation. I certainly never suspected you of such devotion to study. Your English and Latin show no signs of it whatever."

"The—the fact is, sir, that—that I've given so much of my time to—to Spanish, sir, that—that my Latin has suffered a little in consequence. That's how it is, sir. Being a studious chap I——"

"Very good! With what Spanish works are you acquainted, Bunter?"

"Oh!"

Bunter cudgelled his fat brains. He was acquainted with as many works in Spanish as in Chinese or Hindustani.

He was just able to remember the name of one Spanish work.

"Don Quixote, sir!" he gasped. Bunter had heard somebody speak of Don Quixote, and fortunately remembered that the author was a Spaniard. "That—that's my favourite work, sir."

"Indeed! How is the name of your favourite work spelt in Spanish, Bunter?"

The Remove looked on breathlessly. Mr. Quelch was in one of the sarcastic moods that his Form knew so well. He was, as the juniors knew, playing Bunter like a fish. Only Bunter could not see it.

"Q-U-I-X-O-T-E!" answered Bunter brightly. He considered that an easy one.

"The work you mention is your favourite work in Spanish, but you are not aware that Cervantes wrote 'Quijote,' and not 'Quixote,'" said Mr. Quelch.

It was the first Bunter had heard of either Cervantes or "Quijote." But he felt himself equal to the occasion.

"Oh, yes, sir! Quite!"

"And how is this name, with which you are so familiar, pronounced in Spanish, Bunter?"

It was dawning upon the Remove that their Form-master was not so unacquainted with the Spanish language as had been supposed.

But it did not dawn on Bunter. The Owl's fat intellect required plenty of time to get into motion.

"Quixote, sir," answered Bunter brightly, pronouncing the name as it is spelt in English. Bunter considered that an easy one, so to speak.

"You are not aware, Bunter, that in Spanish the name is pronounced in three syllables?"

"Oh!"

"Your knowledge of the language, Bunter, does not enable you to spell or

pronounce an exceedingly well-known Spanish name?"

"Oh, yes, sir! No, sir! The—the fact is——"

"Well, what is the fact, Bunter?" inquired Mr. Quelch in a voice that reminded the juniors of the grinding of a saw.

"I—I—if you like, sir, I'll sling some Spanish at you—I mean, I'll speak some Spanish—lots of it—any amount, sir!" gasped Bunter. "F'rinstance, yo lo tengo, senor!"

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

Bunter pronounced the word "senor" as spelt in English; indeed, he could do no other. He was not in the least aware that in Spanish it is pronounced as if spelt "senyor."

"Give me any sentence in English, sir, and I will translate it at once into Spanish, without even stopping to think," said Bunter.

"I will do so, Bunter. Translate the sentence 'I am speaking to a foolish and untruthful boy,'" said Mr. Quelch.

Some of the Removites grinned.

"Certainly, sir," said Bunter.

"I am waiting, Bunter."

But Billy Bunter did not keep the Remove master waiting. He had a Spanish sentence all ready, and he rattled it off cheerily. Quite a lot of trouble had Bunter taken in memorising that Spanish sentence. He was, of course, relying wholly upon the fact that the Remove master, though a "whale" in Latin and Greek, was unacquainted with Spanish. He had yet to learn that that was not a fact.

"Otras personas asoman a sus balcones y pasan alli una hora o mas!" rattled off Bunter.

Mr. Quelch jumped.

The Remove fellows stared. Really, it was surprising to hear Bunter rattle off a Spanish translation at a moment's notice like this. There would have been cause for surprise had it been a translation of the sentence given by the Form-master.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

Bunter smirked.

"You see, sir——"

"I see that you are as absurd and incredibly stupid, Bunter, as you are untruthful!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

It was Bunter's turn to jump.

"That—that's good Spanish, sir!" he stammered.

"Is it a translation of the sentence I gave you?" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, yes, sir! Quite!"

"Upon my word! You have learned this almost meaningless sentence by heart, Bunter, in order to attempt to deceive me."

"Oh, really, sir——"

"The Spanish words you have uttered mean, 'Other persons show themselves on their balconies and pass there an hour or more,'" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "You do not even know the meaning of the words you have quoted like a parrot."

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter.

It dawned on him at last that Mr. Quelch knew Spanish.

He hadn't thought of that. How was he to think of it? A fellow couldn't think of everything. At least, Bunter couldn't.

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

"Silence! This boy's dishonesty, this boy's prevarication, this boy's crass obtuseness, are not matters for merriment!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

The Remove did not quite agree with their Form-master on that point. But they ceased to laugh, quite suddenly. A Form-master had to be given his head.

"Bunter, you have deliberately attempted to deceive me in order to elude instruction!"

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't want to cut class, sir. It—it would have been a blow to me, sir!"

"Bunter——"

"I was only thinking of that poor unfortunate chap, sir, and how nice it would be to speak Spanish to him, sir, and——"

"Stand out before the class, Bunter!"

"Oh dear!"

Bunter rolled out reluctantly.

He could see now—what the other fellows had seen from the beginning—that his wonderful wheeze was not a success.

"Bunter, your conduct is utterly unscrupulous——"

"Is it, sir?" gasped Bunter.

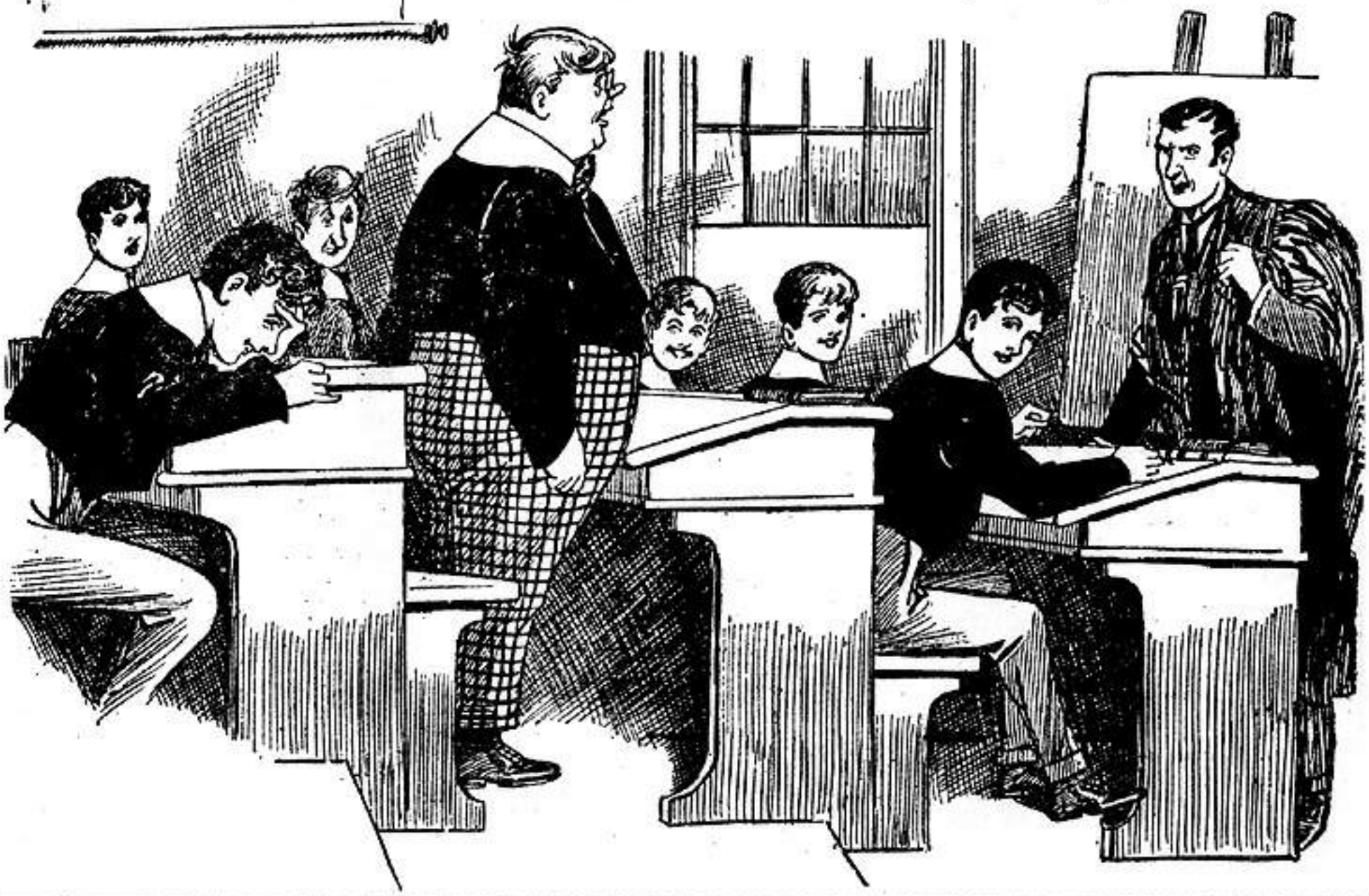
"It is absolutely depraved, Bunter!"

"Oh, crikey!"

"Bend over that desk, Bunter!"

"Oh dear! I—I say, sir! I—I didn't mean—that is, I wasn't—I—I mean I never knew you knew Spanish, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"Very probably!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "Even you, I presume, would not have attempted so bare-faced an imposture had you known that it would



"I was not aware, Bunter, that you had any knowledge of the Spanish tongue," said Mr. Quelch. "Oh, yes, sir! The—the fact is——" "Well, what is the fact?" inquired the Remove master. "I—I—if you like, sir," stammered Bunter, "I'll sling some Spanish at you—I mean, I'll speak some Spanish. F'rinstance, yo lo tengo, senor."

(*See Chapter 2.*)

be detected immediately. I have told you to bend over that desk!"

"But, sir—— Yarooooh!"

A lick from the cane hinted to Bunter that his Form master was waiting for him to bend over.

The Owl of the Remove bent over the desk.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Four loud whacks echoed through the Form-room, accompanied by four terrific yells from William George Bunter.

"There!" said Mr. Quelch. "Now go back to your place, Bunter. You will be detained half an hour after class, for the time you have wasted."

"Oh dear!"

Bunter crawled back to his place.

He sat down dismally and immediately rose again. Mr. Quelch's eye gleamed at him.

"Sit down at once, Bunter!"

"But, sir——"

"I decline to hear one word further from you, Bunter! Sit down!"

"But—but—but—m-m-may I stand up, sir?" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I'd like to stand for a—a—a little while, sir."

Mr. Quelch stared at him, and then his grim face broke into a smile.

"Oh, very well. You may stand through this lesson, Bunter."

And William George Bunter took third lesson standing.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Roland for an Oliver!

"THE Remove——" began Hobson of the Shell.

Claude Hoskins, Hobby's study-mate, did not seem to hear.

Hoskins was sitting at the study table, with a pencil in his hand and a sheet of music-paper before him. His left hand was running through his hair, which Hoskins wore rather longer than most Greyfriars fellows, being musical. When Hoskins of the Shell was running his fingers through his hair, and staring at a sheet of music-paper, any fellow might have known that he was in the throes of composition. But James Hobson did not seem to notice it.

"The Remove," he repeated. "I say, Hosky, the Remove are playing the Fourth at football this afternoon."

"Eh?"

"The Remove——"

"Gone!" said Hoskins.

"Eh, what? They're not gone yet," said Hobson, staring. "Kick-off is at three."

Hoskins smiled bitterly. He was much attached to his study-mate, the cheery and sturdy and good-natured captain of the Shell. They were very unlike one another, and perhaps all the firmer friends for that reason. But there were times when Hoskins could not help feeling that old Hobby was a bit of a Philistine, just as there were times when Hobby, with all his loyal admiration for his musical chum, could not help thinking that Hosky was a bit of an ass.

"Gone!" repeated Hoskins. "If you hadn't spoken, Hobby, I should have jotted it down. I just had it."

"What was it?" asked Hobson.

"Only an inspiration!" said Hoskins, with exaggerated indifference.

"Oh! Well, if it's gone, it's gone!" said Hobson comfortably. "Perhaps it will turn up again. About the Remove——"

"Bother the Remove!" said Hoskins. "I suppose we're not concerned about fags in the Lower Fourth."

"They're playing the Upper Fourth this afternoon."

"Let 'em."

"But you don't see——"

"No!" said Hoskins.

Hobson coughed. The loss of his inspiration seemed to have made Hoskins a little cross. Hobson, not being musical, was unable to realise the magnitude of the loss. Possibly, however, the magnitude was not so great as Hoskins supposed.

"Blow the Remove!" added Hoskins. "I think I'll take a stroll in the quad. It may come back." He was alluding to the lost inspiration.

"But you remember they ragged this study last week!" urged Hobson. "The day before all the fellows went to Zorro's circus, you know—you remember, I suppose? Wharton and his pals raided this study and ragged it right and left. You haven't forgotten that, Hoskins?"

Hoskins threw back the hair from his intellectual brow with an impatient gesture. A fellow who had just lost an inspiration really couldn't bother about such trivial things as study rags.

"They upset a lot of your music, you know," said Hobson slyly. "That was really the worst part of the whole affair!"

Hoskins sat up and took notice, so to speak.

"That's so," he said. "I had no end of a job sorting it out again. They mixed up my sonato in E flat with my march in G major."

"They did," said Hobson. "If only for that, we ought to give them a jolly good ragging in return. And as it's a half-holiday to-day, and they're playing football, now's our chance!"

"Good!"

"It's not so jolly easy to rag a Remove study, you know," went on Hobson of the Shell. "A fellow's always liable to stir up a hornet's nest if he goes ragging in their passage. Even Loder of the Sixth doesn't really like going there, though he's a prefect. But with the whole mob of them on the football field it's all clear—what? And after they mucked up your march in E major——"

"My sonato in E flat, you mean."

"Ye-ees, that's what I mean—mixed it all up with your symphony in G sharp——"

"My march in G major."

"Exactly. I knew it was something of the kind. Well, then, we'll take a few of the fellows, and give Wharton's study what he gave ours—what? One good turn deserves another."

"Good egg!" agreed Hoskins.

James Hobson glanced at his watch.

"They'll be kicking off in half an hour," he said. "We'll wait till they're all on Little Side."

"Right-ho!" agreed Hoskins. "I'll play you something, if you like, Hobby, while we're waiting." Hoskins picked up his violin case. "There's a little thing of my own——"

"Thanks no end, old man!" said Hobson hastily. "But I think I'd better go and tell Stewart and the other chaps——"

"Lots of time for that——"

"Well, they may be going out of gates, you know, as it's a half-holiday. And—and we don't want to lose this chance of giving the Remove the kybosh."

And, without waiting for any rejoinder from Hoskins, James Hobson quitted the study in quite a hurried manner.

Strange sounds followed him as he went.

A stranger in the Shell passage might have supposed that some especially hard-hearted vivisectionist was experimenting upon protesting cats and dogs in Hobson's study, or even that a dreadful murder was being committed there.

But it was not so bad as that. It was only Claude Hoskins playing a little thing of his own.

Hoskins was still playing half an hour later, when Hobson came back with Stewart and Chowne and Carr, and two or three more of the Shell, all ready to go on the warpath. Whether he was still playing the little thing of his own, or some other little thing, it was impossible to tell. Hoskins' ways with the fiddle were not as the ways of other fiddlers.

"Ready, old bean?" said Hobson. "Come on!"

Hoskins laid down the violin with a sigh.

"Right-ho! I'm ready. If you fellows would care to hear——"

"Those fags have gone down to Little Side," said Stewart. "Come on, let's get on with it!"

"Let's!" said all the Shell fellows together.

A Grand Long Complete Story of School Life and Detective Adventure at St. Frank's College.

By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

Author of "The Schoolboy Treasure Seekers," etc., etc.

THE MONSTER LIBRARY.

No. 5. Out on March 20th. Price One Shilling.

HAVE YOU READ THESE?

No. 1.—The Schoolboy Treasure Seekers.

No. 2.—The Black Sheep of the Remove.

No. 3.—The Tyrant of St. Frank's.

No. 4.—The Boy from Bermondsey.

These can be had for 1s. each, or post free 1s. 2d., on application to:

The Amalgamated Press (1922) Ltd., Back Number Dept., Bear Alley, Farringdon St., E.C.4.

And they started.

From the landing window Hobson & Co. had a partial view of the football ground, and they glanced out, and beheld the Remove footballers, just beginning the game with Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth.

They grinned at the sight.

Evidently the heroes of the Remove had no suspicion that the Shell were on the warpath that afternoon. Harry Wharton and Co. were thinking of Soccer; and, indeed, they had almost forgotten that shindy with the Shell of a week before. Hobson, whose study had been wrecked, naturally had a rather longer memory.

"All clear!" grinned Hobson. "The Remove always get a good crowd from their own Form—nearly all the young rascals are there, playing or looking on. If there's any left in the studies we can handle them!"

"Yes, rather!"

"This way!" chuckled Stewart.

And the raiders headed for Study No. 1, which belonged to Wharton and Nugent.

"Here we are! Nobody at home!" chuckled Hobson, as he threw open the door of Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows——"

"My hat! Bunter!"

Billy Bunter was reposing his ample form in the armchair in Study No. 1. He jumped up as the Shell fellows crowded in, and blinked at them in alarm through his big spectacles.

Bunter belonged to No. 7, but once upon a time he had been a member of Study No. 1, and he still regarded himself as entitled to make himself at home in the study.

"It's that fat freak, Bunter," said Hoskins.

"Oh, really, Hoskins——"

"What the thump are you doing here?" demanded Hobson. "After Wharton's grub?"

"There isn't any here," said Bunter. "I mean—certainly not! That beast Toddy has turned me out of my study; he's doing what he calls his legal studies, the silly ass! Won't let a fellow take a snooze in his own armchair before his own fire, you know. At least, it's Toddy's armchair, but all the same——"

"Kick him out!" said Carr.

"I——I say—— Leggo!" roared Bunter.

Three or four Shell fellows collared the Owl of the Remove, and spun him to the doorway. Bunter spun round like a very fat humming-top, and collapsed in the passage.

"Now cut!" grinned Hobson.

"Yarooogh!"

"Chuck the inkpot at him, Carr!"

Bunter did not wait for the inkpot. He picked himself up and fled. And then Hobson & Co., with many chuckles, proceeded to get busy in the study of the captain of the Remove.

———

Wriggling with pain, Bunter crawled back to his place. He sat down dismally, and immediately rose again. Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed at him. "Sit down at once, Bunter!" he ordered. "But—but—but—m-may I stand up, sir?" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I—I—I'd like to stand for a—a—a little while, sir!" The Remove Form-master's grim face broke into a smile. "Oh, very well, then!" he said. (*See Chapter* 2.)

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Back Up!

PETER TODD reached for a ruler.

Toddy was sitting at the table in Study No. 7, with three or four huge volumes before him.

A crocked knee caused Toddy to be left out of the football that afternoon; and he was improving the shining hour with what he was pleased to call his legal studies—Toddy being the son of a solicitor, and ambitious to follow in his father's footsteps.

Peter was supposed, in the Remove, to know an immense amount about the law and to be able to demonstrate that black was white, and white was black, like a genuine legal luminary.

When Toddy was at his legal studies he did not like to be interrupted. Bunter had been ruthlessly turned out of the study. Whether he talked or whether he snored in the armchair, his presence was undesirable to a student of the law. And he was certain to do one or the other. So Peter had driven him forth.

Now he had come back—which was why Peter Todd reached for the ruler.

"You again!" he said.

"Look here, Toddy!"

"Come in!" said Peter, brandishing the ruler. "I can't reach you there!"

Bunter blinked at him, with the door half-open. He didn't want to be reached with the ruler. He had had some!

"Toddy, you beast, a fellow can take a nap in his own armchair before his own fire if he likes, you beast!"

"It's my armchair and Dutton's fire, as Dutton stood the coal!" grinned Peter. "You never stand anything, you fat fraud! But you expect fellows to stand you! Hook it, before I shy this ruler at you!"

"Oh, really, Toddy!"

"Go and snore in Study No. 1, if you must snore; the fellows are out at footer."

"Those Shell beasts are there ragging the study," said Bunter. "They've turned me out—Hobson's gang, you know!"

"What?"

Peter Todd jumped up.

"Hobson's gang ragging Wharton's study?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, so you see!"

"You fat dummy, why couldn't you say so before? The awful rotters, ragging a study while the chaps are at footer! Lucky I'm here! Come on, Bunter! Even you will have to back up now; there's hardly anybody in the studies."

"I—I say!"

"Follow on, you fat frog, and back me up!"

Peter had forgotten his legal studies now. A raid on the Remove passage was a more important matter.

He rushed out of Study No. 7. Bunter blinked after him, but he did not follow. The Owl of the Remove was not anxious for a shindy with the Shell.

"Silly ass!" commented Bunter.

And he closed the door after Peter and sat down in the armchair. He was rather pleased than otherwise that the Shell were raiding that afternoon. It gave him a chance to get his nap after all while Toddy was busy with the raiders.

Really, Hobson had chosen his time well. Eleven of the best men in the Remove were in the football, and most of the others had gathered on Little Side to see the match. Few of the Form were likely to be in the studies on that fine afternoon with football going on. But Peter, as he heard in the passage the sound of crashing in Study No. 1, realised that he could not

tackle a mob of the Shell single-handed. He ran along the Remove passage to call to arms any Removites who might happen to be on the spot.

But most of the studies were vacant. Study after study was drawn blank. In Study No. 11, however, Peter found Skinner and Snoop and Stott. They were at home, passing their half-holiday as they sometimes did when they felt secure from masters and prefects. There was a haze of cigarette-smoke in Study No. 11, and Skinner & Co. were playing nap.

"Hallo! Coming in to take a hand, Toddy?" asked Harold Skinner genially, as the excited face of Peter Todd looked in.

"No, you smoky rotter!"

"Thanks! Buzz off, then! You shouldn't put a face like that too suddenly into a fellow's study. It gives a fellow a bit of a shock!"

"There's a Shell raid——"

"Let 'em rip!"

"They're wrecking Wharton's study!"

"More power to their giddy elbow," said Skinner. "Shut the door after you."

"Line up, you slackers!" howled Peter Todd. "Back me up, and we'll snatch them bald-headed!"

"Dear man, you go and snatch them bald-headed and we'll come along later and pick up what's left of you."

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled Snoop and Stott.

"You rotten funks!" roared Peter.

"Good-bye!"

"You've got to back me up."

"Shut the door after you!"

Peter Todd glared ferociously at the slackers of the Remove. Obviously, Skinner & Co. were not going to leave their little game in order to deal with the Shell raiders. They chuckled at the idea.

"You won't come?" demanded Peter.

"Ha, ha! Not quite."

Peter Todd strode into the study. He really had no time to spare, but he spared a minute for Skinner & Co. Before the young rascals knew what his intention was, he grasped the study-table and upended it. There was a yell of rage from Skinner & Co. as they jumped up, and cards, cigarettes, and other articles shot off the table in a scattering heap.

"You cheeky rotter!"

"Kick him out!"

"Collar him!"

Peter Todd grinned and retreated from the study. He left Skinner & Co. busy picking up cards and cigarettes and scattered cash, while he hurried farther on in search of recruits.

But it was not till he reached Study No. 14 that he found anybody at home, and then he found only Fisher T. Fish, the transatlantic junior. Fisher T. Fish was sitting at the study table in Study No. 14 with a pen in his hand and a deep wrinkle in his brow. Fishy was calculating exactly how much money he had spent since he had been at Greyfriars—an occupation in which he found great entertainment. There was a sum of three-halfpence that he could not quite trace, and the dreadful thought was in his mind that he might have lost it. He knew that he had not given it away. He was absolutely certain of that. But where was it?

"Fishy, old man——"

Fisher T. Fish waved an impatient pen at Peter.

"Vamoose the ranch!" he snapped.

"There's a raid——"

"I guess that cuts no ice with me! Absquatulate!"

"The Shell——"

"Levant!"

"I tell you you've got to back me up."

"Git!"

"You fishy idiot!"

"Vamoose, I keep on telling you!" roared Fisher T. Fish. "You're putting me out in my accounts!"

"They're ragging Wharton's study!"

"Blow Wharton and his study! I guess——"

"Look here, Fishy!"

Fisher T. Fish dipped his pen in the ink again and shut his ears to Peter's importunate voice. He had to solve the mystery of that three-halfpence somehow, and he had no time to waste on less important matters.

"Will you come and lend a hand?" yelled Peter.

"Nope!"

Peter Todd wasted no more words on Fisher T. Fish. He grabbed at the inkpot, inverted it over Fishy's transatlantic head, and quitted the study. Fisher T. Fish jumped up with a roar of rage. Ink streamed over his hair and his bony features and ran down his skinny neck.

"You pesky galoot!" howled Fishy. "I guess I'll make potato-scrapings of you! I guess I'll—I'll—I'll——"

But Peter Todd did not stay to listen to Fishy's guesses. From the other end of the passage came a din that showed how exceedingly busy Hobson & Co. were getting in Wharton's study. And Peter was single-handed to deal with them. There was no time to gather recruits from the football-field. Peter thought hard for a minute or two, and then he grinned. Single-handed, it was not much use to think of tackling the Shell raiders in combat. But there were other ways and means. And Peter had thought of both a way and a means! And for the next few minutes Peter was as busy as Hobson & Co

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Whip Hand!

"BEGINNING to look a bit untidy," remarked Hobson.

"Just a few!" grinned Stewart.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Study No. 1 in the Remove was looking more than a "bit" untidy.

Hobson & Co. had by no means finished; in fact, they had hardly started yet. But Study No. 1 was already looking as if a whirlwind had broken loose within its walls.

The carpet was up, and more or less gracefully draped over the bookcase, which lay on its side.

Books were scattered far and wide, mingled with cinders, ink, pencils, pens, and indiarubbers, impot paper, teaspoons, and cups and saucers, and all sorts and conditions of things.

Harry Wharton & Co. were very keen footballers, and very keen on beating the Fourth Form; but it is doubtful whether they would have given their whole thoughts to the Form match then going on had they been aware of what was happening in the study.

Fortunately, they were not aware of it.

"This clock doesn't seem to be going," observed Carr of the Shell, taking the study clock from the mantelpiece. "I've got an idea, too, that it won't go again in a hurry."

It seemed improbable, as Carr proceeded to pour a bottle of gum into the works.

"We haven't done the table-drawer yet," said Hoskins.

"That won't take long," said Chowne.

It did not take Chowne long, either. He pulled out the table-drawer, and sent it whirling through the air. It dropped into the fender, scattering its contents over the room.

"Good egg!" chuckled Stewart.

"I wonder if those fags will be sorry for having wrecked my study when they see this?" remarked Hobson.

"Ha, ha! Very likely."

"Of course, we're giving them a little more than they gave us. As a senior Form, we're bound to deal liberally with fags."

"Yes, rather!"

"Besides, they were interrupted, and we're not going to be interrupted," said Hobson cheerfully.

"No?" asked a voice at the doorway.

The Shell fellows stared round.

Peter Todd stood there, grinning at them cheerfully. For a moment the raiders were alarmed, under the impression that a crowd of Removites had come in from the playing-fields. But they saw at once that Peter was alone.

Hobson laughed.

"You can interrupt us, if you like, Todd," he said. "We'll bury you under the wreckage, as those fags did me last week."

"Collar him!" said Stewart.

"Well, he didn't have a hand in the rag that time," said Hobson considerately. "We'll let him cut off."

"Hook it, then!" said Stewart. "Go while the going's good, if you're a sensible kid!"

But Peter Todd did not hook it.

"I give you one minute to clear out of this study without doing any further damage," he announced.

"Can it!" said Hobson derisively.

"You won't go?"

"Not quite!"

"Collar the cheeky cad and roll him in the cinders!" exclaimed Stewart impatiently.

Two or three of the raggers made a movement towards Peter Todd.

Peter's hand was behind him. It came suddenly into view, and it held a large garden-squirt.

He levelled that unexpected weapon, and the Shell fellows backed off very quickly.

"There's no water in it," grinned Peter.

"Oh! Then——"

"But there's ink——"

"Wha-at!"

"Ink!" grinned Peter Todd. "Chock full of ink, red and black mixed, with a dose of indelible marking-ink added. Who wants it?"

Judging by the looks of Hobson & Co. nobody wanted it.

In fact, the raggers of the Shell almost shuddered at the thought of receiving that horrible compound from the garden-squirt.

"You, Hobby——"

"Stop!" shouted Hobson, backing away hurriedly to the window. "If you squirt that muck over me, I'll—I'll——"

"You'll change colour!" grinned Todd.

"Look here——"

"You want it, Stewart?"

"No!" roared Stewart. "I'll spifficate you if you squirt it this way!"

"You, Hoskins——"

"Keep off!" yelled Hoskins, in alarm.

"You, Carr——"

Carr did not answer, but he backed away behind Chowne. Chowne tried to back behind Carr. There was a scuffle.

Peter Todd grinned triumphantly at the raggers. There were seven of them; but Toddy held the trump

card, in the shape of the big squirt loaded with ink.

"Look here! You cut off!" said Hobson. "This isn't your study——"

"No bizney of yours," said Hoskins.

"It's a Remove study, so it comes to the same thing," said Peter. "You've got to go! I'm going to watch you off the premises! Now, then!"

"You cheeky fag——"

"Are you going, Hobson?"

"No!" roared the captain of the Shell. He made a furious stride towards the junior, but stopped suddenly, and backed off, as Peter took aim.

"I gave you a minute," said Peter calmly. "The minute's up! Get going, or I begin! All of you will get some of it—there's a gallon nearly, and it's mostly ink. It won't be easy to get the marking-ink off, either. Now, then, I'll let you pass one at a time. You're to go first, Carr."

"I—I won't!"

"Very well. You'll want some washing after this!" said Peter, taking careful aim at Albert Carr.

Carr glared at him, rapidly calculating the chances of a rush. But it was only too clear that a rush, however swift, would not save him from the horrid contents of the garden-squirt. Rather, it would make matters worse, for the nearer he got to Peter Todd the more effectively he would be swamped by the ink.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed.

"Are you getting out?"

"You—you don't dare——"

"I wouldn't bet on that," said Peter, with a gleam in his eyes. "I've told you to go first, Carr, and if you don't go, you get it, honour bright!"

"I—I say, Hobby——"

"Don't go!" snapped Hobson.

"You tackle him, then, and get the ink!" said Carr warmly. "After that I'll mop him up fast enough!"

Hobson did not seem prepared to act on that suggestion. He was resolved not to quit the scene of his labours at the order of a Remove fag. But he did not want the ink. Possibly he hoped that Carr would get it, and thus leave him a clear field for dealing with Peter Todd. Once Peter had discharged his artillery, so to speak, a rush of the Shell fellows would have overwhelmed him at once. And he had only the one shot.

The difficulty was that no man in the study was willing to take the fire, and sacrifice himself to the common good. It was no joke to be drenched from head to foot with mixed red and black ink, with a dose of indelible marking-ink added thereunto.

That was the way Carr looked at it. As his leader refused to lead, Carr had the choice of standing the fire, or marching out of the study. He sagely chose the latter course.

"After all, we've pretty well wrecked the place," he said.

"Look here, Carr——"

"I'm jolly well not going to bag that gallon of ink!" exclaimed Carr excitedly. "You bag it, and I'll handle that cheeky fag fast enough!"

Hobson did not seem to hear.

"Time's up!" said Peter. "Now, then——"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Carr hurriedly. "I'm going."

"Buck up!"

Peter Todd stood back, and Carr of the Shell passed out of the study. He gave Peter a glare; but the squirt still bore steadily upon him, and he did not venture upon anything more than a glare. He strode away to the staircase.

"MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 29—Montague Newland (of the Remove).

A fine upstanding character, all the more interesting because he springs from an ancient race very much maligned by some people. Newland has proved that a Jew can be as decent a fellow as the Englishman, Irishman, Welshman, or Scotsman. Good-natured to a fault, generous, and plucky, Montague Newland may be one of the "quiet" ones in the noisy Greyfriars Remove, but he is "all there." What he doesn't know about finance isn't worth knowing. Good at lessons, a trifle above the average on the playing field, and a dangerous chap to tackle in a scrap, Monty deserves, perhaps, more prominence than generally falls to his lot. Shares Study No. 9 with Penfold, Treluce, and Trevor.

"Get out of sight!" called out Peter. "If I see the top of your head in two seconds, look out for squalls—ink squalls!"

Carr fairly ran down the staircase.

In Study No. 1 two or three fellows converged towards the doorway with furious looks. But they backed into the room again with almost ludicrous haste as the squirt bore on them.

"You next, Chowne."

"I—I——"

"Are you going?"

"Yes!" gasped Chowne.

And he went. James Hobson gave Toddy a glare of concentrated fury. With astute strategy, Peter was ordering off the raiders one by one; and each one, in turn, unwilling to face the discharge of ink, obeyed his order. The Shell fellows had probably read the story of that ancient patriot who threw himself upon the enemy's pikes, to open a way for his comrades. But nobody in Study No. 1 seemed disposed to imitate that heroic example.

"You next, Milsom."

Milsom of the Shell went without a word.

"Now you, Gilbert."

"Don't go, Gilbert!" hissed Hobson.

"I don't want any ink, thanks!"

Gilbert of the Shell walked out, glared at Toddy, and went down the stairs.

"Now, Hoskins!" said the cheery Peter.

"I jolly well won't go!" hissed Hoskins.

"Dear man! You'll have no end of a job sorting the indelible purple ink out of your hair! It may quite spoil that artistic curl on your forehead—the one you put into curling-pins at night."

Hoskins of the Shell crimsoned. Possibly, however, the danger to his artistic curl daunted him; for, with an apologetic glance at Hobson, he quitted the study and disappeared.

"Stewart!" rapped out Peter next.

Stewart laughed.

"It's a fair catch, Hobby," he said. "I'm jolly well not going to be washed in ink. Let's cut."

"Rats!"

"My dear chap——"

"Rot!"

Stewart shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, I'm going," he said.

He left the study, and paused a second in the passage, tempted to hurl himself on Peter Todd, in spite of the squirt. But the huge tube, with ink dripping from the nozzle, was too threatening. Stewart decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and walked away to the staircase and disappeared.

Peter Todd grinned cheerily at James Hobson, the last of the raggers to remain in the study.

"Your turn to cut, Hobby," he said humorously.

Hobson gritted his teeth.

He did not feel equal to rushing upon that deadly weapon. But he was not disposed to quit the study at the order of a Removite. He was quite determined not to do so.

"Going?" inquired Peter.

"No!" roared the captain of the Shell.

"Then you get the prize! Where will you have it?"

Hobson of the Shell backed as far away as he could, glaring at Toddy a good deal like a cornered tiger. Toddy stepped inside the study to take better aim.

"You—you—you young villain!" panted Hobson. "If—if you squirt that muck over me, I'll smash you afterwards!"

"I'll chance that, old bean. Stand up to it!" said Peter Todd encouragingly.

"Keep off!" yelled Hobson.

He dodged round the study in a hurry, but the nozzle of the squirt bore upon him as he moved. He snatched up a chair, with a mixed idea of using it as a shield, and hurling it at Peter Todd.

Swoooooop!

Swish!

"Groooooooh!"

A stream of ink shot from the squirt, and it caught Hobson of the Shell fairly under the chin. There was a crash as the chair dropped from his hands, and Hobson staggered against the wall.

Mixed inks streamed all over him. His face had disappeared under the ink; his hair was drenched with it. His collar was inky, his tie was soaked. Ink ran down him in streams. Ink was in his ears and nose and mouth, and he gasped and spluttered and gurgled horribly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd. "You asked for it, Hobby!"

"Gug-gug-gug!"

Hobson made a blind rush at Peter. He tripped over a fallen chair and rolled on the floor. There was a furious howl as his head came into contact with the overturned bookcase.

Peter Todd whipped out of the study. He had stopped the rag, but he did not want a hand-to-hand encounter with Hobson. Besides, Hobby was too inky to touch.

"Grooogh! Gug-gug! Oh! Ow! Ooooch!"

Wild and weird sounds came from the hapless Hobson as he struggled up.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Master Todd!" Trotter, the page, came along from the staircase, looking round him. "Excuse me, sir, can you tell me where to find Master Hobson of the Shell? I've looked in his study, and he ain't there, and——"

"Somebody want Hobson?" ejaculated Peter. "My hat! I hope it's not the Head! Ha, ha!"

"It's his father, sir."

"Eh?"

"Sir James Hobson is waitin' in the visitors'-room, sir, and he's getting impatient," said Trotter. "'Tain't my fault. I've been looking for Master Hobson everywhere. I believe Sir James Hobson's follering me upstairs now, and——"

"Great pip!"

An inky and infuriated youth came charging out of Study No. 1. Peter Todd jumped away.

"There's Hobby, if you want him," he stuttered.

"Oh, lor'!" gasped Trotter.

"Hobby, your pater's called!" shrieked Peter Todd.

And he vanished along the Remove passage.

"Wha-a-t!" ejaculated the inky Shell fellow. "My pater? Rot! He hasn't written——"

"'Ere he is, sir!" said Trotter.

"Oh crumbs!"

A tall, hard-faced gentleman had appeared on the next landing. It was Sir James Hobson. Hobson of the Shell blinked down the Remove staircase at him—an inky and terrified blink. The tall baronet stared up at his remarkable visage, not recognising his son.

"Great gad! Who—what is that? Boy, have you found my son?" he exclaimed, turning his eyeglass angrily upon the page.

Trotter, bereft of speech, pointed at the inky and unrecognisable junior. Hobson almost collapsed on the banisters.

"Father!" he gasped.

"Eh?"

"I—I—I——"

"Boy, what—— Is that—that James, my son?"

"Ow! Yes. Groogh! I—I——"

Peter Todd, further along the Remove passage, locked the door of his study. He felt that it was safer to have a locked door between him and Hobson of the Shell, and Sir James Hobson, too.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Hobson's Washing-Day!

"HOBBY'S pater!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Poor old Hobby!"

"Phew!"

Stewart and Hoskins and other Shell fellows looked on, with horrified whispers, as a grim-faced, tall gentleman came down the staircase, with an inky, unrecognisable junior slinking dismally by his side, dropping spots of mixed ink at every step.

Sir James Hobson's stern glance fell upon them, and they vanished round corners. They were sorry for poor old Hobby, who had to interview his father in this state; but they did not want to interview Sir James also. The expression on Sir James' face was distinctly discouraging.

"James!"

"Yes, dad!" groaned Hobson.

"What does this mean?"

"N-n-nothing, father."

"What?" thundered the baronet.

"I—I mean——" mumbled Hobson.

"Well, what do you mean? I call to see my son, and I find him in this state! In this state!" repeated the baronet, with a snort.

"It—it's only a rag!" gasped Hobson.

"What! I shall take you immediately to your headmaster, and you will name the boys who have done this, and I shall demand their punishment."

Hobson spluttered with apprehension.

"No! Nunno! Don't! You see——"

"Some boy threw this horrible ink over you——"

"Yes, but——"

"The young ruffian——"

"You—you see——"

"The rascally young scoundrel——"

"It was a rag!" groaned Hobson. "You—you see, I was ragging a Remove study, and a Remove kid inked me—you see—'tain't a matter for the Head, father! Not at all! Nothing of the kind!"

"Do you mean to say that you provoked this usage?"

"Oh dear! Yes, in a way. You see——"

"I do not see!" thundered Sir James.

"Oh dear!"

"Go to a bath-room, and clean yourself at once!" snapped the baronet. "Then come to your study—I will wait for you there."

"Yes, father!" groaned Hobson.

Sir James strode away to Hobson's study, and Hobby only too gladly headed for a bath-room. What he wanted then, more than anything else—even more than a talk with his pater—was steaming hot water, and plenty of it.

Stewart and Carr joined him in the bath-room, to lend a friendly hand. Hobson really needed help.

"Hard cheese, old chap!" said Stewart sympathetically. "Fancy your pater dropping in like that. Put your head under the tap."

"A fellow's pater oughtn't to take him by surprise like this," said Carr. "'Tain't really playing the game."

Splash! Splash! Splash! Steaming water and lathering soap brought some comfort to Hobson of the Shell.

"It's rotten," he said, through a cloud of steam. "Not a line, you know. I no more expected to see the pater to-day than I expected to see Julius Columbus or Christopher Cæsar—I mean Julius Cæsar or Christopher Columbus! Groooooogh!"

"Fellows' paters always let them know!" said Stewart indignantly. "I should be pretty stiff with my pater if he butted in like this all of a sudden! Jolly stiff!"

"Same here," agreed Carr. "Let me have a go with this scrubbing-brush, Hobby—you are a picture, and no mistake. I'm afraid all that won't come off—some of it's indelible ink——"

"Grooogh!"

"We'll jolly well scalp that Remove fag!"

"Mmmmmm!"

"Take your breath for a minute, old bean!" said Stewart kindly.

"I—I've got to hurry—my pater doesn't like being kept waiting!" gasped Hobson breathlessly.

"That's all very well; he shouldn't have come without letting you know. Let him cool his heels a bit."

Hobson lathered and scrubbed. Sir James Hobson was rather a Roman parent; and Hobby almost trembled at the thought of keeping him cooling his heels. But the ink was obstinate—especially the marking-ink. Hobson's face was scarlet with exertion and hot water, and he gasped for breath as he rubbed and scrubbed, and scrubbed and rubbed.

"I hope it isn't a row, old fellow," said Carr. "Is the pater down on you for anything? Been asking him for an extra fiver?"

Hobson shook a streaming head.

"No; I wrote to him yesterday—he could only have got the letter this morning. But there was nothing in my letter—I only told him about the accident at the circus, and that kid Pedrillo being brought here—I thought it might interest him, you know—a fellow never knows what to put in a letter home. He doesn't want to know that Hacker has given me a Georgie, or that Angel of the Fourth has been caned for smoking. Can't be the circus affair—I specially told him I hadn't been to Zorro's Circus, as he had

ANSWERS
Every Saturday —PRICE 2d

written and told me not to go.' If I'd been, you know, I could understand his being ratty. But I never went—did I?"

"You didn't, old chap; and that was all rot, too. Why shouldn't you have come with us?"

"Goodness knows! But he wrote specially and told me not to go, and I never went. But something's up—I could see it in his face!" groaned Hobson. "I know the pater's look when something's up. I'm jolly glad I can prove, if necessary, that I never went to the circus—he's down on circuses, goodness knows why. I say, is it all off?"

"N-n-not quite, old chap! In fact, it's pretty thick in places."

"Horrid thick!" said Stewart.

"Oh dear! Just my luck to be mucked up like this when my pater comes in unexpectedly, in a temper about goodness knows what!" groaned Hobson. "I'll scalp that young villain Todd! Oh dear!"

Hoskins of the Shell put his head into the bath-room.

"I say, is Hobby here? Chowne says—oh, here you are, Hobby! I say, your pater's in the study, and he's in a bate."

"Grooogh!" said Hobson from a sea of soapsuds.

"I was playing the violin," said Hoskins, breathing hard. "Just putting out a little classical bit, you know—when he stamped in. He glared at me—glared!"

"Mmmmmm!"

"He told me," said Hoskins, "to stop that noise!"

"Did he?" murmured Stewart, with a glance at Carr.

Carr turned his face away, and winked at the steaming tap.

"Noise!" said Hoskins. "Told me to stop that noise! In a fellow's own study. Luckily, I remembered in time that he was Hobby's pater, or I should have talked to him! I should have said to——"

"Grooogh!"

"I should have said——"

"Mmmmmm!"

"I should——"

"Give me that towel, Carr; this will have to do," said the breathless Hobson. "I can't keep the pater waiting any longer. Oh dear!"

James Hobson towelled away desperately. While he towelled, Stewart cut off to fetch him a change of clothes. At long last, Hobson of the Shell was newly swept and garnished, and he left the bath-room with a crimson countenance and traces of indelible purple ink still lingering about his ears and the roots of his hair. And in a frame of mind that was anything but happy and comfortable, Hobson proceeded to his study to interview his pater.

Really, it did not seem to be Hobby's lucky day. From the bottom of his heart Hobson of the Shell wished that he had left unimproved that excellent opportunity of ragging Study No. 1 while Harry Wharton & Co. were on the football field. Really, it had not turned out so well as a fellow might have expected!

"I'll give you one minute to clear out of this study," said Peter Todd. "Oh, collar the cheeky cad and roll him in the cinders!" exclaimed Stewart, impatiently. Hobson & Co. made a movement towards Peter Todd. Peter's hand was behind his back, but it came suddenly into view, and it held a large garden squirt. He levelled that unexpected weapon, and the Shell fellows backed off very quickly. (*See Chapter* 5.)

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Mysterious!

SIR JAMES HOBSON was standing by the window, staring out into the Greyfriars quadrangle, when Hobson of the Shell came in. The tall gentleman turned from the window and fixed his eyes upon his son.

There was some resemblance of features between the father and the son, but in other respects they differed widely. The stern, hard expression on Sir James' face differed very much from the cheery, happy-go-lucky expression that Hobby generally wore. Certainly, there seemed to be very little of what was cheery and happy-go-lucky in the baronet's look or composition.

Yet he was, as Hobby knew only too well, a kind and affectionate father. There was little in his talk or his manner to indicate as much: he never addressed Hobson as "Jimmy" or "Jim" instead of "James"; even with his son his manner was always formal, indeed cold. Hobson's friends regarded him as a Tartar, and often compassionated Hobson on that account; but Hobson was aware—he hardly knew how—that he was regarded with the deepest affection by the grim old gentleman; and he could not help being aware that he had never expressed a wish that his father had left ungratified.

There had been a time, before Sir James had inherited his present title and estates, when money had been scarce in the Hobson family; and Hobby, looking back on those past days, knew that his father must have made many sacrifices to provide for him as he had done, though he had not known it at the time.

Hobson, indeed, was very fond of his father, though he was almost afraid to let it be seen. Even when, the week before, he had received Sir James' command not to visit the circus, he had never thought for a moment of disregarding it, utterly unreasonable as it had seemed. He could have gone with the rest of Greyfriars, and Sir James would never have known; but it had not occurred to Hobby's loyal mind to do so.

Sir James stood with his back to the window, a tall, dark figure against the light, and Hobby stood before him, red and uncomfortable. Sir James' eyeglass gleamed at him from a stern, set face. Hobby fully expected a severe lecture on the subject of schoolboy ragging—a matter at which the severe gentleman could not be expected to look as a Greyfriars junior did.

But Sir James did not refer to the rag, or to the state in which he had discovered his son and heir. Some other matter was evidently occupying the baronet's attention.

"I have taken you rather by surprise by this sudden visit, James!" he said.

"Yes, father! Won't you sit down?" asked Hobby timidly.

"Thank you, no! I have little time to remain—I must catch my train at Courtfield."

"I—I hoped you would stay to tea. I——"

"Impossible, James. Another time." said the baronet. "I received a letter from you this morning."

"Yes, father," said Hobby, wondering desperately what could possibly have been in his letter to bring this dark cloud to his father's face.

So far as he could remember, the letter had been an absolutely trivial one—the only item in it that was not utterly commonplace being the reference to Pedrillo the injured acrobat, who had been brought to the Greyfriars school hospital after the accident. That was a rather unusual incident, and Hobson had mentioned it as an item of news, and as showing what a "sport" his headmaster was

to take the stranger in in that kind-hearted manner. But that, of course, could not have perturbed Sir James; at least, Hobby could not see how it could have perturbed him.

To his astonishment, however, his father's next words revealed that that was indeed the cause of perturbation.

"You mentioned a very singular episode, James, in your letter."

"Did I, father?"

"Concerning an accident at a circus that was, at that time, at a village near Greyfriars. It seems that an acrobat was injured, and Dr. Locke took the very extraordinary step of allowing him to be admitted to the school hospital."

"The fellows think it was jolly sporting of the Head, sir."

"Indeed!" said Sir James dryly.

"You see, father, the hospital at Lantham is a jolly long way off, and the circus kid was in a serious state——"

"How do you know? Have you seen him?" exclaimed the baronet, interrupting his son hastily.

"Oh, no; I wasn't there, father. You remember you wrote to me not to go to the circus," said Hobson simply.

Sir James gave him a very keen look.

"I am glad you paid due regard to my wish," he said.

"Of course," said Hobson, "I couldn't understand it, but as you said I was not to go I didn't go. I had a pretty rotten afternoon, with all the other fellows gone. Why——"

"Never mind why," said Sir James.

"The Head let the other fellows go, father. Dr. Locke thought the circus was all right for us to go to."

"No doubt! I do not approve of such entertainments," said the baronet coldly, "and even if you fancied that my command was not wholly reasonable, James, I am sure you would not willingly disregard your father's wishes."

"Certainly not," said Hobby; "I stayed away all right."

"Then you have not seen the boy?"

"No; no fellow's seen him since he came into sanny here. He's still pretty bad, you know."

Sir James Hobson breathed hard, seemingly with relief. Hobby looked at him curiously, wondering blankly what could possibly be his father's interest in the circus waif.

"No doubt the boy will be sent back to his circus when he is able to travel," said Sir James.

"I suppose so."

"The Head will scarcely allow a boy of such character to come into contact with Greyfriars boys while he is here?"

"I don't think there's anything against the kid, father. Some of the chaps have been talking about visiting him in sanny, to cheer him up a bit, as soon as the doctor allows it. I was thinking of it myself."

"You must not do so," said the baronet harshly. "I think it was a most extraordinary step on the part of Dr. Locke to allow this—this wandering vagrant to be brought within the precincts of Greyfriars. However, that is done and cannot be helped; but you must be careful not to come into contact with the boy, whatever your friends may do. You are not to visit him in hospital."

"Very well, father."

"Possibly, when he is convalescent, he will be allowed to walk in the Head's garden, or in the quadrangle even. In that case, James, I require you to avoid him and never speak a word to him."

"Yes, father!" said Hobby, more and more astonished.

"If the Head will not keep such a character from contact with Greyfriars' boys I at least have the right to keep my son away from him."

"I—I don't suppose I should see him, anyhow, father. Some of the Remove fellows have seen him, and they say he looks quite a decent kid—only a kid, you know, hardly my age."

"He is at all events a foreigner——"

"Well, his name's foreign," said Hobson, "and he belonged to Zorro's Spanish Circus; but Bob Cherry, who saw him, says he looks quite English in his face, and——" Hobson broke off suddenly. "What's the matter, father?"

The baronet had given a sudden violent start. But he recovered himself in a moment under his son's astonished gaze. With a frown he took out his watch.

"I must go in a few minutes, James. You will remember my command, and you will be careful not to speak to this Spanish boy."

"Certainly I won't, if you don't want me to, father," said Hobson. "I've got nothing to do with the fellow, of course. If he's a bad character, as you seem to think, naturally I don't want to have anything to say to him."

"I do not say he is a bad character," muttered Sir James. "But he is not a character with whom I desire my son to come into any kind of contact. You will remember this, James."

"Certainly, father. I'll keep clear of the kid if I see him—and if he walks in the quad I'll walk the other way if I spot him," said Hobson with a grin.

"Very good; I rely on you, James. You may walk down to the gates with me—I must see about my train."

Hobson walked down to the school gates with his father, and the baronet shook hands with him very kindly and left a five-pound note in the Shell fellow's palm. Hobby stood staring after the tall figure as it strode away towards Courtfield. He was too astonished even to begin to understand this mysterious matter.

"A fiver, by gum!" Sir James had disappeared from sight, and Hobson stared at the generous "tip" his father had left him. "My hat! Blessed if I can make it all out!"

Hobson of the Shell walked back to the House with a wrinkle in his brow, cogitating. But the more he cogitated the less he could understand, and he gave it up by the time he reached the House.

"Jawed to the wide, old bean?" asked Stewart sympathetically, as he went in.

Hobson grinned.

"No fear! I can't make it out, Stewy—it beats me! Look here, you're Scotch—see if you can understand it. Last week the pater wrote me specially not to go to the circus."

"Down on frivolous entertainments!" grinned Stewart. "He looks it, too."

"I happened to mention in my letter about that circus kid being here in the sanny, and he's rushed down the same day he got the letter to warn me to keep clear of him. Mustn't see him in the sanny; mustn't even say good-morning in the quad!"

Stewart whistled.

"Your pater's got a prejudice against circus people," he said. "I dare say some of them are pretty tough. P'r'aps some circus chaps have pinched his rabbits some time or other."

"But isn't it queer?"

"Oh, there's no accounting for paters!" said Stewart sagely. "A chap has to give his pater his head. I never argue with mine."

"I wish I understood, though," said Hobson, with a sigh. Really, he was feeling quite mystified.

"The best thing," said Stewart, "is to let 'em run on when they're waxy. They tire out then, you know. When they've blown off steam they come round. Mine always does—and paters are much of a muchness."

Stewart of the Shell seemed to be well up in that important branch of knowledge, paters and the proper treatment thereof.

"But my pater wasn't waxy," said Hobson. "He's tipped me a fiver!"

"Great Scott! A whole one?"

"Look!"

Stewart of the Shell beamed.

"I say, Hobby, your pater's a brick! I dare say he's quite right about circuses, too—scrubby lot. A fellow's pater knows, you know! A fellow ought to listen to his pater. I always listen to mine, even when he's talking rot. I say, Hobby, I really think your father is the goods—the real goods! What about a spread?"

"What-ho!" said the genial Hobby.

And at tea-time there was a royal spread in Hobson's study, with half the Shell crammed into the room.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Unfortunate Misunderstanding!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What——"

"What—what—who——"

"Great pip!"

Harry Wharton & Co. had come in. They stood at the doorway of Study No. 1 and stared into that apartment.

The football match was over. The Fourth Form had been beaten by a comfortable margin of four goals to one. The Remove footballers were feeling satisfied with themselves and things generally, and quite ready for a substantial tea in the study. And then——

They gazed blankly into the wrecked study. Interrupted as the raggers had been by the masterly strategy of Peter Todd, they had done enormous damage. The study looked as if a cyclone had struck it hard. And the Famous Five stared and glared, and some other Remove fellows, looking in over their shoulders, grinned. There was something a little comic in the aspect of the dismantled study, to the eyes of a fellow to whom the study did not belong.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Wharton, with a deep breath. "Who's done this? Why, the place is wrecked!"

"The wreckfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "My esteemed chums had better come along to No. 13 to tea."

"Yes, rather!" agreed Bob Cherry. "Tea in my study, old chaps. Yours wants some sweeping and giddy garnishing!"

Wharton and Nugent did not answer for the moment. Study No. 1 was theirs, and though they were ready for tea, they forgot for the moment as they gazed into the wrecked room.

"It's a bit thick!" said Johnny Bull. "Look at that ink splashed over the room—that's really the limit! Somebody seems to have heaved about half a gallon of ink about!"

Wharton knitted his brows.

"It's too thick!" he said. "I want to know who did it!"

"What about tea first?" murmured Bob Cherry. Bob had a healthy appetite, rendered very keen by football;

(Continued on page 17.)

Special Cup Semi-Final Number!

Harry Wharton's Football Supplement

No. 9 (New Series). Vol. 1. March 27th, 1926.

I have managed to secure the services of some of the finest football experts in the country as contributors to our new Supplement. MAGNET readers who follow it regularly can be sure of getting the very latest and most exclusive news, interesting gossip, and information.—H. Wharton, Ed.

Flag-Kicks and Penalties

PARS ABOUT FOOTBALL MEN AND MATTERS.

By The Man in the Street.

THE Football Association is announcing its intention of doing a lot more in the way of assisting football in elementary schools. If they could persuade some of the masters that football is more important than lessons a few lads we know would be pleased.

Bradshaw, of Bury, is about the biggest centre-half in top-class football, and that, of course, is an all-sufficient reason for him being given the pet name of "Tiny."

Len Hill, the Southampton goalkeeper, referring to his early days, says: "At school they dumped me into goal because I weighed more than anybody else." In other words, they thought his name was not Hill, but Mountain.

Stanley Seymour, the Newcastle United outside-left, believes that the abolition of the bonus and strong criticism by the Press will check foul play. That is what might be called "asking for it."

James Tonner, who has played at centre-forward for Burnley recently, is the smallest player on the books of the club, standing only 5 ft. 4 ins. Yet, in addition to being a powerful marksman, he is quite a good wrestler; so at Burnley they call him the "Ten-Tonner!"

Thirty people were arrested at a Scottish football match recently for trying to break through the turnstiles without paying. They were all fined; but my suggestion is that they should have all been compelled to referee a match instead.

It is the custom at big football matches on the Continent for the captain of the home team to hand the captain of the visiting team a bouquet before the game is commenced. When the match gets properly started, however, there are often other things besides bouquets flying about.

Grimsby Town is the only club which has played in all four Divisions of the Football League—First, Second, Southern Third, and Northern Third. They ought to be known as the "Jugglers."

Hugh Gallacher, the Newcastle United centre-forward, says: "The game in England is different; you have speeded it up considerably. It demands quicker thought and quicker action, and my own impression since I joined Newcastle United is that I am at a new school learning new lessons." Judging from the number of goals Gallacher has scored, he is a pretty apt pupil.

Although they have English, Welsh, and Irish Internationals on their books, the Wednesday club, of Sheffield has no Scottish player. But they have a Scotsman named Craig in charge of the team, so evidently the Scots can't be left out completely.

When Dr. Paterson recently turned out for the Arsenal he was described as "A. N. Other" on the programme. After the match one of the opposing players said that he had played so well that he ought to have been called "Two Others."

Plymouth Argyle have finished in the second place in the Southern Third Division table for the past four seasons. So near and yet so far!

London's telephone exchanges have 250,000 calls an hour, so we are told. A referee friend of ours declares that he has often had more calls than this in the course of a game.

Footballing Families

By "Trainer."

NOT so long ago the chairman of Bolton Wanderers, in the course of a speech, declared that they always made a point of signing on the sons of their footballers as soon as they had been christened. This remark made an allusion to the fact that the Wanderers have been very successful in these modern days with sons of players of olden time. There are at the present moment on the Wanderers' books three sons of Robert Jack, the manager of Plymouth Argyle, who at one time played for Bolton Wanderers himself. Of course, the manager of the Bolton club did not expect to be taken very seriously when he said that they signed on the sons of their footballers as soon as they were christened; but, as a matter of fact, football club directors might do worse, for there is plenty of evidence that football skill does run in families. Scores of present-day professional footballers are the sons of former players, men like Johnson, of Sheffield United, Walker, of Aston Villa, being taken as typical instances of football skill handed down from father to son.

There are many cases, too, of football brothers who have made good. John Wren, the half-back of Notts County, once told a story of a remarkable match in which he played as a lad. Wren was then at Bristol, and the whole of the eleven players on one side consisted of members of the Wren family. They put up a very good game, too, but it must be well-nigh unique in the history of football for the same family to supply a player for one team for every different position on the field.

At one time Middlesbrough had no fewer than five members of the Carr family on their books, but some of these have now drifted away—George having gone to Leicester City, for example. But for years and years it has scarcely been possible to watch a Middlesbrough side without there being a Carr in it, and I can tell my readers that there has been no prouder man in the North of England than the father of these Carr boys as he has seen them grow up and take their places in the Tees-side team one by one. "I used to teach my lads football almost as soon as they could walk," said the father of these Carr boys to me on one occasion, "but I was always careful not to teach more than one the duties of the same position, because I did not want them to grow up to compete with each other for places in the same team."

That was a wise move on the part of the father of the Carr boys; but, on the other hand, there are instances of brothers who have made good in the same position. Not so long ago on one Saturday there were three brothers Cock playing in the centre-forward position for three different first-class teams—Jack Cock for Plymouth Argyle, Donald Cock for Notts County (he is now with Clapton Orient), and Herbert Cock for Brentford.

At one time Aston Villa had three members of the same Stephenson family on their books—James, George, and Clem—but only one now remains, though the other two are still playing. And all these Stephensons were forwards. On the other hand, the Page family has had four fellows occupying different positions in first-class clubs at the same time, the most notable being James, who plays full-back for Cardiff City, and Louis, the outside winger of Burnley.

A remarkable record is held by three members of the famous family of Ashton, Gilbert, Claude, and Herbert being captain in turn of the Soccer eleven at Cambridge in three successive seasons. And so we could go on with illustrations showing how football runs in the blood, but I will finish with a unique instance. During the present season Jack Rutherford senior and his son Jack have both played at outside-right for the Arsenal.

JAMES CARR of Middlesbrough.

The SPORTING BLACKSMITH!

The story of William Harper, who holds the Fort for the Gunners at Highbury.

IF you mention certain positions on the football field there are names to fill them which instantly occur to the mind. For instance, inside-right is synonymous with Buchan, and inside-left with Walker. These, undoubtedly, are the best men for those positions you can name. You might name several good half-backs, and you might differ in naming the full-backs. But when naming the man for goal you would have no hesitation, for there is one who springs to the mind without conscious effort. He is William Harper.

Harper is an Anglo-Scot. By that I mean that he is a Scotsman who plays with an English club. For the major portion of this season he has filled, very conspicuously, the wide, blank space between the Arsenal uprights, while before that he assisted the Hibernians.

Just watch him once, and you will agree. Can you mention any goalkeeping qualification that Harper has not got? You cannot, and, what's more, you cannot mention one that this Scottish wonder does not possess in a most uncommonly marked degree. Anticipation, judgment, the knack of doing the right thing at the exact psychological moment, keenness of vision—oh, Harper has all these and a good many more!

He was born at Tarbrax, a small borough in Scotland, and if his present proportions are anything to go by—six foot in height and correspondingly broad—what a fine, bonnie, bouncing babe he must have been! The Gunners' custodian does not remember many things about the town of his birth, for at a very early age William's parents decided to move from Tarbrax, and, undesirous of leaving their offspring behind, they took him with them.

It was to Winchburgh they went, where William received his education. That education was not so notable for its scholastic achievements as was William's early and rapid rise to a place in the school Soccer team. That place, it is hardly needless for me to tell you, was between the sticks or the coats, or whatever it was that served as goalposts in those days.

The time came, as all times must come, however, when William left the school and, incidentally, the team. His parents, who had quite a number of responsibilities upon their shoulders, seeing that there were seven other junior Harpers besides William, decided that his future should be moulded in a blacksmith's shop, so to that profession they ultimately apprenticed him. William was content, but, being one of the lads who believe in combining business with pleasure, he joined up in the ranks of a juvenile team which rejoiced in the name of Winchburgh Violet. After playing with these for one season he left to join Niddry Strollers, a club farther away from his home, and who were doing great things in their class.

You will perceive by this that William, even at that early age, had football ambitions. These ambitions grew apace. He honoured Niddry Strollers with his presence for just one season; then, flying after still bigger game, he signed on for Broxburn St. Andrews. Broxburn welcomed him, and, to their intense delight and satisfaction, played him in two matches, and then came the War.

Renouncing football, blacksmithying, and everything else, young Harper joined the Colours, and within a short space of time was packed off to France.

For six months thereafter William knew the joys of going over the top—went out with wiring parties, and realised what it was like to be in close proximity to a bursting shell. He knew also what it felt like to stroll about at midnight in No Man's Land under the all-revealing rays of German star-shells, and with the enemy, armed with machine-guns, watching their opportunity. All these joys were William's for six months, after which he had a change. He was given a trade test, and transferred—in a strictly military sense, of course—to the Royal Flying Corps.

In a very short time William proved himself one of the most "fly" of the Royal Flying Corps. Oh, yes! Before long he found himself the leader of the scrum in the divisional Rugger team, helping them to win the divisional championship. Thus inspired, he plunged into other things. For instance, he captained the team that won the divisional tug-o'-war, and helped the Soccer team to the Final of the Divisional Cup. Better than ever, he discovered that his tremendous fists could do other work than punch a football away, so he went in for boxing. To some tune, too. Ere he had finished with boxing he had annexed the brigade heavy-weight championship.

Then, of course, the War ended, and William, one of millions, came back to his native heath and hearth. He found that his old club, Winchburgh Violet, had grown since his severance, and was now a strong junior club. He rejoined them. Then he left again, this time to join another junior club composed mainly of hefty miners. This club was named Winchburgh Thistle, and William stayed with them just long enough to help them win the East of Scotland League championship.

But our William, 'tis to be feared, had developed rolling-stone tendencies, for very soon after this we find him playing for Edinburgh Emmet. For six weeks he kept the Emmet's fort gloriously, being afterwards transferred to Edinburgh Hibernians. It was with the Hibs, of course, that his early promise fructified, and a great International career launched upon. It was with the Hibs, by the way, that he found himself playing in the Scottish Cup Final of 1922-23.

Now the Arsenal have got him, having secured his transfer for a considerable sum last November. And who shall say, of all the Arsenal's big guns, that William is not the biggest? Here is his record:

INTERNATIONALS.

1923-24-25.—For Scotland v. England.
1923-24-25.—For Scotland v. Wales.
1923-24-25.—For Scotland v. Ireland.

INTER-LEAGUE.

1923-25.—For the Scottish League v. Football League.
1923.—For the Scottish League v. Irish League.

LIGHTNING SKETCHES OF FOOTER CELEBRITIES.

An impression of FRANK BARSON, the English International centre-half of Manchester United.

What Becomes of the Old Pro's!

By "Old 'Un."

THAT the footballer's life is a short, even if a merry one, is a fact obvious to all who take any real interest in the game. Previously in this Supplement I have explained that the paid footballer does not earn nearly enough to enable to save up a fortune against the day when he is no longer capable of earning his living at football. So the question of what he will do for a living when his active career is finished must ever be a matter for serious consideration by the footballer. And in this respect it has to be said that the modern player, speaking generally, has shown that he has his head screwed on his shoulders in the right way. In the old days the paid players thought little of the future; they just took their wages while they were playing, spent most of the money they got, and the consequence was that some tragic stories could be told of the way in which the football heroes of the past earned—or tried to earn—a living when their playing days were over. The footballer of to-day looks after himself while he is playing, and keeps one eye on the requirements of the time when he is "done" in the active sense.

The foregoing explains why so many modern footballers "hang on" to their jobs in addition to playing as professionals. Personally, I don't think any footballer is the worse for following some light occupation during the week—for carrying on with a job which does not take too much out of him, and which still leaves him free to do the necessary amount of training. So far as these fellows are concerned, they have little worry about what is going to happen to them when age or accident puts an end to their footballing days.

Even those who do not keep up their "trades" generally make some sort of provision for the future. Most of the trainers of the big football clubs of to-day are former stars of the pitch, and the trainer's job is not at all a bad one.

Other players, aiming a bit higher, get managers' jobs, and in this connection it is rather a notable fact that something like a dozen men who have played for Newcastle United in the past are now in possession of managers' jobs with first-class clubs. These managers' jobs are certainly worth having. I know one manager whose salary is £1,250 a year—£25 a week—and there is an additional bonus for him of £250 if, and when, the side which he manages finishes first.

There are many directions, too, in which the retired professional footballer can make use, in a business sense, of his personal fame and popularity. Men like Charles Buchan and Jack Mew, for example, have sports outfitters' establishments, and there are many players of other days who have set up in a similar capacity. There are other businesses, too, in which many old players are to be found. Tobacconists' and newsagents' shops are often taken over by old players, while many are placed in managerial positions in hotels.

Many old players who do not get actual appointments as managers, coaches, or trainers of football teams are employed as "spotters" by the big clubs, being sent out week after week to watch this or that young player whose form is attracting attention locally.

BRIEF REPLIES!

"Gates" (Birmingham).—Nobody will ever know exactly how many people attended the Cup Final of 1923—the first ever played at Wembley—for the simple reason that thousands got into the ground without paying, and consequently unchecked. The actual number who paid was 126,047, and an official estimate is that 50,000 more got in without payment.

H. Smith (Blackpool).—A professional player cannot demand a benefit at any time, but he may be given one after five years of continuous service with the same club, the amount of such benefit being limited to £650.

(*Continued from page* 12.)

and he had a bundle under his arm from the tuckshop.

"Never mind tea yet," said Wharton. "I want to know who wrecked this room and splashed ink over our things. I——"

"He, he, he!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who did it, Bunter? Ten to one in doughnuts that you were spying around at the time!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Do you know who did it?" demanded Wharton.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, it's a bit thick, isn't it?" said Bunter, blinking into the study. "Fancy squirting ink about a fellow's room from a big garden-squirt, you know!"

"Then you saw it?" exclaimed Wharton.

"He, he, he!"

"That's what it looks like, you know," said Nugent, glancing into the study again. "Just as if some ass has been squirting ink about the room. Look at that splash on the wall, and over our books! Somebody's bagged Toddy's squirt and done it. You know, Toddy's got a big squirt—the one he doused Coker with once."

"He, he, he!"

"Who bagged Toddy's squirt, Bunter?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"He, he! Nobody!"

"But you said——"

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "I'm not going to tell you anything. I'm not going to sneak about a study-mate of mine!"

The Famous Five stared at him.

They were aware that Toddy was the possessor of a big garden-squirt, but certainly they had not suspected that Toddy was the ragger of the study.

"Do you mean Toddy?" demanded Wharton.

"He, he, he!"

"Gammon!" said Bob. "Toddy wouldn't do it. Why should he? You're friendly enough with Toddy. Might have been Skinner. More likely some of the Shell——"

"He, he, he! I'm not going to say anything!" chuckled Bunter. "I'm mum! Toddy's my pal, you know—I'm not giving him away. He's turned me out of my study—just because I went to sleep in the armchair, and he says my snoring disturbs him. Turned a fellow out of his own study, you know! Check—what? But I'm not going to give him away—you won't get anything out of me!"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Do you mean to say that Toddy ragged our study?"

"I don't mean to say anything! That squirt may be standing in the corner of No. 7 now, all inky—and it may not. I may have seen Toddy come back with it—and I may not. I'm not going to say!"

"Rats!" grunted Bob. "Bunter's trying to pull our leg. Toddy wouldn't rag the study. All bunkum!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"It is terrific bosh," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "More likely the honourable and disgusting Shell fellows——"

"Well, Toddy's been in, while we've been out," said Harry. "We'll ask him. He must have heard something going on if he was in his study when our room was ragged. Whoever did it must have made a fearful row. Come on!"

"He, he, he! Mind he doesn't give you the ink!" chortled Bunter. "Toddy's in a jolly bad temper. He's doing his legal studies, you know. He chucked a book at me, just because I asked him whether he was learning to chisel people like his father. Look out for his squirt!"

Heedless of Bunter, Harry Wharton knocked at the door of Study No. 7 and threw it open. Nugent followed him into the study; the other three members of the Co. remained in the doorway.

Toddy looked up impatiently.

His legal studies that afternoon had been severely interrupted. First he had had to kick Bunter out of Study No. 7; then had come the Shell raid on Study No. 1, and Toddy's effective intervention; then he had had to kick Bunter out of Study No. 7 a second time. Legal studies under these conditions were not easy; and now there was another interruption. He waved his hand at the juniors before they could speak.

"Hook it!" he said.

"Just a minute——"

"Not a second! I'm busy!"

"We've just seen our study!" roared Wharton.

"Go and see it again!"

"It's wrecked——"

"I know—I know! Shut the door after you——"

"There's the squirt!" exclaimed Nugent, pointing to the big garden syringe, which stood in a corner of Study No. 7. There were ample traces about it of what it had contained recently.

"Look here, Toddy, did you——"

"Cut!"

"Did you squirt ink from that dashed squirt in our study?" bawled the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, ass! Hook it, I tell you!"

"You did?" roared Wharton.

"Of course! I'll tell you about it presently!" exclaimed Peter Todd impatiently. "You're interrupting me now. You needn't trouble to thank me, if that's what's worrying you——"

"Thank you?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes; we'll take all that as said. Good-bye!"

Wharton and Nugent stared hard at Peter. They would never have believed Bunter's hints that Peter had ragged their study. But they could not discredit Peter's own statements!

Toddy had already turned to his big books again. As a matter of fact, Toddy was perplexed by the legal phraseology of the volume he was studying, and found it difficult to follow the meaning thereof—if any. By concentrating his mind upon it he seemed to catch a glimmer of meaning, even of sense, but it required concentration. It was no time for fellows to butt into his study and talk.

The schoolboy lawyer was reconcentrating his mind upon the perplexing page when he was interrupted once more. This time his visitors did not talk—they acted.

As if moved by the same spring, Wharton and Nugent jumped simultaneously at Toddy.

Two pairs of hands collared him, and he was jerked away from his chair, which went flying.

Bump!

Peter landed on his back on the carpet with a roar.

"Oh! Whoooop!"

"So you did it!" shouted Wharton. "You own up, do you? Well, you're going to have some of your own medicine!"

"What? I—— Oh, you—— Yoooogh!"

Wharton grasped the inkpot from the table and up-ended it over the face of the sprawling Toddy.

Swish!

"Groooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Go it! Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!"

"Yug-gug-mmmmmm!"

"Now wreck the room!" shouted Nugent. "I'll begin with the table!"

Crash!

The study table went over, and Peter Todd's legal volumes crashed right and left.

Peter struggled to his feet, mopping ink blindly from his face.

"You potty dummies!" he roared. "Wharrer you mean? Have you gone off your rockers? Are you barmy? What's this game? You howling idiots, next time the Shell rag your study I'll let them rip!"

Wharton jumped.

"The Shell?" he ejaculated.

"Groooogh!"

"Didn't you rag our study?" yelled Nugent.

"Fathead! No! Ooooch! Why should I, ass? Mmmmmm! Oh crumbs! You chuckleheaded chumps, it was Hobson and his mob, of course! Ooooch!"

"But you said——"

"You said you——"

"You said you squirted the ink about the room!" roared Johnny Bull. "We all heard you."

"The hearfulness was terrific!"

"Gug-gug-gug!" Peter Todd spluttered ink from his mouth. "You born idiots! Groogh! Hobson and his gang were wrecking the study, and I drove them out with a squirt full of ink! That's how it was, you footling frumps! Ow!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Ah!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fatheads—you duffers! Look at me!" yelled Peter Todd, mopping at the ink. "Look at me! This is what you give me for shifting the Shell out of your study! Why, I'll——"

"Sorry!" gasped Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "You should have explained, Toddy. You owned up to inking the room——"

"You silly ass! I——"

"If you'd told us——" gasped Nugent.

"You footling chump!"

"Much obliged, old man!" said Harry Wharton. "Really much obliged. If you'd only explained in time——"

"You burbling bandersnatch!"

"You—you see——"

"You frabjous fatheads!" Peter Todd made a jump for the fender and grasped the poker. "I'll——"

"Hook it!" gasped Bob.

The Famous Five fled from Study No. 7, laughing as they went. Really it was a very unfortunate misunderstanding.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows——"

Bump!

"Yarooooh!" roared Bunter.

"Jump on him!" said Bob Cherry. "He jolly well knew it wasn't Toddy, and he said——"

"Whoooop!"

"Now, all together—jump!"

Billy Bunter squirmed away and fled. Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded to Study No. 13 for tea. Study No. 1 required extensive rehabilitation before it could be used again—though, thanks to Peter Todd, Hobson & Co. had not done so much damage as they had intended.

"After all, it's only tit for tat," said Bob Cherry. "We wrecked Hobby's room last week. I dare say the cheeky cads would have ragged my study, too, if Toddy hadn't chipped in. Poor old Toddy——"

"Ha, ha, ha! If he'd explained——"

"Let's make him come to tea," said Nugent, laughing. "We really owe Toddy a lot of thanks, though—— Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good egg! Let's!"

And Peter Todd—after some much-needed ablutions—came to tea in Study No. 13, as a distinguished and honoured guest, and once more all was calm and bright.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Circus Waif!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! There's the circus kid!"

It was the following day, and Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering in the quad in morning break. Their saunter took them near the Head's private garden; and there, leaning on the gate, they caught sight of the circus lad, Pedrillo, whom they had not seen since the day of the accident at Friardale.

They regarded him rather curiously.

Pedrillo was a good-looking fellow, rather bigger and older than the Removites. Although he bore a Spanish name, and belonged to Zorro's Spanish Circus, he did not look in the least like a foreigner. His features were obviously Anglo-Saxon, his hair fair, his eyes blue.

He glanced at the juniors, evidently without knowing them. Harry Wharton & Co. had rendered him assistance after the accident at the circus, but Pedrillo had been unconscious after his fall from the trapeze.

"Let's speak to the kid," murmured Nugent. "Now he's out of sanny it would be only civil to ask him how he's getting on."

"Yes, rather!"

"We want Bunter to interpret," grinned Bob Cherry. "Anybody here know any Spanish?"

"I know one word—Armada," said Johnny Bull. "But I suppose it wouldn't be the polite thing to speak to a Spaniard about the Armada."

"Fathead! Perhaps he knows some English," said Bob. "I'll try him, anyhow. If he doesn't, I'll try French. He may know French."

"Not Remove French, I fancy."

"Bow-wow!"

Bob Cherry walked up to the gate and lifted his cap politely to the young acrobat.

Pedrillo returned the salute with a smile.

"Que quiere usted, senorito?" he asked.

"Oh, my hat! We're not well up in Spanish," explained Bob Cherry. "But if you catch on, we'd like to ask you how do you do, see?"

"Muchas gracias, caballero. I speak English," said the circus lad, smiling. "It is my own tongue."

"Oh, good!" said Bob. "Feeling better?"

"Much better, thank you," said Pedrillo. "I have been very lucky, especially in falling into such kind hands. El senor schoolmaster is the best of men."

"The Head! Yes, rather!" said Bob. "The Head's a brick! He licks us sometimes, you know, but we let him do it—we don't mind. He's a jolly old sport!"

"He has been very kind to me," said the circus lad simply. "I have had the best of care—I, a stranger to him."

Pedrillo spoke with feeling. Evidently the kind hospitality of the Head of Greyfriars had touched him deeply.

"We're jolly glad to see you out and about again," said Harry Wharton. "We've seen you before, you know."

"At the circus?"

"Yes; on the trapeze. And we carried you to Dr. Locke's car after the accident."

"Ah! It was you, then? Muchas gracias," said Pedrillo. "I mean, many thanks! I have lived so long in Spain that Spanish comes naturally to me; but I am English."

"Your name isn't, though," said Bob.

"Yes, my name is Spanish—Pedro," said the circus lad. "Pedrillo—that is to say, Little Pedro."

"And your other name?" asked Bob.

"I do not know."

"You don't know your surname?" ejaculated Bob.

Pedrillo shook his head.

"I am called Pedrillo, that is all," he answered. "Senor Zorro has told me that I was a waif, whom he took compassion upon years ago, when last his circus was travelling in Inglaterra—in England."

"Well, my hat! He must be rather an old sport, to take a kid on his hands like that."

"Yes; if it is true. I do not know. He is a hard man," said Pedrillo, with a sigh. "Not that it matters now. He will not want me now that I cannot be useful to him."

"You will not be going back to the circus?"

The acrobat shook his head again.

"After what has happened I could not do the trapeze act as I used. I do not think that Senor Zorro will take me back. But I do not wish to go back to him. I had already resolved that I would leave the circus when they returned to Spain. I wish to remain in Inglaterra. It is my country, though I had not seen it since I was a little nino. The senor schoolmaster says I am to remain here till I am quite well, then I shall find something to do. I shall not go back to Senor Zorro."

The boy's face darkened, and his eyes glinted.

Harry Wharton & Co. recalled the hard, swarthy face of the circus proprietor, and they could easily guess that Senor Zorro had not been a kind master.

Two Shell fellows came strolling by—Hobson and Hoskins. The latter glanced at the circus lad as he leaned on the gate speaking to the Removites.

"Hallo, Hobby, there's the circus kid," he remarked—"the chap who fell off the trapeze, you know! Let's say good-morning."

Hobson stopped.

Hobby was quite willing to say a civil word to the stranger within the gates, but his father's strange injunction came back into his mind. He coloured uncomfortably.

"I'll cut," he said.

"Don't you want to speak to him?" asked Hoskins, in surprise. "He looks a decent kid, and he's been ill."

"The pater told me to keep clear of him," muttered Hobson.

"What on earth for?"

"Goodness knows—I don't. You speak to him, Hosky, if you like. I'll cut."

Hobson of the Shell turned away and walked towards the House, and Hoskins, much surprised, followed him. Harry Wharton & Co. remained chatting with the circus lad till the bell rang for third lesson. Bob Cherry started as the clang rang out.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the giddy bell! Ta-ta, Pedrillo!"

"Adois, senores!"

And the Famous Five cut off to the House.

"That kid's had a hard time," Bob Cherry remarked as they went to their Form-room. "That circus man, Zorro, looked a jolly hard case, I remember. And I know he hasn't been here to inquire how the kid was getting on."

"The circus has moved away from Friardale," remarked Nugent. "I think it's over at Lantham now."

"The kid seems to be stranded if Zorro doesn't want him back," said Harry. "If he can't carry on with the acrobat business, I wonder what he will do? It's hard cheese!"

"Perhaps the Head will find something for him," said Bob hopefully. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Hobson! All together!"

The captain of the Shell was going along the Form-room passage. The Famous Five made a rush, and Hobson of the Shell found himself sitting down suddenly. By the time he had scrambled up, red with wrath, the heroes of the Remove had vanished, chuckling, into the Remove Form-room.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Something On!

"I SAY, you fellows, there's something on!"

"Bow-wow!"

"But there is!" persisted Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five in great excitement through his big spectacles. "That circus kid——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What about him?" asked Bob Cherry.

It was some days since the Famous Five had talked with Pedrillo over the gate of the Head's garden, and several times since then they had seen him, and occasionally exchanged a word with him. The peculiar circumstances under which the waif had become an inmate of Greyfriars rendered him rather an object of interest to Harry Wharton & Co., and they rather liked him personally, from what they had seen of him.

So for once they gave ear to Bunter's news.

"Is he gone?" asked Wharton.

"No fear! He's in the Head's study," said Bunter, "and Hacker's been sent for."

Mr. Hacker was master of the Shell at Greyfriars. Why he should be sent for, when Pedrillo was with the Head, was rather a puzzle. Billy Bunter divined that something was on, and he was intensely curious to know what that something was.

"I heard the Head tell Hobson," went on Bunter. "He told him to ask Mr. Hacker to step into the study. Pedrillo's

"So you did squirt ink in our study?" shouted Wharton furiously. "You own up, Toddy, do you? Well, you're going to have some of your own medicine!" "What! I—oh—you—yoooooooogh!" The captain of the Remove grasped the inkpot from the table and up-ended it over the face of the sprawling Toddy. Swish! "Groooogh!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Go it! Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!"
(*See Chapter* 8.)

there, you know. Now, why has he asked Hacker to step in?"

"The whyfulness is terrific, my esteemed, inquisitive Bunter."

"Well," said Bob Cherry humorously, "he couldn't ask him to fly in."

"Eh?"

"Or to dive in."

"What?"

"So that's why he asked him to step in," said Bob, with the air of a fellow who had guessed the riddle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" howled Bunter. "I mean, what's up? It's a bit thick having the circus kid about the school at all, in my opinion. I never approved of it."

"Don't let the Head know that," said Bob gravely. "It would break his heart."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm sure something's on," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I want you to back me up. I'll get along to the Head's door——"

"What?"

"And you fellows can watch in the corridor, and warn me if anybody comes along while——"

"While you're at the keyhole!" ejaculated Bob.

"Yes, that's it," said Bunter eagerly. "See? Then we shall all know about it. I'll tell you, of course."

"Why, you—you——"

"Just whistle if anybody comes in sight, that's all," said Bunter. "Come on, there's no time to waste. Here—I say—leggo—wharrer you at? You silly asses! Leggo! Whoooop!"

For some reason, inexplicable to Bunter, the chums of the Remove did not seem to catch on to his bright idea for learning what was going on in the Head's study.

Instead of hurrying off with Bunter to the Head's corridor, they collared Bunter, and sat him down in the Form-room passage.

Bunter sat and roared.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked cheerily down the Form-room passage, passing the open door of the Shell Form-room. The voice of James Hobson of the Shell was audible in that room as they passed. Evidently, the master of the Shell was there.

"If you please, sir, the Head wishes you to step into his study."

Hobby was delivering his message.

"Very well, Hobson," answered Mr. Hacker.

Hobson came out of the Shell Form-room and almost ran into the Famous Five.

"Halt!" said Bob Cherry.

Hobson made a warning gesture.

"No larks," he said. "Hacker's in there. He will hear me if I mop up the passage with you cheeky fags."

The Removites grinned. Really, it would not have been a facile task for Hobby to mop up the passage with five sturdy juniors.

"We're not going to rag you," said Bob, "but I've got a bone to pick with you. What sort of manners do you learn in the Shell?"

"Eh?"

"You're not generally a bad sort, in your way," said Bob. "Of course, you're a Shell-fish, a fathead, and a duffer, and think a good deal too much of yourself."

"You cheeky young ass——"

"But what do you mean by it?" went on Bob. "Three separate times I've seen you cut that kid Pedrillo, when he was trotting about. Every other chap who comes across him has a civil word for him—a kid who's had an accident, and is a bit down on his luck. Even Skinner, of our Form, has spoken to him civilly. But you——"

Hobson flushed.

"You—you see——" he said awkwardly.

"It's rather thick, Hobby," said Wharton seriously. "Yesterday, in the quad, you really turned your back on him. If he noticed it, it would hurt him. Dash it all, a fellow's bound to be civil to a stranger. Now he's well enough to walk in the quad, surely any chap can give him a nod, or say good-morning!"

"Yes, but——"

"He's really the Head's guest here," said Nugent. "Civility doesn't cost anything, Hobson."

Hobson's rugged face was very red.

"I—I know. I've got nothing against the kid," he said. "He looks to me a decent chap enough."

"Then why the thump are you uncivil to him?" demanded Wharton. "You nearly ran into him when we were speaking to him yesterday, and you turned right round and walked away."

"Rotten bad manners," said Johnny Bull.

"I—I can't help it!" muttered Hobson. "You—you see, my pater's got a down on circus people for some reason. You remember he wouldn't let me go to Zorro's Circus when it was at Friardale. He came down to see me the other day, and told me not to have anything to say to that acrobat chap, if I could help it. Of course, he doesn't know anything about the fellow, and I suppose he thinks he's some rough character."

"Does he think the Head would let a rough character walk about the quad, and talk to Greyfriars chaps?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, that's what he said," answered Hobson. "I'm bound to do as my pater says."

"That's right enough," said Wharton at once. "Of course, we never knew all that. Still, I don't suppose your pater wants you to be uncivil, all the same."

"Well, I don't mean to be," said Hobson. "If I run right into the kid, of course, I'm bound to be civil to him. But I want to keep clear of him, if I can, after what my pater said. Not that it matters to you cheeky Remove kids, anyway," added Hobson, remembering suddenly his lofty dignity as captain of the Shell. "Go and eat coke!"

"Let's bump him!" said Bob.

Mr. Hacker came out of the Form-room as Bob was speaking. He stopped and glanced at the Removites.

"What did you say, Cherry?" he inquired.

"Oh, nothing special, sir!" stammered Bob.

"I thought I heard you suggesting horseplay in the corridor?"

"Oh! D-d-d-did you, sir?"

"I did, Cherry!" said Mr. Hacker severely.

Hobson strolled away with a grin on his face. Mr. Hacker, although he had been requested to step into the Head's study, wasted several minutes upon the chums of the Remove, on the subject of ragging in the passages. Then he whisked away, leaving them looking properly repentant till his back was turned. And then, awful to relate, they grinned.

———

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Pedrillo of the Shell!

DR. LOCKE was seated at his writing table, the circus waif standing before him, when Mr. Hacker arrived in the Head's study. The master of the Shell gave Pedrillo a rather curious glance. He had seen the circus lad before, about the quad, but he was rather surprised to find him in the Head's study.

"Pray take a seat, Mr. Hacker," said Dr. Locke. "I wish to consult you concerning this lad."

"Certainly, sir!" said Mr. Hacker, more surprised still.

"You are aware in what circumstances this boy came to the school, Mr. Hacker. Happily, he has almost completely recovered from his accident, and the question of his future has been occupying my mind. He has a very strong disinclination to return to the circus, and indeed there seem to be difficulties in the way, as he can no longer carry on his former occupation. The circus proprietor does not seem to desire his return, as he has made no inquiry whatever for him, and the circus has now moved a considerable distance away."

Mr. Hacker listened respectfully, but with increasing astonishment.

He could not quite see how the future of this unknown stranger affected the Head, or himself, in any way.

"The lad has told me a very strange story," resumed the Head. "It appears that he is English, but at a very early age was taken into the Spanish circus, at that time travelling and performing in this country. He knows nothing of his relations, and does not even know what his surname is."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Hacker.

"In these circumstances I feel that it is my duty to befriend him," explained the Head.

"It is like you, sir, to think so," said Mr. Hacker. "But surely his former employer should not be allowed to leave him on your hands in this unfeeling manner!"

Pedrillo, who had listened in silence, flushed crimson.

"Surely, sir, you are not called upon to take up what may be a serious burden and responsibility?" said the master of the Shell.

"Senor," exclaimed Pedrillo, "I do not wish to be a burden upon this gentleman—upon anyone. I have told the senor schoolmaster that I will not return to the circus. I will not go back with Senor Zorro to Spain! But I have my hands to work with, and I can earn my bread. Now that I am well I am ready to leave. And I shall always remember the kindness I have received from this noble caballero!"

The circus waif made a movement towards the door.

Dr. Locke signed to him to stop.

"Mr. Hacker did not mean to wound your feelings, Pedrillo," he said. "Stay."

"Not at all, my boy," said Mr. Hacker—"not in the least!"

"I have been thinking of what can be done," went on the Head. "I think I shall have to see the man Zorro, and learn from him what particulars I can of this unfortunate boy. It is possible that he may have relatives in England who may be discovered. In that case, naturally, he would pass into their care."

"Naturally," assented Mr. Hacker.

"In the meantime, he must remain here," said the Head. "But I do not desire him to remain in idleness; and in many respects, of course, his education has been neglected. I think, therefore, of keeping him at Greyfriars until something definite can be decided upon. And I consider that the time should be utilised, so far as may be possible, in improving his education."

"A very excellent plan," assented the master of the Shell.

"A difficulty is that he is too old to be placed in one of the lowest Forms, and scarcely fitted by his attainments to take a place in a higher Form," said the Head. "He is not aware of his precise age; but I judge him to be over sixteen. Obviously he cannot be placed in the Second or Third, or even the Remove. If you have no objection, Mr. Hacker, I think that, as a temporary measure, he may be placed with the Shell."

"Oh!"

"Naturally, he will not be able to share in all the studies of your boys, Mr. Hacker. But he will share their lessons so far as he is able, and I myself will give him some special tuition in my leisure hours. He is very willing to learn. Is that not so, Pedrillo?" said the Head, with a kind glance at the waif.

"Si, senor," said Pedrillo.

Mr. Hacker coughed.

He was a kind-hearted man, though his manners and customs were sometimes a little crusty. But he saw a good many objections to the Head's kind scheme. Nevertheless, he could see that Dr. Locke had already decided

the matter in his own mind. And the Head's word was law at Greyfriars.

"As a temporary measure!" he said. "Oh, quite so! I need not ask you whether you have ascertained that this lad is—hem!—likely to prove a suitable associate for Greyfriars boys. That would naturally be your first consideration, sir!"

"Quite so. And I have satisfied myself on that point, Mr. Hacker."

"Undoubtedly the boy should be taken care of, if there is a possibility of discovering relatives, whose duty it would be to take him in hand," said Mr. Hacker.

"I am glad you agree with me."

"Certainly. If you place him in my Form, as a temporary measure, I will do the best I can for him, sir."

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Hacker!" said the Head courteously. "In finding him quarters in your Form, you will doubtless select some study where—where the occupants can be relied upon to treat a stranger good-naturedly. Pedrillo, of course, is quite new to our ways, and anything in the nature of what the boys call ragging, though harmless in itself, would be quite out of place."

"I shall take care on that point, sir."

"No doubt you would like a talk with the boy, Mr. Hacker, as he will be chiefly under your care for some days, perhaps weeks. Pedrillo, go with Mr. Hacker!"

"Si, senor! Muchas gracias."

Pedrillo obediently followed the master of the Shell, and Mr. Hacker led him to his study.

There, after a long talk and a rather keen examination of the circus waif, Mr. Hacker felt a little more satisfied, and decided on the whole that the Head's kind-hearted scheme was not a bad one.

And so it came about that the circus waif became "Pedrillo of the Shell"—which was to be rather a surprise to Greyfriars generally when the school learned of it.

Billy Bunter had been right in opining that something was "on."

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Up to Hobson!

WILD and weird sounds floated from Study No. 3 in the Shell passage at Greyfriars.

Fellows who passed that study stopped their ears as they passed.

Claude Hoskins was at violin practice.

The door was locked. Hoskins had found it judicious to lock the door on such occasions. Infuriated fellows had sometimes invaded the study when Hosky was torturing the fiddle and the Form simultaneously. Hoskins had known what it was to have his head shoved into the coal-locker by wrathful Shell fellows who had no ear for music—or who had, at least, no ear for Hosky's music.

Behind the locked door Hoskins practised in safety.

That is, if he was practising! Fellows never could tell whether Hosky was practising or tuning his fiddle or playing some very classical piece of his own composition. Hosky knew—or was supposed to know. Nobody else knew, or could even guess.

Mr. Hacker, coming into the Shell passage with a lithe, handsome lad by his side, started.

"Bless my soul! What is that?" he exclaimed.

Then he realised what it was and smiled. His own quarters were far enough from the Shell passage to keep him out of range of Claude Hoskins' music.

The Form master tapped at the door and turned the handle. It did not open.

"Cut off, blow you!" came Hoskins' voice from the study.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Don't come bothering now. Hook it!"

Evidently Hoskins supposed that it was some suffering Shell fellow at the door.

"Hoskins!" shouted Mr. Hacker.

"Oh!"

Hoskins recognised his Form master's voice and jumped up and unlocked the door.

"Excuse me, sir!" he stammered. "I—I thought——"

Mr. Hacker waved him aside and entered the study. Pedrillo followed him in.

Hoskins ceased playing his violin. The Form master's visit surprised him, and he was still more surprised to see Pedrillo.

"Hobson is not here?" said Mr. Hacker.

"No, sir. He's at the footer."

"Very well. This is your new study-mate, Hoskins."

Hoskins almost fell down in his astonishment.

"Is—is—is it, sir?" he babbled.

"Yes, Hoskins. Dr. Locke has decided to place Pedrillo in the Shell, and I have selected this study for him."

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Hoskins.

"Pedrillo, this is Hoskins, of the Shell," said Mr. Hacker. "You will have another study-mate, whom you will see shortly. I trust you will all be good friends in this study."

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Hoskins good-naturedly. "The kid's quite welcome here, sir. I'm jolly glad to see him looking so well, after such a beastly accident."

"Muchas gracias," said Pedrillo. "I mean, many thanks."

Mr. Hacker smiled approval.

"I am glad to see you welcome Pedrillo in a friendly spirit, Hoskins," he said. "I have selected this study for him because I am aware that both you and Hobson are good-hearted boys, and likely to be kind to a stranger who does not yet know our ways, and to give him any little help that may be in your power."

"Certainly, sir."

"As Hobson is captain of the Form, I rely upon him to see this lad through any little difficulties that may arise," said Mr. Hacker. "You will tell him so, Hoskins?"

"Yes, sir. I know Hobby will play up," said Hoskins.

"I will leave the boy with you now, Hoskins."

And Mr. Hacker retired from the study.

Hoskins ceased playing his violin as Mr. Hacker entered the study with Pedrillo following in his wake. "Hobson is not here, then?" said Mr. Hacker. "No, sir, he's at footer." "Very well," said the Form-master. "This is your new study-mate, Hoskins." Hoskins looked astonished. "Is—is it, sir?" he babbled. "Yes, Hoskins. Dr. Locke has decided to place Pedrillo in the Shell, and I have selected this study for him!" *(See Chapter 12.)*

"Well, this is a go!" said Claude Hoskins, with a very curious look at his new companion. "What's your name?"

"Pedrillo, senor."

"Your other name, I mean. We don't call fellows by their front names at Greyfriars."

Pedrillo hesitated and coloured.

"I am called only Pedrillo," he said.

"My hat! Is that a custom in your country?" asked Hoskins.

Pedrillo smiled.

"England is my country, though I have lived most of my life in Spain, caballero."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hoskins. "You'll have to chuck calling fellows caballero and senor. Call me Hoskins."

"Muy bien——"

"What on earth does that mean?"

"I—I mean—very well, Hoskins."

"That's better. Muy bien sounds very pretty; but we're not strong on Spanish in this study," grinned Hoskins. "My word, though, I'll get you to teach me some. It will come in for some Spanish songs I want to get on to. Know anything about music?"

Another fellow would probably have asked Pedrillo whether he played football.

"A little, amigo," said Pedrillo modestly.

"Good! We shall be friends, I see," said Hoskins. "Nobody at Greyfriars knows anything about music excepting me. The music-master knows absolutely nothing. What do you think? He tells me not to use consecutive fifths."

"Verdad?"

"Honest Injun, he does! Why, I've composed a sonata that fairly bristles with consecutive fifths," said Hoskins proudly. "It will knock them at the Albert Hall some day, when it's given to the public. That won't be just yet, of course. I say, where's your books?"

"The senior schoolmaster is going to give me school books," said Pedrillo.

"Who on earth—— Oh, the Head! I see. Been to school before?"

Pedrillo shook his head.

"My hat! You'll have a hard row to hoe, then," said Hoskins commiseratingly. "Bit fatheaded to put you into the Shell to begin with. But I suppose you're too big for a fag Form. I'll help you in prep and all that, and so will Hobby."

"You are very kind," said Pedrillo softly. "It is like a dream to me to find so much kindness here. The senor schoolmaster—the Head, as you call him—is the noblest caballero I have ever seen."

"Oh, the Head's all right," said Hoskins. "Quite an old sport. Can you write music—the old notation?"

Another shake of the head.

"That's a pity. I have a lot of copying out to do, and I'd have asked you to do it," said Hoskins. "Wastes a lot of my time, you know."

"Verdad?" murmured Pedrillo.

"Ever played the fiddle?"

"Only by ear. But I have played it in the circus, and for the caballeros to dance the fandango."

Hoskins picked up his precious instrument.

"Let's hear it," he said.

Pedrillo took the violin willingly. Hoskins watched him with a friendly and superior smile as he drew the bow across the strings. But his expression changed as Pedrillo proceeded to play. In a few minutes he was aware that Pedrillo was "some" fiddler.

The strains of a merry Spanish dance tune echoed from the Study and along the Shell passage.

The door suddenly opened, and Stewart of the Shell put his head in.

"Great pip! You've really learned to play the fiddle at last, Hoskins!" he exclaimed.

"You silly ass!" snorted Hoskins.

"Oh, it isn't you!" said Stewart, staring at the player. "Might have guessed that, as it's in tune."

"Hook it, you dummy!"

"I say, that kid knows how to handle the fiddle," said Stewart. "I say, give it to him, Hosky—give it to him, old man, and tell him to keep it locked up when he's not using it!"

Stewart backed out of the study just in time to escape a whizzing Latin dictionary.

"You can play a bit, kid," said Hoskins condescendingly. "Blessed if I know how you picked it up in a circus. Look here, play this over for me; it's a little thing of my own."

Hoskins dragged out a sheet of music-paper covered with what seemed to be hieroglyphics. Hoskins had a rather hasty hand in writing music.

"I do not play from music," said Pedrillo, with a sigh. "I cannot read it."

"Oh, that's rather rotten!" said Hoskins. "I'll jolly well teach you to read music, and then you will be able to play my things. I don't mind telling you that you play the violin jolly nearly as well as I do."

There was a chuckle outside the study doorway.

"Hook it, Stewart, you cheeky ass!" roared Hoskins, exasperated.

"Give him the fiddle!" implored Stewart. "Give it to him, old man, and we'll pass a vote of thanks in the Shell."

Hoskins picked up a fives bat and rushed to the door. Stewart vanished, chuckling, along the passage.

"That's Stewart, one of the biggest asses in the Shell," Hoskins told Pedrillo when he came back. "He's a born idiot, you know—practically an imbecile. He's rather a whale on mathematics, and Latin and Greek, and some other things; but he knows nothing about music—a crass ass, you know! He can play football all right, but when it comes to music—he actually can't tell the difference, when I'm playing my march in G minor, and my fantasia in E flat. What are you grinning at, Pedrillo?"

Pedrillo did not explain what he was grinning at.

"Hallo! Nearly time Hobby was in," said Hoskins. "I was going to have tea ready. You can help me if you like."

"Con gusto," said Pedrillo at once.

The circus waif's face was very bright. Undoubtedly Mr. Hacker had judged well in placing him in Study No. 3. Hoskins, with all his weird foibles, was a kind-hearted, pleasant fellow, just the fellow to make the stranger feel at his ease in his new quarters. And Hobson, big and rugged and good-natured, was certain to take the same line.

Pedrillo—greatly interested in a way of life that was quite new to him—helped Hoskins get the tea ready for the other fellow who was coming in hungry from football practice.

Hoskins spoke and acted as if he had known Pedrillo all his life, in the easy Greyfriars way; and that alone was enough to put the newcomer at his ease.

"Luckily, we've got enough crocks to go round," said Hoskins.

Then Hoskins paused, struck by a sudden thought. He remembered what Hobson had told him concerning Pedrillo, and the severe instructions of Sir James Hobson.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Hoskins. He looked quite dismayed.

"What is it, caballero?" asked Pedrillo, glancing at him.

"Oh, nothing! Can't be helped now, anyhow," said Hoskins. "Old Grim-Face should have spoken to Mr. Hacker about it; but, of course, he never knew—— Oh, my hat! What will Hobby say?"

"But what——"

"It's all rot!" said Hoskins decidedly. "If Hobby's pater saw you, he would see that you're all right. If the Head thinks you're all O.K.—why, you are all O.K. What?"

"But I do not understand," said Pedrillo, puzzled.

"Never mind—it's all right. Hobby's bound to do the civil thing. Make some more toast, kid—Hobby will be hungry after the footer."

"Muy bien."

Pedrillo asked no more questions, as Hoskins evidently did not want to explain. Indeed, it was scarcely possible for Hoskins to tell the new junior about the commands Hobson had received from his father. Sir James, of course, had never for a moment contemplated or dreamed of the present juncture of affairs. In the circumstances, Hosky considered, Hobson was bound to play up and be civil to the new fellow.

There was a heavy tread in the passage as the two juniors finished their preparations for tea.

"That's Hobby!" said Hoskins.

Hobson of the Shell came into the study, red and cheery after football

"Tea ready?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, old scout."

"Good! Why—what—who——" Hobson stared at the new fellow in the study blankly.

"I am Pedrillo, senorito," said the new junior as he met the amazed stare of the captain of the Shell.

"Yes, I—I know," stammered Hobson. "But—but——"

He turned a reproachful glance on Hoskins. For the moment he supposed that his friend had asked the circus waif to tea in the study, forgetful of the awkward position in which it would place Hobson.

"Look here, Hoskins——"

"Can't be helped, old man. The kid belongs to Greyfriars now," said Hoskins. "They've put him in the Shell, and Mr. Hacker says he's to share this study, and we're to back him up."

"Great Scott!"

"Play up, old man!" said Hoskins. "The kid's all right—knows something about music, too. Your pater wouldn't mind, if he saw him, you know—it's just a silly prejudice because he's never seen the kid. Anyhow, it can't be helped—he's here."

"Oh!" said Hobson.

Pedrillo's handsome face crimsoned.

"Senor Hacker brought me here," he said. "But if I am unwelcome, amigo, I will ask him——"

"No fear!" said Hobson. "It's all right, kid. I'll write to the pater and explain—I mean, never mind about that. If you belong to this study, you belong to it, and we're going to be friends."

And Hobson held out his hand to the new junior, frankly and cordially, and gave him a vigorous grip.

THE END.

(The friendship thus started between Hobson and Pedrillo is destined to bring about some astonishing results. Mind you read "The Circus Schoolboy!"—the next story in this splendid series.)

A MILLION AT STAKE! An ordinary copy of "Nicholas Nickleby" is alleged to contain a will, leaving a fortune to Curly Taylor. Naturally, Curly is keen to get his hands on this book—and so is his cousin, Lionel Speedlow!

The CASE of THE LANGSDALE WANDERERS

A Powerful New Football and Detective Story, featuring Ferrers Locke, the private investigator, and his clever boy assistant, Jack Drake.

So Near and Yet——

CURLY needed no second bidding. He was across the room and at the doorway in a couple of strides. Looking up from her apron, Sarah Munnings saw, to her amazement, her two visitors taking the flight of steps in front of her house at a bound. Next moment they were swallowed up in the gloom.

"Well, I never!" she said. "All over a taste for the classics. Never again, Sarah! Honesty is the best policy—better'n Dickens, even!"

And while Sarah consoled herself thuswise, Drake and Curly were speeding towards the Rookery as fast as their legs could carry them.

"Put a spurt on!" panted Curly, wild with anxiety and excitement now. "Good heavens, if that book has been destroyed——"

"Never mind about the gloomy side of things," said Drake. "Just you remember, my buck, that we've got to burgle our way into the Rookery. You're kicked out now, you know."

Curly had overlooked that important fact. Since the disbanding of the Wanderers, Curly had been ordered out of the house by his cousin. Not that Curly had any desire to stay within those walls with his amiable cousin, after what had happened in the affair of the robbery at the club offices. Still, he was forbidden the place now. And if the book he sought was secreted there—— He ground his teeth in an agony of suspense as he forged on.

Drake was not so despondent.

"Cheer up, old scout!" he said encouragingly. "We'll get that book, never fear! We'll get it if we have to burgle the Rookery from top to bottom! Lemme see, she"—meaning Sarah—"said the top shelf in the library. You'll know better where to locate that. Tell you what, old sport—I'll ask to see Speedlow. I'll swing him the yarn that I know something about the book he's looking for. I'll tell him I know of its hiding-place, and for a consideration will tell him where it is—savvy? He'll jump to the bait, I'll bet. Right; then we'll chin-wag for about half an hour in the dining-room or the sitting-room, what time, my lad, you scoot round the back of the house and enter the library. You'll snaffle that book in about a couple of shakes and get out again. Once you're away give three whistles, and I'll know it's time to pack up my conversation with friend Speedlow."

"It's a good wheeze," said Curly, as he raced along. "But it's risky for you, Jack."

"Rot!" exclaimed Drake. "I'll enjoy myself no end pulling the leg of that fatheaded cousin of yours!"

They ran on, and soon the twinkling lights of the Rookery came in sight.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous criminal investigator, is called in to sift the peculiar evidence surrounding the death of MARCHANT TAYLOR, founder and managing-director of the Langsdale Wanderers.

Locke learns that, after a deal of legal argument, the entire fortune of Marchant Taylor has been left to LIONEL SPEEDLOW, his eldest nephew, while CURLY TAYLOR, Speedlow's eighteen-year-old cousin, is allowed ten pounds a week, on the understanding that he continues to play for the Langsdale Wanderers.

There is no love lost between the two cousins, and in his new role of managing-director Speedlow from the start earns the displeasure of the football lovers in Langsdale. Thereafter, in a spirit of spiteful revenge, he goes all out to ruin the famous Langsdale club.

Later comes news to the effect that there is a second will in existence, leaving Marchant Taylor's fortune to Curly, and this will, it is alleged, is to be found in the volume, entitled "Nicholas Nickleby." Speedlow and his cousin search for this volume, but it is not to be found.

Fearful of the consequences—should Curly eventually discover it—Speedlow decides to get his cousin out of the way. But his rascally efforts prove of little avail, and the plot recoils on his own shoulders with startling suddenness. Ferrers Locke then interviews Turville, Speedlow's late butler, from whom he learns that the all-important volume containing the later will has been borrowed by Sarah Munnings, a "daily help" at the Rookery. Locke at once despatches Curly and Drake to her house. Here the youngsters learn, to their horror, that Sarah has returned the precious volume to the library at the Rookery. Realising that the will is now within reach of Speedlow's destructive hands, Drake, interrupting Sarah's lamentations, urges Curly to make all speed for the Rookery.

(Now read on.)

Very eerie and depressing it looked just then, and Curly felt his hopes sink within him. Would their plan, so simple in theory, turn out as simple in practice?

"Ssssh!" whispered Drake, as the main gates looked up out of the darkness. "Easy does it now!"

They slowed to a walk.

Curly led the way to the rear of the house grounds, for he knew of a simple entrance in that vicinity. They traversed a hundred yards or so of the spongy ground in silence, then Curly signalled a halt.

"We'll nip over the wall here," he whispered. "It looks dangerous, but it's quite easy, really."

He shinned up a young tree as he spoke, and began to swarm along a branch that wound its way over the high wall of the estate.

Drake watched him from below until he disappeared from view. Followed the sound of a fall as Curly dropped from the branch to the ground on the inner side of the wall. Then a soft whistle. It was Drake's turn.

Locke's assistant was shinning up that tree with the speed of a young monkey almost before the last note of that soft whistle had faded away on the breeze. A couple of seconds later and he was beside Curly Taylor.

"Trespassers will be prosecuted," he said, with a grim chuckle, "if they're caught. Now for it! I'll give Mr. Speedlow a surprise call! The mere fact that I didn't come in by the main gates will help my story that I want to make a bit of money without its getting back to the ears of my guv'nor. Do you follow?"

"If he doesn't see through the yarn we shall do the trick," said Curly. "Off you go then, Jack, and good-luck!"

"Same to you, old bean!"

Drake moved off, assuming a very suspicious slinking gait that took him in full view of a lighted window, across which, from time to time, moved a silhouetted figure.

"That's Mr. Speedlow!" chuckled Drake. "Bet he'll spot me, which is exactly what I want."

Drake had his wish, for the lean features of Speedlow looking out across

his lawn saw the shadow of a slinking figure. At once Speedlow thought him of Messrs. Jaggers, Spindle & Bowsley. Had they come to "take it out of him" again?

For the moment he grew nervous, but a pull of the bell-rope and Thompson, his new butler-valet, appeared in the room like a piece of well-ordered machinery.

"Thompson," said Speedlow easily, "there's somebody slinking about the grounds. Hop out and see who it is, there's a good chap!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Thompson withdrew. He made his way outside the house, sighted the shadow, and, in turn, shadowed it.

"Only a youngster, whatever his business," he muttered to himself. "Still, I'm not taking any chances!"

Thompson stalked his man, or, rather, his boy, with great caution, and then taking cover behind a bush he awaited his chance. The intruder was making for the front door of the house. To do that he had to pass the bush wherein Thompson was concealed. Drake knew where the man was, and hugged himself for joy. Thompson's presence there meant that the coast was clear for Curly to make his entrance elsewhere.

He passed the bush just out of reach of arm's length.

"Got you, my young scallywag!"

With the words Thompson pounced out of hiding, and aimed a swipe at Drake's head. It fell short, but, seeing the lad make no movement to resist Thompson thereafter contented himself with fixing a stout grip on Drake's collar.

"Now then, you young sneak thief," said Thompson triumphantly, "you come along and see the master!"

"I want to see him," said Drake, in a whisper. "Take me to him!"

"You want to see him, do you?" guffawed Thompson. "An' that's why you come slinking in over the wall—eh? You didn't come in at the drive gates, that I do know, for my good wife would have settled your hash! Come along with me!"

He propelled the unresisting lad forward. The steps of the Rookery were passed, the door of the dining-room was reached. In that apartment stood Speedlow. A look of astonishment crossed his face as he recognised Locke's assistant.

"Bring him in, Thompson," he said, with a cruel smile. "Spying round the house, was he? Right, my young nosey Parker!"

"Shssh!" hissed Drake dramatically.

That made Speedlow stare in deeper amazement.

"What's the game?" he snarled, at length.

Drake took one pace forward, this time free of Thompson's restraining hand, and said two words in a low voice to Speedlow.

"Nicholas Nickleby!"

The effect was electrical. Speedlow's eyes opened wide. Into them flashed a momentary look of terror. Then he recovered himself and stood staring down at Drake. That worthy, by means of facial signals, intimated that he had something of a secret nature to impart, and thereby suggested that Thompson should make himself scarce.

Speedlow, safe in the knowledge that he could handle this youngster if he tried any tricks, turned to Thompson.

"Just hang around in the dining-room for a little while, will you, Thompson. If I need you, I'll ring."

Thompson inclined his head respectfully, bowed, and withdrew, greatly wondering beneath his servant's cloak of impassiveness. Once he had gone Speedlow signed to Drake to seat himself.

"Now, what's all this about?" he said, in a hoarse whisper. "What do you know about Nicholas Nickleby? Why should you think it interests me? Why were you slinking about my grounds?"

"One at a time, old sport!" said Drake. "Last one first. I was slinking about 'cos I don't want my chief to know I've been here—savvy?"

"Ferrers Locke!" muttered Speedlow. "Does he know about Nicholas Nickleby?"

Drake nodded impressively.

"But I'm on your side," he said, with a curious jerk of the lips that impressed Speedlow. "I'm out to make a bit. I know what that book's worth to you——"

"You do, do you?" breathed Speedlow, something of his old terror returning.

"Oh, I know about the will and young Taylor," went on Drake, enjoying Speedlow's discomfiture. "But, as I said before, I'm open to make a bit on my own."

"Do you know where that confounded book is?" demanded Speedlow hoarsely.

Drake winked and nodded.

"Of course I do," he returned, in all truthfulness, and divined at once that Speedlow, at any rate, did not know that it was reposing on the shelf in the library.

"Then tell me where it is——"

"Not so fast!" said Drake, and he played his part well. "I'm not doing this for the benefit of my health."

Speedlow bit his lip, and regarded his youthful visitor narrowly.

"I'll give you a thousand quid——"

Drake laughed—openly laughed.

"A thousand!" he exclaimed scornfully. "Poof!"

And so it went on, Speedlow raising the price he was prepared to pay, Drake rejecting each fresh offer with that scornful shrug of the shoulders. It was a dangerous game, for it served to work Speedlow into a fury; but Drake was enjoying the risk. He was thinking of Curly, and wondering how he fared, was wondering whether he had yet reached the library.

As the seconds ticked by Drake felt reassured. He and Curly were bound to win. But he was yet to learn the truth of the old saying that "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

Foiled!

As Drake moved off in the shadows Curly sought cover behind a clump of laurels, and waited until Drake had had five minutes' start. Then Curly, moving with ease through that gloomy stretch of natural parkland, arrived at the back of the Rookery.

At a glance he saw that no lights gleamed out from the servants' quarters. If the man Thompson was at home, he was not, at least, in the rear of the premises. With beating heart Curly approached the window of the scullery. He knew that it would prove his easiest means of ingress.

"Oh, good!"

The exclamation escaped him as he found the latch of the window unclasped. It was only the work of a moment to raise the sash.

Then, his heart thumping like a steam-hammer, Curly waited and listened. But there came no disturbing sounds. A quick glance about him gave him the full geography of that window. Then he was standing on the stone-flagged floor the other side, panting a little, but triumphant.

"Don't like this burglar business a bit," he reflected, with a wry grimace.

He moved forward. His feet scarcely made a sound as he traversed the passage and stairs leading to the entrance-hall above. He saw ahead of him the lighted dining-room, the lighted sitting-room; heard the sounds of muffled voices. Evidently Drake was carrying out his programme to the letter.

There was no time to be lost.

With cautious tread Curly drew near the door of the library. It creaked a little as he pushed it open. It creaked again as he closed it behind him. But no one seemed to have heard those creaks.

His heart racing enough to burst, Curly pressed down the switch of the electric light. Momentarily dazzled, he paused; and then, as his eyes became accustomed to the glare and they embraced the top shelf in the library, he felt that the missing will was as good as in his possession.

In his eagerness he rushed forward with outstretched hand. But to his chagrin his fingers fell a good six inches short of the shelf whereon reposed "Nicholas Nickleby."

"A chair!"

Breathing heavily with suppressed excitement Curly drew forward a chair and mounted it. His eyes saw the volume he wanted, his hands went forward eagerly to possess it.

They closed on it!

Still standing on the chair Curly feverishly turned over the pages of that classic by Charles Dickens, but no sign of the missing will came to light. A look of keen disappointment flashed across Curly's face, to be replaced on the instant as an inspiration flashed through his brain.

"The binding!" he muttered. "Feels like a pocket in the binding."

He was right. The back binding of the volume did contain a secret pocket, and from its narrow interior young Curly drew a sheaf of papers.

"The will!"

He uttered the words involuntarily; instinctively, too, and perfectly natural in the circumstances, he unfolded the sheets of paper and "quizzed" at the spidery handwriting on them. Well he knew that hand, well he knew the signature at the foot of the document, well he recognised the signatures of the two witnesses to that deed; although, like a good many other people who have signed similar documents, little he knew the importance of those signatures.

There it was, all legally drawn up and witnessed—leaving the entire fortune to "my nephew Richard Taylor and his heirs——" etc.

Curly could have let out a whoop of joy at that moment. He forgot he was playing the burglar in what was by rights his own place. He moved on the chair, forgetful of its slender balance and security. The action was fatal. He lost his balance, steadied himself, and clutched at the top shelf of the bookcase. And then, with a splintering of wood and plaster, the whole contraption parted company from the wall and collapsed to the floor, taking Curly's struggling figure with it.

The noise of the fall could be heard yards away. Speedlow heard it; Drake, too. They eyed each other, the man and the boy, and then Speedlow sprang at Locke's assistant with a roar like an enraged lion.

As Curly, half-dazed, staggered out from the wreckage of the bookshelves, Speedlow darted in with clenched fist. Thud! A vicious blow took Curly full on the chin. Then, before his senses left him, Curly had the mortification of seeing his cousin snatch from his hand the precious document that made him a millionaire. (*See this page.*)

"You cunning hound!" he screamed. "You're fooling me! There's someone else in this house! Thompson!"

Thompson came out of the dining-room like a flash of light. He had heard that ominous crash. But he first rushed to his master.

"Hold that young hound, Thompson!" roared Speedlow, who was struggling with Drake like a wild-cat. "Hold him—quickly!"

He almost flung Drake at the man-servant, and then dashed from the room. He knew where that crash had emanated. He reached the library in half a dozen frantic steps, and swung into the room.

Curly was scrambling to his feet, somewhat dazed by his fall. In his hand was the will; Speedlow realised that without waiting for further evidence. Besides, there, on the floor, was the missing volume—"Nicholas Nickleby."

With a scream of demoniacal rage Speedlow lunged in with thrashing fists. They took Curly at a distinct disadvantage. A sickening left connected with his jaw, a right like a kick from a mule took him full between the eyes. Then, just as his senses were leaving him, Curly felt the precious document that made him a millionaire snatched from his unresisting fingers, saw the gloating face of his rascally cousin as through a mist.

Then all was a blank!

A Dastardly Scheme!

ONE glance Speedlow gave the document in his trembling hands, but brief though it was, it was sufficient to tell him the truth. He was not the heir to old Marchant Taylor's fortune, after all. The will that had so fortunately come into his possession revoked all former bequests, for it was dated two days before Marchant Taylor had mysteriously met his end.

But the will was in Speedlow's hands now. If he destroyed it he would be safe for all time.

Safe——

Speedlow was out of that library like a racehorse. Back again in the sitting-room—a fire was burning there. He'd settle the question of the will for good! He'd burn it!

His glance fell on Jack Drake, who was still struggling fiercely in the burly grasp of Thompson, and he laughed. It was the moment of Lionel Speedlow's triumph. Coolly now, for he held the whip-hand, Speedlow crossed to the fire-place and calmly deposited that precious document in the fiercest part of the fire.

"You cad!" roared Drake, struggling like a wild-cat. "Oh, you despicable hound!"

"Ha, ha!"

For answer Speedlow's mocking laugh rang out. It goaded Drake to desperation. With a superhuman effort he threw off the burly Thompson and raced towards the fire. Speedlow's laugh changed on the instant. The will was in the flames, but should even a portion of it be retrieved it would be dangerous from his point of view. Like an animal at bay Speedlow grabbed up the poker, and raised it aloft.

"Come near this fire," he hissed, "and I'll brain you——"

Almost before the words were out of his mouth Jack Drake had dashed in under that threatening poker. His clenched fist took Speedlow full between the eyes. A second later the two were at grips. The poker descended to the fireplace with a crash and a clatter as the two exchanged blows. It was a gallant effort, while it lasted, but there could only be one result. Thompson was even now rushing to his master's assistance, what time the leaping flames of the fire consumed the valuable document with feverish energy.

"Hold the young cub!" grated Speedlow, as Thompson caught Drake round the neck.

And Thompson held him—held him in a police grip from which there was no escape.

Ferrers Locke's assistant had the mortification of seeing Lionel Speedlow poke the small remaining portion of the will, so far untouched by the flames,

into the heart of the fire. The flames swallowed it up; a scattering of blue grey ashes—as Speedlow poked away—all that remained to tell the tale. And ashes would never bring Curly Taylor into his rightful inheritance.

Drake ground his teeth in savage rage as Speedlow's mocking laugh again rang through the room. He thought of Curly! Where was he—what had happened to him?

With the reflection there came an answer, for the door of the sitting-room was pushed open and a figure staggered rather than walked into the apartment. It was Curly! Drake let out an exclamation of anxiety as he noted his chum's pale face, pale except where a dark patch of blue, just beneath his left eye, disturbed it.

"J-Jack!" gasped Curly, trying to straighten himself. "The will! I found it! This swindling hound sneaked it——"

"And burnt it!" broke in Speedlow, realising that he was master of the situation.

Curly's face went paler than ever. Burnt——

Speedlow talked on, now thoroughly enjoying himself.

"What's more, I'm going to give you in charge—both of you, for breaking into my premises with intent to commit a felony. You can tell the court all about your will—they'll believe you, I don't think!"

What Speedlow said was only too true, Curly and Drake realised that, for no court would be prepared to listen to such a "fairy" tale, without some pretty convincing evidence to back it. Moreover, it was known that Curly and his cousin were at loggerheads, and that Curly had been turned out of the Rookery upon ceasing to play for the Langsdale Wanderers. Indeed, he was guilty in the eyes of the law for breaking into the Rookery.

"You cunning rotter!" said Curly, his hands clenching and unclenching with the emotion that consumed him. "You hold the whip-hand. But it sha'n't stop here——"

"Neither shall you!" broke in Speedlow coolly. "I'm going to ring for the police."

Curly's mind worked swiftly then.

"It sha'n't stop here," he said, with equal coolness. "There's just one thing, my dear cousin, that you have lost sight of. Just one thing." He was bluffing now with wonderful confidence. "Merely a copy of that will, duly signed and witnessed!"

It was a wild shot when it came to be analysed, but it went home for all that. Speedlow's jaw dropped, his face worked convulsively.

"A copy——" he began hoarsely.

Curly nodded.

"By Heaven you sha'n't beat me!" roared Speedlow, in a sudden passion. "You sha'n't cheat me if I have to——"

He stopped, his eyes narrowed. A meaning glance passed between him and Thompson. And then, before Curly fully realised what that peculiar glint in his cousin's eyes meant, before Drake could yell a warning, Speedlow had caught up the poker. With a single bound he was across the room. The poker swung aloft. Curly saw it, tried to step aside, but was not quite quick enough.

It struck him a glancing blow on the shoulder that spun him to one side. It came down again, this time with stunning force on his head. Without a groan, Curly dropped to the carpeted floor.

"You murderous brute!" panted Drake, who was fighting and kicking to free himself of Thompson's grip. But Speedlow was paying no heed to Drake's words. He was stooping over the body of his cousin, afraid that he had struck too hard, for his intention had been only to stun him. He satisfied himself that Curly still breathed, then he straightened himself.

His narrowed eyes glanced round the room, and suddenly came to a stop as they fastened on the silk cords that looped the long velvet curtains at the windows. In a few seconds the cords had been torn from their hooks. He returned with them to where Drake and Thompson stood.

No words were uttered, but in less than five minutes Drake was securely trussed.

A big hand was kept thrust over his mouth to prevent his cries, and later the hand was replaced by a gag. Then, his eyes gleaming the hot words he could not voice, Drake was dropped to the floor whilst Speedlow and Thompson bound the unconscious Curly.

The task was done at length, and then Thompson, who had not questioned his master's lawless actions, cleared his throat.

"What are you going to do with them?" he asked.

"Do with them?" said Speedlow, and he followed up the phrase with a nervous laugh. "Why, I'm going to send them for a trip round the world."

"On your yacht?" questioned Thompson.

Speedlow nodded. He looked at Thompson shrewdly, and found that he had not been mistaken in the fellow when he had engaged him. Thompson obviously was prepared to do anything requested of him—for a consideration, of course.

"On the yacht," he muttered thoughtfully. "You will take them down in the car to Mersea."

"Not like this——"

"No, no, you dolt! They will be shoved into a couple of packing cases, you understand. You will take them aboard the Eagle, with a letter to the captain authorising you to deliver them at Cairo. But on the way"—Speedlow's voice dropped to a whisper—"I think they might happen to get washed overboard!"

Drake heard the first part of this amiable arrangement, but he was only able to guess the remainder. A glance at Speedlow's face filled in the blanks, as it were.

Thompson laughed, and his usually impassive features, thus relaxed, showed him up in his true colours. If anything, he was a greater scoundrel than his master.

"Easily done," he replied, rubbing his hands with great satisfaction. "And what do I get out of it?"

Speedlow had anticipated this. He knew his man, his price, his limitations.

"You get five hundred pounds before the trip," he said slowly, "and five thousand when you return here with the job satisfactorily carried through."

"I'm your man!" said Thompson briskly. "I don't know what all this talk of another will means; but, as far as I can see, it meant that if it hadn't been burnt I should have been compelled to look round for a fresh job and a fresh master. And men as useful as Thompson," he added, with a jerk of his thumb towards his chest, "aren't required every day."

Speedlow smiled wryly.

"Your perspicacity does you credit. Forget this talk of the will, you understand? You'll find me a good master, Thompson. Now get busy!"

And get busy Thompson did. He was helped by his master, and Drake was carried below stairs, to be joined a few moments later by Curly Taylor.

Then Speedlow left Thompson to it. That individual dragged into view a couple of packing-cases. Into the smallest of them he bundled Drake with as much concern as if he were packing straw. Then four strips of wood, forming the lid, were nailed into place, and Drake was left to darkness and despair. With a grunt, Thompson next turned his attention to Curly. An improvised gag was made out of a dishcloth hanging near at hand. Then into the second packing-case Curly was bundled. The lid was nailed home, just permitting enough air through the interstices of the planks to keep him alive, and the first part of Speedlow's dastardly purpose was accomplished.

When Thompson returned to the upper regions of the house he found Speedlow attempting to put the library to rights.

"Mustn't leave too much evidence lying around, Thompson," he said, "in case that meddling detective Ferrers Locke comes here on the prowl. I rather think that those two young whelps came here on their own, without letting Locke into the secret, otherwise he would have accompanied them. Have you fixed the cases?"

"All ready to take aboard," replied Thompson, with a leer.

"Right, then I'll write you the letter of authority to Captain Mooney, giving him instructions to get the Eagle under way at the first tide, and for the cases to be lashed on deck. He's an unsuspicious old buffer—can't see beyond the end of his nose. It'll be an easy job for you to cut those lashings adrift when you're out at sea."

"You leave that to me," said Thompson. "I'll be back here well within the week, sir."

No more was said. A big car was driven out of the garage. Into it were packed the cases containing their human cargo. A roar and a splutter, as the engine broke into life, then the crunch of gravel as the wheels began to revolve.

The journey to the East Coast had begun.

Nipped in the Bud!

"NOW, I wonder where those two youngsters are all this time?"

Ferrers Locke ceased his perambulation of the carpet and stared at the clock on the mantelpiece. It registered the hour as a quarter to eleven—three hours since he had despatched Curly and Jack Drake on their errand.

"I'll give them until eleven!" he muttered, filling his briar with a plug of tobacco.

The clock ticked away the fifteen minutes, and still Drake and Curly had failed to show themselves.

Ferrers Locke began to look anxious. Since the youngsters had been gone he had been exceedingly busy himself. The expected trunk-call had come through, and with it some excellent news, judging by the satisfied smile on the face of the criminologist as he jammed down the receiver. The next hour he had spent in a visit to the Langsdale Cottage Hospital—a visit that was to provide a nine

Printed and published every Monday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Subscription rates: Inland and Abroad, 11s. per annum; 5s. 6d. for six months. Sole agents for South Africa: The Central News Agency, Ltd. Sole agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for Canada: The Imperial News Co., Ltd. (Canada).—Saturday, March 27th, 1926.

days' wonder to the reading public when certain facts were made known.

"Hang that book and the will!" muttered Locke, as the last chime of eleven rang out. "I need not have sent them for it. I wonder——"

Whatever train of thought he had fastened on, it served to rouse him into a state of activity, for he grabbed his hat and coat and swung out of his room. Outside the hotel he made tracks for the house of Sarah Munnings, the daily help at the Rookery. He found the good lady in, and learnt from her that her late visitors, Curly and Jack Drake, had bounded out of the room upon learning that the much sought-after book, "Nicholas Nickleby," had been returned to the library at the Rookery.

"That's where the youngsters have made for," reflected the detective, as he swung out of the house and took the road that led to the Rookery. "By thunder, if anything has happened to them——"

He gritted his teeth, and strode on, battling his way fiercely against the strong wind that had sprung up.

The Rookery came in sight at last. A light gleamed from one of the windows in it—the sitting-room Ferrers Locke judged it to be. He pressed hard against the bell-push at the side of the main gates. A woman appeared.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I want to see Mr. Speedlow without delay," replied the detective, fretting at this fresh delay. "My name is Ferrers Locke!"

"Just one moment, sir," came the answer. "I'll phone through and see if Mr. Speedlow is disposed to see you."

Ferrers Locke had not long to wait. There was a telephone in the little lodge connected with the big house. Speedlow gave a jump as he heard the name of his visitor, but he realised that his best plan was to see him, to greet him with a certain amount of cordiality.

"Send him along."

A moment later the gates at the end of the drive were being opened. Locke was about to pass through when a sudden thought struck him.

"Has either Mr. Richard Taylor or Mr. Drake been along here to-night?" he asked the woman at the lodge.

"No, sir! This is the first time to-night I've had to open to visitors."

"Thank you!"

The detective swung along the drive and reached the porch of the house. Speedlow awaited him there. There was an ingratiating smile on the scoundrel's face.

"Good-evening, Mr. Locke!" he said cordially. "This is an unexpected pleasure!"

He invited the detective to enter, and Ferrers Locke found himself in the sitting-room. Speedlow pushed a chair forward for him near the little writing-desk, so that the full glare of the light fell upon his strong face, Speedlow himself adopting a chair a little more in the shadow.

"I won't beat about the bush," began Locke gravely. "I want to know what's happened to your cousin Curly and my assistant Drake!"

"Cousin Richard—your assistant!" exclaimed Speedlow, with well-feigned surprise, that Locke hardly knew whether the man was acting or not. "My dear Locke, I haven't set eyes on either of them for days. But why should you come to me for information?" he added seriously. "I'm hardly popular just now with my cousin——"

"Enough of this by play!" rapped Locke, and Speedlow quailed momentarily beneath the searching gaze bent upon him. "I happen to know that they both came to this place about three hours ago——"

Speedlow shook his head.

"You are making a mistake, Mr. Locke," he said quietly. "I have not been out myself all the evening, and I assure you I have received no visitors. But I can verify that," he added, with a ghost of a smile. "You may ring down to the lodge if you like. The woman there will bear out what I say."

Locke bit his lip. He had naturally enough jumped to the conclusion that Drake and Curly had made all haste to visit the Rookery. Indeed, that was the only possible theory he could adopt in the circumstances. And yet Speedlow seemed to be telling the truth. Seemed to be—— Locke fancied, as he gazed hard at the scoundrel before him, that the cordiality in the first place had been overdone. Speedlow was a consummate actor.

"You don't believe me?" went on Speedlow. "I'm sorry. I know I've got a bad name in Langsdale. But why don't you ring the lodgekeeper?"

Ferrers Locke faced his host squarely.

"Because I don't expect for one moment that either Curly or Drake would —ahem!—enter these grounds via the main gates," he said evenly.

"Oh! Then I'm afraid I don't quite catch on," said Speedlow stiffly. "You talk as if these two young friends of yours were playing at burglars or somethin'."

Locke smiled.

"You're not far wrong," he replied. "You see, I know how the cards were laid out for this particular evening. I know——"

He broke off as his eyes came to rest on a portion of the cornflower blue carpet. An ominous crimson stain, obviously fresh, stood out upon it. Locke looked up at Speedlow sharply, catching the expression of alarm in that individual's face.

"Then what does that mean, Speedlow?" asked Locke, standing now, a grim forefinger pointing to that stain.

"Er — er — my man Thompson damaged his hand, you know," said Speedlow lamely.

"Liar!" said Locke. "It's written all over your crafty face. Let's cut out the palaver. I've got you, my beauty, in a cleft stick, did you but know it. If you've added murder to your list of crimes, by heavens you'll pay the penalty"

"Mr. Locke——"

"I want the truth," snapped the detective. "I know—I know, mark you, that Drake and your cousin came here to-night. Where are they now?"

Speedlow eyed the sleuth narrowly.

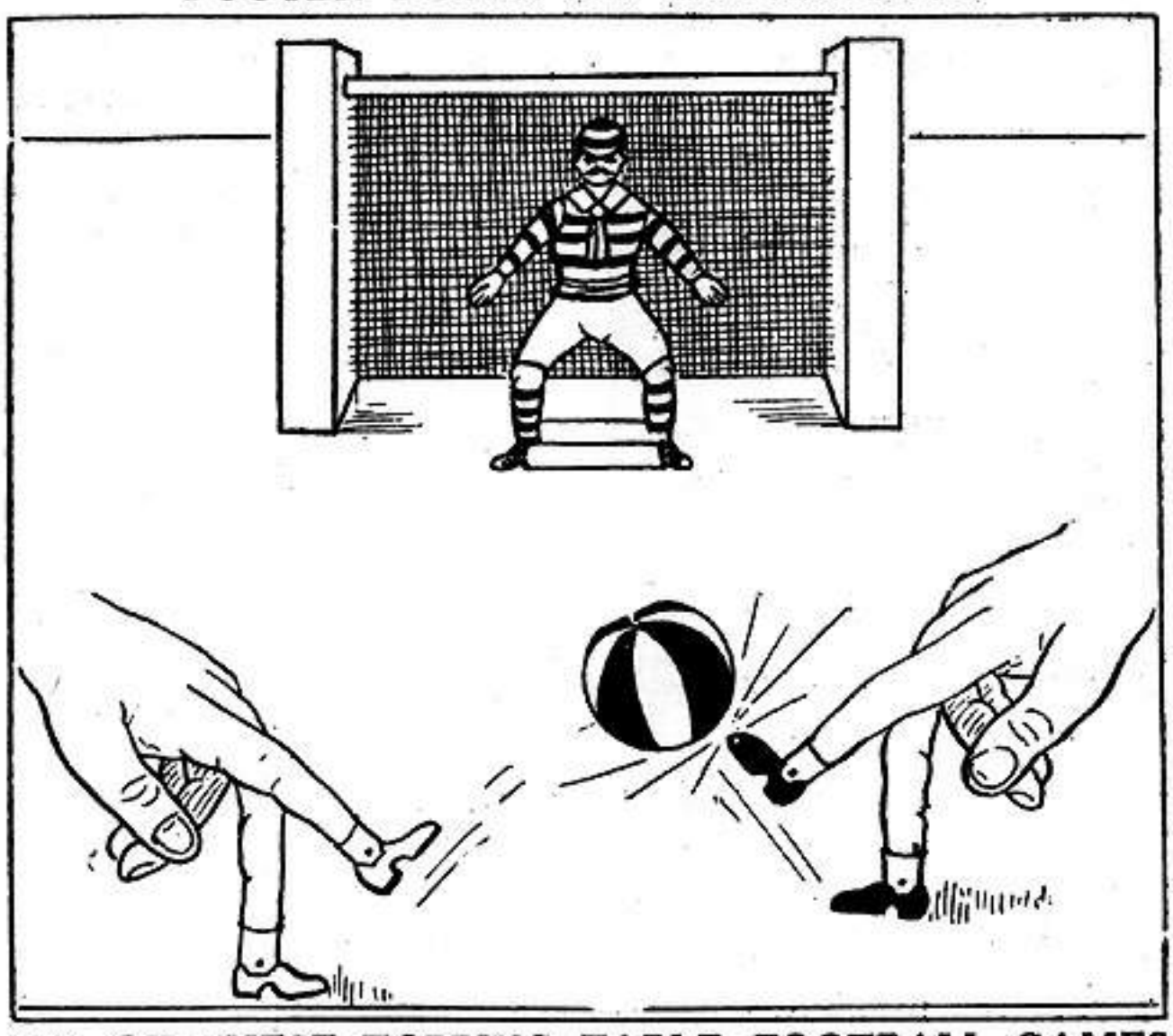
"How should I know?" he said, with a scornful curl of the lips. "I have told you that they haven't been here. You say they have. Very well, since you know so much, find out the rest. Meantime, get out of my house."

It was as much as the detective could do to keep his hands off the arch-scoundrel before him. He who was usually so calm and possessed no matter the circumstances, became ordinarily human at the thought that something terrible might have happened to his boy assistant. Of Curly Taylor Locke gave scarcely a thought now. It was of Drake he was thinking. A fierce reply trembled on the detective's lips, but before he could utter it there came the whirring sound of the telephone bell.

The instrument was at Locke's elbow, almost, on the tiny writing-table. With sudden decision the detective picked it up. Speedlow watched him like a man in a trance. He was afraid of this detective, although he had "ordered" him out of his house. He was tempted even now to rush forward and protest, but Locke was at that moment speaking into the transmitter, whilst his eyes held Speedlow in submission.

"Yes." This in answer to the query

FOOTER BOOTS ON THE FINGERS!



20 OF THESE TOPPING TABLE FOOTBALL GAMES OFFERED EVERY WEEK! *(See Page 2.)*

THE CASE OF THE LANGSDALE WANDERERS!

(*Continued from previous page.*)

whether or no Speedlow was speaking. "What do you want?"

The reply came through.

"Thompson this end, sir. All's well. The cases are aboard—on deck. No suspicions. The Eagle will be heading out to sea in an hour's time on the flood tide. Thought I'd let you know, sir."

"Thank you—er—Thompson," replied the detective, assuming as near as he could Speedlow's voice. "Good-bye!"

He jammed the receiver on the hooks and then faced Speedlow.

"From your man Thompson," he said. "And very interesting. I fancy I know what the two cases contain. Ah, that's better!"

While he had been speaking, Ferrers Locke had sauntered closer towards the shrinking Speedlow. A quick movement of his hands and a pair of handcuffs were encircling Speedlow's wrists before that astonished individual knew what they were even.

"That settles you for a bit," rapped the detective harshly. "You'll be comfortable in a prison cell in half a jiffy. Meantime, I must put a stop to the sailing of the Eagle. Very useful man that fellow Thompson."

The detective chuckled grimly as he picked up the telephone receiver again. In his right hand he held a revolver, which he levelled at Speedlow.

"Just sit tight in that armchair for a bit," he said coldly. "I should hate to drill you, but if you play any monkey-tricks you know what to expect."

With something like a groan Speedlow obeyed. He saw all his murderous plans tumbling down like a pack of cards. His eyes were burning their hate as he listened to Ferrers Locke call up the coastguard station at Mersea, as he heard him giving instructions for the yacht Eagle to be detained, for the two packing-cases to be shipped ashore, and for the man Thompson to be arrested.

"And that's that!" said Locke, pocketing the revolver and walking over to Speedlow. "Now I must ask you to accompany me."

Lionel Speedlow accompanied Ferrers Locke all right; he had no choice in the matter. The woman at the gates stared in surprise and consternation when she saw her master, the handcuffs gleaming on his wrists as the light from the gate lamp fell upon them, walking alongside the stalwart figure of Ferrers Locke.

Outside the gates a cab had driven up—a quick response to Locke's phone call to the Langsdale police-station. And five minutes later Lionel Speedlow was safely lodged in the cells. Before Locke had finished chatting with Inspector Towley—a very surprised police-officer indeed—a message came through from Mersea to say that the yacht Eagle had been prevented from sailing, that Thompson had been arrested, and that the two packing-cases when opened had revealed the bound figures of Drake and Curly. It transpired that Drake was even then motoring up to Langsdale, fit and well, and that Curly Taylor with a nasty head wound was being treated at the Fisherman's Hut, Mersea.

(Don't miss the concluding chapters of this fine story, boys, for there are some amazing revelations in store. Order next week's MAGNET *now and thus avoid disappointment.)*

JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD.

THE FINEST CAREER FOR BRITISH BOYS.

Boys are wanted for the Seaman Class (from which selections are made for the Wireless Telegraphy and Signalling Branches). Age 15¼ to 16¼ years.

Men also are required for

STOKERS - - - - - *Age 18 to 25*
ROYAL MARINE FORCES - *Age 17 to 23*

GOOD PAY. - - - ALL FOUND.
EXCELLENT CHANCES FOR PROMOTION.

Apply by letter to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N. and R.M.: 5, Suffolk Street, Birmingham; 121, Victoria Street, Bristol; 30, Canning Place, Liverpool; 55, Whitehall, London, S.W.1; 289, Deansgate, Manchester; 116, Ryo Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or 6, Washington Terrace, Queen's Park, Southampton.

1/6 THE BULLY BOY 1/6

The Pea Pistol you have been looking for! 20-Shot Repeater. Perfect action; fires a pea 25 feet; bright nickel finish; each in box with Ammunition. A better Shooter than you have ever had before. Send 1/6 and don't miss our latest and best pistol.

Send postcard for 1926 Catalogue.
Foreign and Colonial postage 9d. extra.
J. BISHOP & CO., 41, Finsbury Sq., London, E.C.

ENTIRE PARCEL FREE, containing 54 Colonial and Foreign Stamps, Catalogued 13/8, 100 Mounts, Invisible Pochette for Preserving Rare Stamps, Strong Perforation Gauge, Vest-pocket Folder, Latest Copy of Stamp Bargains, Particulars of Free 20/- Collections, and 40 other Free Gifts you can secure. Absolutely free to genuine approval applicants. *Send a postcard now.*—R. WILKINSON, Provincial Buildings, COLWYN BAY.

MY GREAT OFFER

I supply the finest Coventry built cycles ON 14 DAYS' APPROVAL, PACKED FREE AND CARRIAGE PAID, on receipt of a small deposit. Lowest cash prices, or easy payment terms. Write for Free Bargain Lists NOW.

FROM 2/- WEEKLY

Earl O'Brien Ltd. THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER DEPT. 18 COVENTRY.

HEIGHT INCREASED IN 30 DAYS. 5/- Complete Course.

No Appliances. No Drugs. No Dieting. The Melvin Strong System NEVER FAILS. Full particulars and Testimonials, stamp.—Melvin Strong, Ltd. (Dept. S.), 10, Ludgate Hill, London, Eng.

300 STAMPS FOR 6d., including Airpost, Triangular, Queensland, Nigeria, New South Wales, Victoria, Rhodesia, etc.—W. A. WHITE, 18, Stourbridge Road, LYE, Stourbridge.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

WE TRUST YOU

2/6 deposit with order is all you remit in advance for a world-famed Mead "Marvel" 400A Cycle. Nothing more to pay till you have ridden the machine one month. Sent Packed FREE and Carriage Paid.

"MARVEL" 400 £4 19s. 6d CASH.

Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Factory-soiled cycles astoundingly CHEAP. Tyres and Accessories at popular prices. Write TO-DAY for sumptuously illustrated Catalogue, and reduced *wholesale* prices of 28 New Season's models.

Mead CYCLE CO. INC. (Dept. B601), SPARKBROOK, BIRMINGHAM

POST ACCESSORIES AND 62 DIFF. STAMPS **FREE!!**

Metal Tweezers, 100 Gummed Album Headings, British Colonials, 62 Different Stamps (50 Unused), Peelable Stamp Mounts—Absolutely FREE. Just request Approvals.
LISBURN & TOWNSEND, London Road, LIVERPOOL.

HEIGHT COUNTS

in winning success. Let the Girvan System increase your height. Wonderful results. Send P.C. for particulars and our £100 guarantee to Enquiry Dept., A.M.P., 17, Stroud Green Road, London, N.4.

HAVE YOU A RED NOSE?

Send a stamp to pay postage, and you will learn how to rid yourself of such a terrible affliction free of charge. Enclose stamp.
Address in confidence: T. J. TEMPLE, Specialist, "Palace House," 128, Shaftesbury Avenue, LONDON, W.1.

£2,000 WORTH CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL. — Samples catalogue free; 12 by 10 Enlargement, any photo, 8d.—HACKETT'S WORKS, July Road, LIVERPOOL.

BLUSHING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, SHYNESS, TIMIDITY,

Simple 7-day Permanent Home Cure for either sex. No Auto suggestion, drill, etc. Write at once, mention "M.G.," and get full particulars quite FREE privately.
U.J.D., 12, All Saints Road, ST. ANNES-ON-SEA.

SAFETY REVOLVERS

NO LICENCE REQUIRED.

Accidents impossible.

For Theatricals, Sports, etc. Protection against footpads, dogs, etc.

NEW MODELS, blue steel or nickel finish.

Single chamber	2/6	post free.
Six „ pocket model	7/6	„ „
Eight „	10/6	„ „
Ten „ cowboy model	15/-	„ „

Free supply of cartridges given to all customers enclosing 9d. for carriage. *Catalogue, Cameras, Cycles, Gramophones, etc., free on request.*—JAMES MANSFIELD & Co. Ltd., 71, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

WHEN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS PLEASE MENTION THIS PAPER.

TRICKS WHICH WON the CUP!

by FRED TUNSTALL

FRED TUNSTALL.

The Famous International outside-left of Sheffield United.

EVERY year as the Cupties come along there is a lot of talk about what is called "the game that wins the Cup."

From all this talk one would get the impression that there is some straight and sure cut to success in the Cup—that certain teams win because they play a particular type of football, and that those whose name has never been inscribed on the trophy have failed repeatedly because their game is all wrong from a Cup-winning point of view. In my own mind, I have no difficulty in summing up this talk of a so-called game which wins the Cup as being just so much idle clamour. There is, in my view, no such thing as a style of play which wins the Cup.

THE VILLA METHOD.

Perhaps it will be said that the experience of Aston Villa, to give one example, shows that there is a Cup game. The Villa have won repeatedly—more times than any other club. It is a wonderful feat, considering the general level of equality, for a team to win the Cup six times, and also to do well even in those years when they have been knocked out before the Final. But I don't think that it is because the Villa play any particular style that they have won the Cup. Indeed, I would go a little further, and declare that the real secret of the Villa's consistent success is that they have always played what was to them their natural games of the moment. No matter who their opponents have been, the Villa have just gone on playing their Cup games in their own sweet way. Taking the broad, general view, we might say that the Villa have won by tactics, and that the keynote of their tactics has been just this—"carry on."

ODD-GOAL FINALS.

Whenever a Cup competition starts it is always possible to name about twenty clubs which seem to have reasonable ground for hoping that they will eventually pull through. This fact demonstrates what is undoubtedly true—that there is in football in these days a general level of equality. Between the teams which compete there is, in the ordinary way, little to choose. That being so, I think it essentially follows that, the luck being evenly distributed, tactics have a very great deal to do with the destination of the trophy. So many Cupties are won by the odd goal—isn't it the odd goal which has won the Final tie in four out of the last six occasions?—that the results of any Cuptie must, of necessity, depend on the incidentals of the game, though it may not be strictly true to refer to tactics as incidentals.

BEATING BETTER TEAMS.

There were some fine illustrations of the way tactics tell in the experience of Sheffield United last season. We won the Cup, as you know, and I say quite frankly that we won in spite of the oppositions of some teams which were, man for man, better than we were. But on more than one occasion tactics pulled us through. In this connection I am tempted to wonder to what extent newspaper talk and gossip affects the destination of the silver bauble. As soon as the draw for this or that round is made, the newspapers, and the people who read the newspapers, begin to discuss the forthcoming match in detail. They suggest that this or that will happen, and the players who are not affected by all this talk can say that they are men of strong will.

WORRIED INTO DEFEAT.

When we were due to meet West Bromwich Albion in the Fourth Round of the Cup last season, it seemed to be a matter for general comment in the newspapers that if the Albion could hold the Sheffield United left wing they would win the match. I don't think this summing-up was right, but that doesn't matter for the sake of the argument I am putting forward. The game had not been long in progress before it became obvious that certain West Bromwich Albion players had, to use a popular expression, got our left wing "on the brain." Gillespie especially was the man to be watched. Well, the defenders watched Gillespie, shadowed him here and there. There was nothing which could have pleased "Billy," the master tactician, more. He led those defenders of the Albion into wrong positions, caused them to go chasing him over to the right wing, and then Billy swung round and banged the ball in my direction. A first and very important goal was the outcome. It was comparatively easy for us to win after this, because our opponents were worried and had lost faith in their scheme.

THE CUP-WINNING GOAL.

Those of my readers who were present at the Final tie last season may recall that tactics played their part in that victory, too. It will be recalled that the right wing of our team was not definitely announced until just before the match started, and I fancy that everybody thought the danger would come from the left. But, as a tactical move, we decided the right wing was going to play its part in that game. In the first half-hour or so I, on the extreme left, scarcely ever "saw" the ball. Over to the right it kept going, and the right wingers responded very nobly, too, so much so that the Cardiff players evidently got a bit worried over this flank, and they started to pay it much closer attention. This was what we wanted to happen, and presently a stray ball came over, which I seized on to score the goal which won the match. These are the little things which count in the Cup, and it is when tactical moves of this kind come off that one really begins to appreciate to the full the value of round-table talks on tactics before meeting any particular opponents.

"THE BEST-LAID SCHEMES——"

It occurs to me, however, that the remarks about tactics in Cupties may bring me an awkward question. Somebody may ask why the team which prides itself on its sound tactics doesn't always win? The reply to such a question is that we must always remember that on the football field there are always two teams, and for every tactical move by one side there may be an even better tactical move by the other fellows. You can think out your schemes, but the other fellows may prevent you from putting those schemes into execution. And the test then becomes a question of adaptability. As a last word, even in regard to football tactics, it is often true that the best-laid schemes gang aft agley.

Fred Tunstall

The Team of All the Talents

by PAUL PRY

(Our Travelling Correspondent.)

PUTTING THE SUN INTO SUNDERLAND.

THOUGH it may seem incredible in these days, it is a fact that the Sunderland club only got into big League football when the officials promised to pay a portion of the travelling expenses of all the clubs which visited them. Evidently the people connected with football in those days didn't think much of the sort of sunshine which is provided by Sunderland, but since then the brilliance of Sunderland has at times been positively scorching. Indeed, as I was reminded when I put in an appearance at Roker Park the other day, there must have been occasions since those long-ago days when the other clubs have regretted that Sunderland were allowed admission to the League even on those unique terms.

Calling on Mr. Bob Kyle—he of the managerial chair and the ever-ready smile—I suggested to him that just as the Sunderland club used to stand part of the expense of their visitors in the old days, he might consider the advisability of giving me part of my expenses in going to Sunderland. My exit from the office was hurried. If it hadn't been speedy it might have been painful, so I rushed through the door to see some of this team of all the talents. That was the name by which Sunderland was known for years, and they deserved that name, too, seeing that they won the championship of the First Division in three seasons out of four and in the one season during that glorious run when they didn't finish on top they finished second. Comparison with the Sunderland team of those times with the Sunderland team of to-day would be futile, not to say silly. The giants of other days have been followed by giants of the present, men who mean to do, sooner or later—and the sooner the better—that one thing which has always eluded the players of the Sunderland club—that is win the Cup.

A. McINROY.

When I got among the players I asked them if they felt in the mood for a fight to the death, and it was only when this question was greeted with a broad smile all right, and some knowing winks, that I remembered that among the Sunderland players is one with the peculiar name of Death. There was a time not so long ago when the Roker Park management thought that Death should be left outside, but now he is the recognised first choice for outside-left.

Then I ran up against Bob Kelly, who cost a fortune when he was transferred from Burnley not so long ago. But I had difficulty in recognising Kelly, because he looked more like a canary than a footballer doing his training. He was wearing a bright yellow sweater, which, he told me, was once worn by Mitchell in an English International match. The changing of shirts on these occasions is a popular little hobby with professional footballers, and it was in exchange that Kelly got his jersey. Bob is the sphinx of the team, with a "poker face," which never by any chance gives away what he is thinking. I could tell you of a day when Bob was at Burnley when he amazed his colleagues by handing them each a piece of wedding cake. Seeing that they hadn't even heard that Bob had been married that morning they were a bit surprised, but they needn't have been, for Kelly is just as mysterious off the field as he is to opposing halves and full-backs on the field.

In the billiards-room was Dave Halliday, who is as Scotch as they make them up at Dundee, and as hard as the granite which is found there. Dave can make the scoring of big billiards breaks look easier even than his scoring of goals, and he showed me a nice little memento of an occasion when he won an open billiards tournament at Dundee. As company for this Scot there is "Bill" Clunas, who also knows how to wear a Scottish International cap. Another fellow ought to be Scotch, but he isn't. This is goalkeeper McInroy, and if you know a better kindly send a note to any manager, and your pal will immediately be signed on. Skipper Parker, and centre-half, is one of the many expensive jewels in the Sunderland crown, and he came from Stoke.

As Kelly is the sphinx so are the full-backs the rocks of the team. To have a player named England is surely worth something, and in a chat with him he told me, with a smile, that there are two reasons why he hasn't been given a cap for England. One is that to have a player named England in an England side would confuse the reporters when they came to describe the match, and the other is that Sunderland will have to pay an additional fee to the Shirebrook (Notts) club, if and when England does play for England.

A word of warning is due to any person who is likely to go to Sunderland. Keep a sharp eye for "Warney" Cresswell. He is always in a hurry except when he is actually on the field, when he is as calm as a dish of cress. It takes him less time to dress than any other club player when preparing for a match, and after a game he has often been known to catch a train before the rest of the members of the side have got their shoelaces fastened.

"WARNEY" CRESSWELL.

The men "on the staff" at Sunderland are rather a queer mixture, for whereas they have some of the most expensive players in the game, as reckoned by the transfer fees paid for them, there are some others whom they have brought on from their boyhood days. An instance of the latter sort is provided by Bob Marshall, who has played practically everywhere in the forward line, for he took a benefit at the age of twenty-one. When you remember that a player must have been on the books of the same club for five years before he can have a benefit it is easy to reckon at what age Marshall was signed on. They have also at Sunderland now a couple of lads who may be heard of in the future—Tait and Gurney, north country lads, who have earned fame as schoolboys, and who are still short of eighteen years of age.

These lads, and all the other lads at Sunderland, are lucky, in that they have in "Billy" Williams as trainer a man who is generally admitted to be the best trainer in the country. Mind you, Billy hasn't gained popularity among his men because he deals with them "softly." He is the trainer of the iron hand, but behind it is the soft heart. "He is like a father and mother to us," said one of the Sunderland players, "and I have known him sit up all night with a fellow who might require his services."

There was no more disappointed man about Roker Park than Trainer Williams when the side went out of the Cup for the present season. The prospect of success seemed so rosy, and "Billy" was confident that he had got his men just in the proper state of physical fitness to carry off the trophy. Once more, however, they will have to wait, and when the Cup-ties come round again next season we shall still have to write that Sunderland have never yet won the trophy.

It is not the habit of the Sunderland people to grouse, and they know how to take defeat in the proper spirit, but they were certainly very much upset by certain incidents which accompanied their dismissal from the Cup this season at the hands of Manchester United. In the replayed fifth round tie between Sunderland and Manchester United, the Manchester side got two goals ahead in the first half, and then the fighting spirit which is behind the Sunderland team was fully demonstrated. One of the arrears was rubbed off, and a little later "Demon David" Halliday got the ball into the net again. The referee signalled a goal, but was immediately surrounded by the Manchester United players, who appealed to him that the scorer was offside, and would not be happy until the referee had consulted the linesmen. This the man with the whistle eventually did, and then reversed his decision, disallowing the goal on the ground of offside.

As so many different statements were issued at the time, I was at considerable pains when in Sunderland to ascertain the facts. It is not true to say that Sunderland appealed to the authorities against the result standing, for they knew well enough that the decision of the referee of any match regarding incidents on the field has always been accepted as final. What they did object to, however, was the alleged weakness of the referee in listening to the clamour of the Manchester United players and consulting his linesmen about an incident on which he himself had apparently, no doubt, and on which he was in a position to give his judgment without asking the opinion of anybody else.

C. [illegible]KER, The [illegible]per.

Mr. Bob Kyle is of opinion that the referee who does ask his linesmen for their opinion when he himself is in a position to see is asking for trouble, and is very likely to get it. The Sunderland manager is also of opinion that the fact that the referee did listen to the appeals of the Manchester United men will induce the players of other clubs to make similar appeals, and thus we shall get all sorts of scenes.

"For goodness sake, though," said Mr. Kyle, "don't let anybody imagine that we can't take defeat without squealing. We were all dreadfully disappointed, and if we had felt that we had been beaten on our merits we should have been the first to hold out the hand of congratulation. But having gained what we all thought was a very good goal, and having once been awarded that goal, we naturally felt a bit hurt. But now we propose to forget it, and to recall that line which we used to write in our copy-books in the long ago days—'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.'"

Semi-Final STARS!

RECALLING SOME AMAZING STRUGGLES AND THE HEROES WHO TOOK PART IN THEM.

Photo shows David Jack, of Bolton Wanderers—lying on ground—after having scored a lucky goal which meant all the difference between victory and defeat in a thrilling Cup match described in the article appended below.

IT is a certainty that every one of the four clubs which is in this season's Semi-Final hope to win the Cup—nay, they are all firmly convinced that this is to be their year. All save one of the four clubs is going to be disappointed, of course; but when the Semi-Final stage is reached the Cup is, almost literally, anybody's. It is at this stage of the competition that the advantage of choice of ground ceases to operate, the Semi-Final games being played on neutral grounds, of course. This fact, coupled with all the nervous excitement which is in evidence on these occasions, results in thrilling and mostly very close struggles. Usually there is only one goal between the Semi-Final teams at the end of the game, and, as demonstrating how closely matched the Semi-Final teams usually are, it may be recalled that in 1912 two Semi-Finals were played without a single goal being scored in either of them, and both the replays were decided by the score of one goal to nil.

I have seen some wonderful Semi-Final struggles in my time—some games which have been won by fluke goals, and others in which players have either made or greatly enhanced their reputations. For the benefit of my readers I will recall some of those games.

Perhaps of all the players I remember who really jumped into fame by reason of a great Semi-Final display was "Ronny" Sewell, the goalkeeper who is now with Blackburn Rovers. He was at that time—in 1914—a reserve man at Burnley. In the first meeting between Burnley and Sheffield United in the Semi-Final of that season Sewell did not keep goal for Burnley; but in that first match their regular goalkeeper was hurt, so the deputy had to be brought up for the replay. I can assure you that there were people connected with the Burnley club whose hopes of victory in the replay dropped when it was known that the reserve goalkeeper would have to turn out. But Sewell proved himself the big hero of the replay—kept out all sorts of shots, was never beaten in the course of the match—and, after Burnley had won by a single goal, this last-minute goalkeeper was carried off the field shoulder-high.

R. SEWELL, Blackburn Rovers.

Mention of Sheffield United reminds me of perhaps the most brilliant goal I have ever seen scored in a Semi-Final, and it was all the more remarkable because it was obtained by a half-back, George Utley, who was then the captain of Sheffield United, and who is now trainer to the Fulham team. In this Semi-Final to which I have referred Sheffield United had Bolton Wanderers as opponents at Blackburn, and so hard did the Wanderers press in the first half that it seemed long odds on the Bolton team winning. Just before half-time, however, when the pressure on the Sheffield goal was very severe, George Utley secured possession of the ball in his own half of the field. Off he went for the opposite end of the field like a hare. Four Bolton men were tricked in that amazing run, and the final kick of Utley's sent the ball whizzing into the net. By that dramatic goal did Sheffield United triumph, and they went on to win the trophy, thus illustrating the value of a single effort.

For this reverse in 1915 Bolton Wanderers took their revenge over Sheffield United when these clubs were again drawn to meet each other in the Semi-Final of 1923. But just as the previous Semi-Final meeting between these two teams was won by a really great goal, so was this second match decided by what most people considered a "fluke" effort. Two minutes after the restart, and in the presence of the biggest crowd which has ever witnessed any game bar the Final tie, David Jack, the Bolton Wanderers inside-right, while in the act of falling over, just managed to get his foot to the ball and lob it in the direction of goal. The Sheffield United goalkeeper—and practically everybody else—thought the ball would go over the bar, and it is doubtful if Jack really expected to score. But at the last minute the ball "dipped" in the most unexpected way, and "sneaked" in under the bar.

As one goal so frequently decides the games in the Semi-Final, it is natural that every effort is made by the competing clubs to get their noses in front. I have often wondered what were the feelings of Albert Iremonger, the Notts County goalkeeper, when the first goal was registered against him in the Semi-Final of 1922. Huddersfield were the opponents of Notts, and very early in the game Mann, the Huddersfield forward who is now a half-back for Manchester United, sent towards goal what seemed to be a simple sort of effort. Iremonger, in the Notts goal, stuck out his foot, but the ball passed over it, and positively "trickled" into the net.

In the same season there was played one of the most-talked-of Semi-Final ties of all time—a game which, so it was said, was won on champagne. This was a contest between Tottenham Hotspur and Preston North End on the Wednesday ground at Sheffield. In the first half the Spurs were much the better team, and it seemed certain that they would win. The Spurs were a goal up at half-time. In the second half, however, the contest completely switched round: Preston overran their opponents to an amazing extent, scored a couple of goals, and won a dramatic victory. It was said afterwards that several of the Preston players had a sip of champagne at half-time, and that gave them new life and zest for the remainder of the match.

"THE PRO'S EASTER EGG!"

A special article dealing with Easter football—for next week!