

**PENKNIVES AND POCKET WALLETS FOR READERS!**

*(See Page 2.)*

No. 1,111. Vol. XXXV.

Week Ending June 1st, 1929.

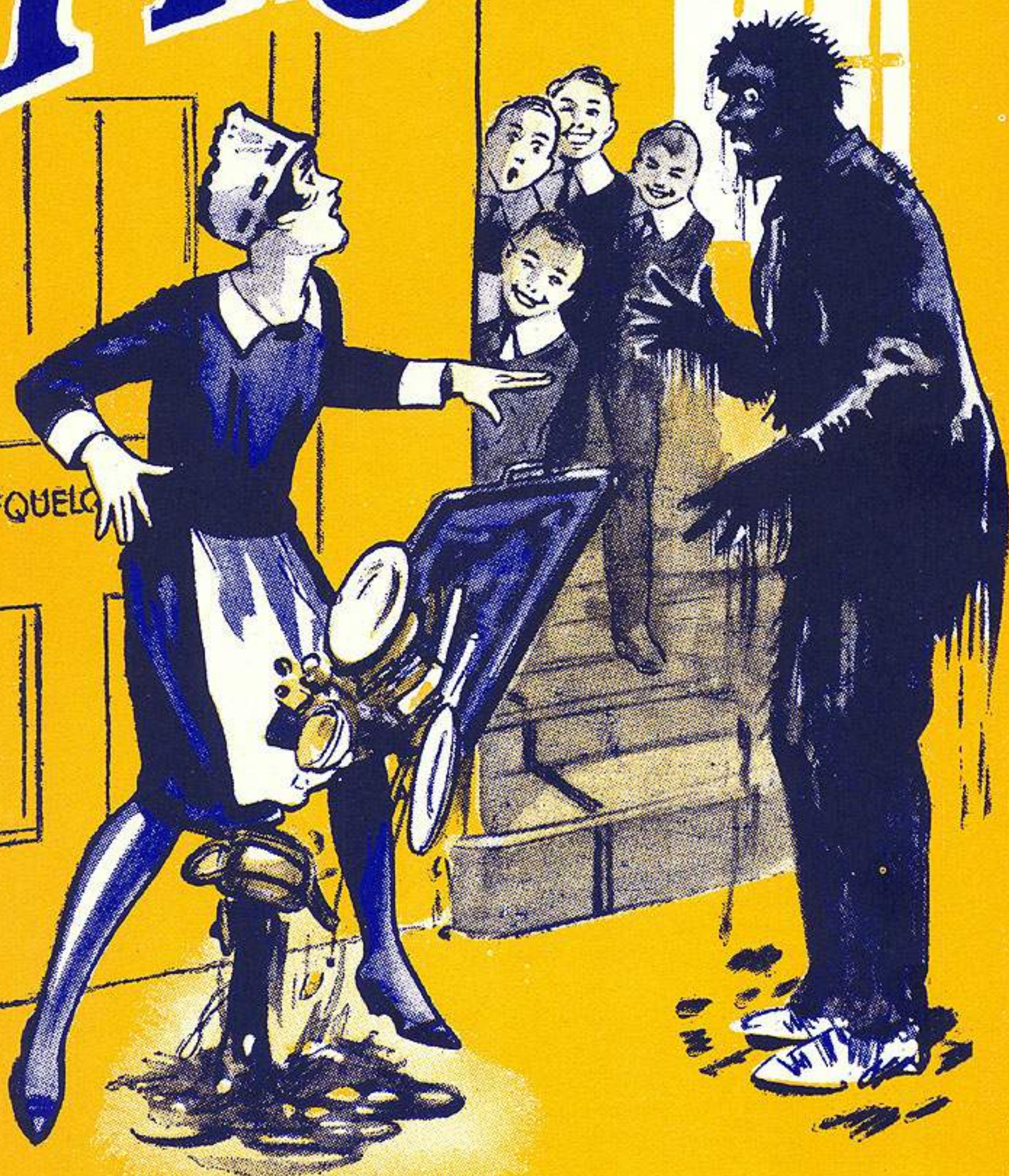
# The Magnet

# 2<sup>D</sup>

EVERY SATURDAY

LIBRARY

MR QUELQ



**. . . NO WONDER THE MAID WAS SCARED!**

(A startling "booby-trap" incident from this week's splendid school story of the Chums of Greyfriars.)





# Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address:  
The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House,  
Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

NOTE.—All Jokes and Limericks should be sent to  
c/o "Magnet," 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

**T**O set the ball rolling, chums, here's a clever limerick sent in by S. C. Hamilton, of Ripley, Egerton Road, Bournemouth, who carries off a useful leather pocket-wallet.

There's a greedy, grub-raiding marauder  
Named Bunter. When he's brought to order,

His sad tale of woe

Is: "The fact is, you know,  
I'm expecting a big postal-order!"

Quite a week of naval celebrations this week, you fellows. June 1st is the anniversary of the Battle of Ushant, one of Nelson's great victories. But May 31st looms much greater in our eyes, for that is the anniversary of the Battle of Jutland—"Dor Tag," the day to which the German Navy drank for years—until it came. You all know what happened. Our chaps had been spoiling for a fight, and when Beatty's squadron suddenly came across the German High Sea Fleet, they didn't hesitate to attack, even though the Germans had their great battleships out against our lighter battle cruisers.

Beatty's squadron came in for a great deal of punishment, but they hung on until our battleships, under Jellicoe, came along and joined in the "game." That was too much for the Germans who immediately made off for Kiel. And if it hadn't been for the fact that they sought the shelter of their minefields, where our fellows couldn't follow them, the War possibly would have been finished a lot sooner than it was. As things turned out, the German Fleet deemed discretion the better part of valour, and remained in the Kiel Canal until our final victory, when they had to come out and surrender to us. The Battle of Jutland certainly finished Germany as a naval power.

## STILL THEY COME!

Judging by my letter-bag, the dandy picture-cards—in full colours—dealing with mechanical mysteries and

## MARVELS OF THE FUTURE

which are now being presented FREE with our splendid companion paper, the "Gem Library," have proved a huge success. This week's topping picture card, No. 7 in the series, depicts

## A FORTRESS ON WHEELS,

another dream of the future. Don't fail to add it to your set, boys.

Now to attend to the pile of letters on my desk, which gets bigger and bigger every day, despite the fact that most of them are answered by post. I wonder how many of you can answer this question off hand:

## WHAT IS A XYSTARCH?

Tom Catesby, of Winchelsea, is trying to catch me here. A Xystarch was an Athenian officer who was in charge of the gymnastic exercises, which took place in a covered portico called a xyst—hence his name!

And here is a question (asked by Terence The MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,111.

Doughty, of Queenstown) which may interest many of my readers. Terence wants to know

## DID KING SOLOMON'S MINES EXIST?

Why not? King Solomon certainly existed, and he must have obtained his gold from somewhere. As the result of several years' excavations at Zimbabwe, in Rhodesia, it was concluded that the mines from which Solomon obtained his wealth were situated there. The mines in that neighbourhood are the oldest and the most extensive in the world and round about the time that Solomon was alive it is estimated that gold to the value of seventy-five million pounds was extracted from them. It is also believed that the older portions of the ruins discovered in Zimbabwe proved that this was formerly a colony of the ancient empire of Sheba.

Here's a gruesome one. George Grave wants me to tell him something

## ABOUT THE INQUISITION.

This was established during the thirteenth century, with the intention of punishing heretics. In Spain it became a terrible and powerful body under the direction of Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, and some of the tales of the tortures inflicted by the Inquisition make the most hair-raising reading. It is said that not less than 30,000 people suffered death alone in Spain by order of the Inquisitors. Furthermore, in Spain and Portugal the King and his Court attended the executions in State, the victims generally being burned at the stake. The Inquisition ceased in Spain in the year 1834. One of Edgar Allan Poe's best-known stories—"The Pit and the Pendulum"—deals with the Inquisition.

What is the difference between

## A FILIBUSTER AND A BUCCANEER?

asks R. G., of Chatham. Filibusters were originally pirates and buccaneers who took possession of small islands or lonely coast lands and maintained themselves there without acknowledging any other authority. Buccaneers only made war on the enemies of their own countries. For instance, Sir Henry Morgan was a buccaneer, because he only waged war against the Spaniards, but Blackbeard, as well as being a pirate was also a filibuster because he and his men established communities of their own where they governed themselves. In later years the term "filibuster" was used to mean men who took part in expeditions whose object was to seize tracts of country and settle there in defiance of international law.

Having delved so far into the past, let us come back to the present day, and laugh with Norman Macpherson, of 2170, Masson Street, Montreal, Canada, whose joke wins him a MAGNET pocket-knife this week. Here it is:

A young author had just had his first book published and was showing it to one of his friends.

"Take it home with you," he said, "and tell me what you think of it in the morning."

His friend consented, and the next morning he was asked his opinion of it.

"Oh," he replied dryly, "it was all right, but the covers are too far apart!"

After that, we'll deal with Ralph Atkinson, of Purfleet, who asks me:

## HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A BULL-FIGHT?

Once, Ralph, and never again! Even then I didn't wait to see more than one "fight"—and there are five or six in an afternoon. To commence with, a bull-fight looks interesting. There is a great deal of pageantry about it when the toreadors take the ring, and the president throws them the key to open the way for the bulls.

There's a certain amount of skill when the "cape-players," who are unarmed, flourish their scarlet capes and face the rush of the bulls, dodging them by a hair's breadth at the last second. But when the picadors take the ring, English people generally leave, because the odds are all on the side of the picador, who, mounted on a horse, is armed with a long spear. Even if he is unhorsed he rolls away and leaves his "mount" to bear the brunt of the bull's attack.

After that, comes a man with long darts, who enrages the bull and then dodges out of the way after he has stuck his darts in the animal. Last of all comes the matador, to whom the dazed bull falls an easy prey.

No, Ralph, I am not enamoured of bull-fights, and I would rather see a game of Soccer or cricket any day. Incidentally, I think the Spaniards are getting a bit tired of bull-fights themselves. They are certainly going in more and more for the civilised sports which are the rule in the rest of European countries.

By the way, chums, have you read this month's issues of the "Schoolboys' Own Library"? If not make a note of the titles: No. 99. "The Bounder of Greyfriars!" and No. 100. "His Own Enemy!" and then pop round to your newsagent, and get your copies before it's too late.

At the end of my space again, I see. Well, I've just got time to tell you what I have in store for next week before I "pipe down," as they say in the Navy. The long complete Greyfriars yarn is entitled:

## "PREFECTS AT WAR!"

By Frank Richards.

And you will find all your favourite characters well to the fore in it. George Wingate, the popular captain of the school plays a prominent part in this yarn, which is one of the best Frank Richards has yet written.

Of course, we must not leave out the supplement—a laugh's as good as a tonic any day. Dicky Nugent's second story in his screamingly funny "Movie" series wants some beating. Make a note of the title, chums:

## "DR. BIRCHEMALL—FILM STAR!"

Dr. Birchmall has made himself look an ass many a time and oft, but next week he really takes the bun. You'll laugh till your sides ache, chums, when you read about his funny antics.

By now you are well into our serial:

## "SPEEDWAY PALS!"

By A. Carney Allan.

There are more thrills and exciting situations in next week's gripping instalment. Then, to round off the programme there's another cheery "Come into the Office, Boys!"

**THE EDITOR.**



# THE PREFECT'S PLOT!



In which Harry Wharton & Co., the Lesser Lights of the Remove, Play a Conspicuous Part.  
By FRANK RICHARDS.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Fag Wanted!

**"FAG!"**

Harry Wharton & Co. heard the call. Really, they could not help hearing it, as Loder of the Sixth was standing within a dozen feet of them when he yapped out the word.

But they did not heed.

The Famous Five of the Remove were walking away from the House, that sunny afternoon. It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, a glorious day in early summer, and the chums of the Remove were bound for the river. They heard Gerald Loder, but heeded him not. Like Felix, they kept on walking.

"Fag!" roared Loder.

Still the juniors did not heed.

Harry Wharton & Co. belonged to the Remove, and the Remove did not fag, even for the high and mighty Sixth. Third Form and Second had that doubtful pleasure and privilege.

It was, in fact, an insult to the Remove to call them fags. Noses had been punched in the Fourth and the Shell for that reason.

It was not practicable to punch Loder's nose; Sixth Form noses were above punching. So the five juniors contented themselves with elaborately taking no notice, and proceeding on their way as if Loder of the Sixth did not exist at all.

Loder stared after them. Then he glared. Stares and glares had no effect on five backs. So Loder swooped after them, and headed them off.

"Stop!" he snapped.

The Famous Five stopped. Loder of the Sixth had no right to fag them; but being a prefect of the Sixth, he had a right to order them to stop, if the spirit moved him so to do. So far as that went, Loder had to be given his head.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "Nice afternoon, Loder."

"The niceness of the esteemed afternoon," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "is only equalled by the terrific niceness of the absurd Loder."

"You heard me call, you young sweeps," snapped Loder.

"I'm going down to the nets," said Loder.

"Good!" said Johnny Bull cordially. "You can do with some cricket practice, Loder. I heard Wingate telling you the other day what he thought of your batting. I agreed with him."

"I want a fag for bowling," said Loder.

"Oh!"

"You, Hurree Singh," added Loder, "I believe you're the least clumsy of all the clumsy young asses in the Lower Fourth. Come along!"

"My esteemed Loder—"

"I've told you to come," said Loder.

"Are you going to argue about it?"

Jealousy underlies the enmity between Gerald Loder and popular George Wingate, and to do Wingate a bad turn Loder would sooner walk a mile than walk a yard to do him a good one. But the bad turn Loder now contemplates is really the outside edge!

The Famous Five looked at Loder of the Sixth as if they could eat him. The trouble was that Loder was in the right, now. Removites were not fags in the ordinary sense. But fagging at games came under a different category. Any member of the First Eleven

had a right to call on every junior to fag at bowling in cricket practice if he liked. Loder was a member of the First Eleven. Not unless the junior in question was booked for a match, could he refuse. And the Remove had no match that day; and a desire to go up the river could not be pleaded for exemption. The bully of the Sixth was within his rights. A good-natured senior would have waived his rights, on such an occasion. But good-nature had never been one of Gerald Loder's weaknesses.

He grinned at the dismayed expressions on the faces of the Famous Five.

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"Guilty, my lord!" said Bob.

"Then why didn't you stop?"

"We're going down to the river," explained Harry Wharton. "We're having a boat out this afternoon. Sorry—but we've no time to waste, even to enjoy a conversation with you, Loder."

"Jolly as that would be!" added Frank Nugent, with polite regret.

"I'm looking for a fag!" said Loder grimly.

"Better look somewhere else, then," answered Wharton. "The Remove don't fag, as you jolly well know."



"You're not playing cricket to-day, I think?" he remarked.

"N-n-no!" said Wharton slowly.

"Then come on, Hurree Singh."

"Look here, Loder," said Harry warmly. "We've arranged to go up the river, and have a bit of a picnic!"

"Four of you can go," smiled Loder.

"We don't want to go without Inky."

"Dear me!" said Loder, "that's very sad! Heart-breaking, isn't it? Sorry it can't be helped!"

"You could easily get another man to fag at bowling for you," said Bob Cherry angrily. "Lots of fellows—"

"I don't want lots of fellows; I want Hurree Singh," said Loder cheerily. "I'm waiting for you, kid!"

"My esteemed chums," said the nabob of Bhanipur, "the excellent and ludicrous Loder is an esteemed beast, but what cannot be cured must go longest to the well, as the English proverb says. You fellows go up the river while I perform the esteemed bowlfulness for the execrable Loder."

"Oh, rot!" said Johnny Bull. "We're not going without you!"

"Sink or swim together," said Bob. "Loder's only doing this to muck up our half-holiday, because he's got a down on us. But it can't be helped."

Loder, with his bat under his arm, had already started for Big Side. He looked back, his eyes gleaming at the dusky face of the nabob of Bhanipur.

"Are you coming?" he bawled.

"The answer is in the esteemed affirmative, my excellent and disgusting Loder."

"Buck up, then!"

Harry Wharton & Co. turned back.

Their cheery faces were clouded now. Loder of the Sixth had an ancient grudge against the Famous Five; and a Sixth-Form prefect had many ways of making himself unpleasant if he liked. Loder could have found half a dozen fellows to fag at bowling; but it suited him to call on a member of the famous Co.—and the laws of the school games placed it in his power to do so. As a rule, the chums of the Remove kept their end up, in their feud with Loder. But this time, the bully of the Sixth had them.

"My esteemed and absurd chums," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "I really and ridiculously wish that you would go and leave me to it—"

"Oh, bosh!" said Harry. "We can go on Saturday, if the weather's fine."

"If!" murmured the nabob. "But in this absurd climate, that is a terrifically big if."

"We'll chance it!" said Nugent. "We're not going without you, old black bean. We'll come and watch you making hay of Loder's wicket."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"After all, we may dig up some fun on Big Side," he said. "I've told you men lots of times that Inky could bowl any man in the Sixth. And Loder bats like a sack of coke. It will make him no end sick, if Inky makes him look a fool before all the Sixth. Specially after Wingate's been ragging him for slacking, and threatening to chuck him out of the First Eleven, so the fellows say."

"Good!" said Wharton.

And that prospect rather cheered the Famous Five, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh went in to change into flannels.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Not Nice for Loder!

**G**EORGE WINGATE, captain of Greyfriars, was frowning a little. There was a gathering of the great men of the Sixth on Big Side, and all the members of

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the first eleven, with one exception, were there. Loder had not yet arrived, and his absence irritated the Greyfriars captain. Wingate did not like Loder, or pull with him at all well; but, all the more for that reason, he was reluctant to "chuck" him, if it could be helped. Loder was a slacker, but he was very keen on figuring in matches, though not at all keen on keeping himself fit to help to win them.

The fixture with the first eleven from St. Jim's was nearly due, and Wingate had given Loder a very plain hint that unless he improved very considerably he could not expect to play in that match. That hint was enough to rouse all Loder's bitterness, and even enough to spur him to a little effort. But Loder had many interests in life, among them, smoking cigarettes in his study, sneaking into the back doors of "pubs" to play billiards, and backing horses on the strict Q.T. So he did not find so much time as might have been desired to keep in form at cricket.

Loder's pals, Carne and Walker, were on the field, and Wingate called to them.

"Where's Loder, you men? Isn't he coming?"

"Oh, he's coming," answered Walker.

"He told me he was going to put in a solid hour at the nets this afternoon."

"Well, that's all right—if he does it," said the Greyfriars captain.

"We've got to keep in form, if we're going to beat St. Jim's next week."

"We've got plenty of men to beat St. Jim's," remarked Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, who was a member of the first. "There's some men in my Form I'd like you to keep an eye on, Wingate. There's Tomlinson—"

Wingate smiled.

"I'm keeping an eye on the Fifth, old scout," he answered. "I don't care two straws where the men come from, so long as we win matches. But Loder is a good man when he tries."

"When?" grunted Blundell.

"Here he comes," called out Walker.

The captain of Greyfriars gave Loder of the Sixth a cheery nod as he arrived. Personally, the less he saw of Loder the better he liked it; but he was glad to see him at cricket.

"Oh, here you are," he said. "Better late than never!"

"Not so jolly late," said Loder. "I've been picking out a fag to give me some bowling."

"I'd rather see you face some stronger bowling than a fag can give you," said Wingate.

"Oh, the fag I've picked out is hot stuff," said Loder. "I've heard you say he could make a lot of senior batsmen sit up and take notice."

"Do you mean the Indian kid?"

"Yes; Hurree Singh. He's just coming along."

"All right," assented Wingate. "But I thought he was out of gates this afternoon. Those five kids asked leave to go up the river, and I gave it them. They generally stick together."

"I believe they were going up the river," said Loder carelessly. "But junior jaunts can't be allowed to interfere with games, of course. I told the nigger I should want him."

Wingate compressed his lips.

"No need to butt in and spoil their afternoon," he said. "You could get all the bowling you wanted without that, Loder."

"Really, Wingate, a fellow hardly knows how to take you," said Loder. "You rag me for cutting practice; and when I make arrangements to put in a solid practice with a junior bowler whom you've praised yourself, you find

fault with that, too. A fellow hardly knows what to do."

"Well, here the kid comes, anyhow," said Wingate shortly. "Get on with it. Give Loder some of your best, Hurree Singh."

"Certainly, my esteemed Wingate," answered the dusky junior. "The hearfulness is the obeyfulness."

"What do you other kids want?" asked Wingate, glancing at the rest of the Co., who had arrived with Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"We've come to watch the show," explained Bob Cherry gravely. "You've told us we can pick up tips by watching first-class batting, Wingate. So we've come to watch Loder."

"Well, you can watch if you like, of course," said Wingate, rather puzzled. "But cricket practice isn't very thrilling to watch, on a half-holiday, too."

"Only sometimes," said Bob. "When Loder's batting, it's time for the jolly old universe to stand up on its hind legs and watch. We're expecting great things."

Wingate gave them rather a suspicious look and turned away. The Famous Five were only juniors, but they were very keen and useful men at games, and he did not think they had much to learn from a First Eleven man, when that man was Gerald Loder. He could not help suspecting that they had come there in the expectation, if not the hope, of seeing a First Eleven man make a fool of himself. However, anybody at Greyfriars was free to watch cricket practice if he liked, so there was nothing to be said.

Loder went to his wicket, and the dusky nabob prepared to fag at bowling. Loder was well aware that Hurree Singh was the best junior bowler in the school; but he was not aware at all that he had anything to fear from the best junior bowler in the school. His impression was that Hurree Singh's bowling was good enough to give him practice as strenuous as he wanted—which was not very strenuous—but not good enough to knock his wicket over. He was going to get his practice. He was going to do it without his wicket falling even once, and at the same time he was going to spoil the afternoon for his old enemies in the Remove. So Loder felt that he had reason to be satisfied all round.

But a change came o'er the spirit of his dream, so to speak, when the bowling started.

Loder was in error on two points. Hurree Singh's bowling was better than he supposed, and his own batting was worse than he supposed. These two little errors were now made plain unto him.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh did not look a dangerous bowler. His manner was calm and cool, almost sleepy. There were no fireworks in his style. But he was all there. He sent down a slow ball which looked as easy as pie to anyone who did not know better; and Loder, unfortunately for himself, did not know better. How that ball broke in to his middle stump Loder never knew. But he knew that it did, when the stump was jerked out of the ground.

"How's that?" roared Bob Cherry.

Loder looked at his wicket and looked at Hurree Singh. The expression on his face was like that of a demon in a pantomime.

"Good!" exclaimed Wingate heartily. "Good man, kid! You'll have to pull up your socks, Loder."

Loder made no reply.

"Try that again, kid," said Wingate.

The Greyfriars captain was devoting his whole attention to Loder. Loder was the doubtful man in the eleven, the





Forgetting where he was, forgetting everything but his rage, Loder bounded across the pitch, grasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh by the collar, and boxed his ears. "Stop him!" There was a roar on Big Side. "Loder!" roared Wingate, almost petrified. "What do you mean by it? Are you mad?" (See Chapter 2.)

man Wingate was anxious about. Dropping Loder out of the team would cause a lot of unpleasantness, which Wingate was anxious to avoid, if possible. But if Loder could not stand up to the bowling of a Remove man, the question was already settled. Loder was on trial now.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled a faint, dusky smile as he caught the ball that was tossed to him. The champion bowler of the Lower School was at the top of his form, and Loder was about at the bottom of his. The chums of the Remove were destined to see the entertainment they had come to see.

The ball went down again, again a slow, and to Loder it looked like the one that had preceded it. He played it carefully, realising that he had to be careful, though the bowler was only a Remove fag. But it booted not. He did not know how he missed that ball. But he missed it. On that point there was no doubt—no possible, probable shadow of doubt whatever. For his bat swept the empty air, and the leg stump was whipped out of the ground, and from some of the Sixth and Fifth men standing around came a laugh.

Loder did not laugh. "How's that?" shrieked Bob Cherry. Loder glared round. "You fags keep quiet or clear off!" he shouted.

"The dear man's getting wild," murmured Bob. "He's not enjoying this so much as he expected. He's getting annoyed."

"He is!" grinned Johnny Bull. "He is!"

"Jevver see a Sixth Form man bat like that?" asked Frank Nugent. "You could have stopped that ball, Harry."

"Well, Inky's jolly hot stuff," said Wharton. "He's our jolly old prize-packet. Still, a First Eleven man ought to be able to handle him."

"Not a man like Loder, though," chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha! No."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was bowling again. The slow ball with the mysterious break, for which Loder was looking, did not materialise this time. It came down like a bullet from a rifle, and Loder's wicket was a wreck before he knew that it was there.

"Oh, my hat! The hat-trick!" ejaculated Bob.

There was an emphatic grunt from Blundell of the Fifth.

"They call this cricket, in the Sixth," he remarked to Potter of the Fifth, loud enough for some Sixth Form men to hear.

"Do they?" said Potter. "I wonder why?"

"I wonder!" chuckled Greene of the Fifth.

Wingate was frowning again. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's bowling was good—undoubtedly hot stuff of the hottest sort. Still, a First Eleven man was expected to handle the hottest stuff that any fellow in the Lower School could hand out. The Greyfriars first would have to face stuff as hot as this, or hotter, when Kildare and his merry men came over from St. Jim's to play them. Gerald Loder would have done more wisely, had he known, not to have picked out the Remove champion bowler that day. He was likely to pay dear for the pleasure of having spoiled the half-holiday for his old enemies in the Remove.

He faced the bowling again, with a set, savage face. Loder was always a bad loser; there was not much of the sportsman in him. Smiles and sneers on the faces of a good many Sixth and Fifth men told what they thought of his performance. Everybody seemed to be devoting his special attention to Loder now, and for once the bully of the Sixth was not enjoying the limelight. The

fall of his wicket for the fourth time brought an exclamation from Loder which would have caused trouble had his headmaster overheard it.

"That will do, Loder," rapped out Wingate. "This is a cricket ground, not a tap-room. Keep your temper."

Loder looked at him, and grasped the handle of his bat with an almost convulsive grasp. He would have been glad, at that moment, to give Wingate what he failed to give the ball.

Down came the ball again, and this time Loder got it. It was a real relief to him to hear the click of willow and leather meeting. He was quite tired of sawing the atmosphere with his bat. He drove the ball away with a mighty swipe—right back to the bowler. A lithe figure leaped, a dusky hand flashed, and Hurree Jamset Singh held up the ball.

"Caught!" roared Bob Cherry. "Oh, well caught, sir!"

"Caught and bowled!" chuckled Nugent. "Oh, my hat! What price Loder?"

Loder's complexion was almost green. Five balls had been sent down to him, and of these he had succeeded in hitting one—back into the bowler's palm! It was not glorious.

"Well, my only hat!" said Wingate.

"Is there to be any morefulness?" asked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh meekly.

"Try again," grunted Wingate.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh tried again. This time Loder put into it all he knew. In his eager determination to keep his wicket intact he very nearly blocked it out of sight. There was a crash, and Loder hopped.

"Leg before!" howled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, that's about the limit!" grunted Blundell of the Fifth. "Why—what—my hat! What is Loder up to?"

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The crash of the ball on his leg may have hurt Loder. At all events, he quite lost control of his temper. Forgetting where he was, forgetting everything but his rage, the bully of the Sixth whipped along the pitch, grasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh by the collar, and boxed his ears.

There was a yell on Big Side.

"Oh crumbs! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop him!"

"Loder!" roared Wingate, almost petrified. "Loder! Are you mad?"

"Yaroooh!" yelled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh! "Yoop! Help! Rescue! You esteemed beast! Whooooop!"

Wingate rushed on the spot. With a swing of his sinewy arm, he tore Loder away from the nabob, and sent him sprawling.

"You can cut, kid!" he said curtly.

"Wow! The thankfulness is terrific, my esteemed and absurd Wingate," gasped Hurree Singh.

And the nabob cut willingly enough. He joined his chums, and they scudded from the field, howling with laughter. Loder's performance had had an unexpected climax, and had been more entertaining than they had dreamed it would be. They cleared off, leaving Wingate telling Loder what he thought of him—in tones that could be heard all over Big Side.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Jevver see a man play cricket like that? Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows, what would you give for Loder's chances of playing in the St. Jim's game?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Judging by Loder's performance, and by what Wingate was saying to him when they left, Loder was not likely to figure in the game when the St. Jim's men came over. Undoubtedly, the bully of the Sixth would have done more wisely to have let the Famous Five alone that afternoon.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Bunter Lays the Trap!

"O H!" ejaculated Billy Bunter. He was startled.

Bunter was coming out of the doorway of Study No. 1 in the Remove, which was not his study, and in which he had no business. Harry Wharton & Co. were coming up the Remove passage from the stairs. So they met face to face.

Fagging at bowling being over so soon the chums of the Remove had decided on that little picnic up the river after all. There was plenty of time for that excursion. The basket containing the good things for the picnic had been deposited in Study No. 1, while the Famous Five went down to the cricket ground. Now they were coming back for it, with the intention of starting for the river.

Bunter blinked at them through his big spectacles.

The sight of the Famous Five seemed to alarm him, for some reason. He made a hasty wipe across his mouth with the back of a fat hand, as if to brush away some tell-tale trace. There was plenty of time left for the picnic, but as Bunter had been in the study it was doubtful whether there was anything else left for it.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, fatty!"

"I say, did you fellows leave a basket of grub in your study?"

"Yes," said Harry, with a suspicious eye on the Owl of the Remove. "If you've been scoffing it, you fat villain, look out for squalls!"

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"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"The squallfulness will be terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"Well, I like that!" said Bunter warmly. "I was just going to tell you fellows that I saw a chap bagging your tuck! Now I won't!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The Famous Five dashed into the study.

The picnic basket was there, on the table, as they had left it. But it was empty. Quite a substantial feed had been packed in that basket. But it was gone from their gaze like a beautiful dream.

"Look here, this is too jolly thick!" bawled Johnny Bull. "There goes our picnic! Who did this?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Do you know who's scoffed this tuck, Bunter?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"Well, old chap, I hardly like to mention Skinner's name—"

"Skinner!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "One of Skinner's little jokes, is it? Let's go and look for Skinner, you men!"

"And skin him!" said Johnny Bull.

"The skinfiness will be terrific."

"But was it Skinner?" said Harry Wharton. "More likely Bunter—it's more in Bunter's line."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Look here, if you know who it was, cough it up!" exclaimed Nugent.

### WHAT NAME?

The following letters have been jumbled together purposely. Put in their proper order, they spell the name of a well-known junior at Greyfriars.

### DRRALEDEGO

Who is it? The answer will appear in next week's MAGNET.

Last week's solution was—  
Fisher T. Fish.

"Whoever it was, is going to get slaughtered!"

"I'll tell you all I know," said Bunter. "The fact is, seeing you fellows put the basket there, I kept an eye on it, out of pure friendliness, you know. My usual good-nature, old chaps. Well, a fellow came sneaking along the passage and nipped into the study—"

"You saw him?" demanded Bob.

"I was nearer to him than I am to you at this moment," answered Bunter.

"I know who it was, all right."

"Well, who was it, fatty?"

Bunter hesitated.

"I hardly like giving a man away," he said. "Besides, I might get my nose punched. Bolsover major's got a jolly bad temper."

"You mentioned Skinner a minute ago. Were there two of them?"

"Cough it up, you fat ass."

"I don't want to mention any names, unless you fellows promise to see me clear," said Bunter firmly. "I'll tell you fast enough, only I don't want a walloping afterwards. That's only fair."

"Fair enough," said Bob. "We'll see that you're not walloped for telling us who it was, you fat frump."

"Honest Injun?" asked Bunter.

"Honest Injun!" said the Famous Five altogether.

Bunter looked relieved.

"That's all right then," he said, "I know you fellows will keep your word, and I don't mind telling you who had the tuck."

"Well, who was it?"

"Me!"

"What!"

"Me!" said Bunter cheerfully. "I was jolly hungry, you know. The fact is, I meant to leave half the stuff; but somehow it all went. Here—yaroooh—I say, you fellows—yoop—leggo—what about your promise?" yelled Bunter.

The chums of the Remove released William George Bunter. The fat junior blinked at them indignantly.

"Hands off, you beasts!" he gasped. "Why, you promised that I shouldn't be walloped if I told you. You promised honest Injun! I expected you fellows to keep your word."

"You—you—you—" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You fat villain—"

"You spoofing rhinoceros!"

"You podgy cormorant!"

"Oh, really, you fellows! I suppose you're going to keep your word," said Bunter scornfully.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Caught!" he said. "We've let the fat villain pull our legs. You're not going to be walloped, Bunter. A promise is a promise."

"I should jolly well think so," said Bunter. "You fellows ain't so particular in such matters as I am. I've often thought that I'm the only fellow at Greyfriars with a really fine sense of honour. Still, you're bound to keep your word."

"But—" said the captain of the Remove.

"No buts about it," said Bunter, "you promised, and there you are!"

"But," repeated Wharton, "there are more ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream. You're not going to be walloped. You're going to be imprisoned."

"Eh?"

"In this study, till after tea. Come on, you men."

"I say, you fellows—"

The Famous Five crowded out of the study. Billy Bunter made a rush after them to escape. Bob Cherry took him by his plump shoulders and sat him on the floor.

Then the juniors departed, locking the door on the outside. Billy Bunter scrambled up, and hammered on the door with a fat fist.

"I say, you fellows!" he roared. "I can't stay here! I say, I can't miss my tea. I say, you fellows, lemme out! Beasts! I say, old chaps—I say, you rotters—help!"

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

"Beasts!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you can't leave me here over tea-time! You can't, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter turned the handle, and wrenched at the door. But it was locked on the outside, and did not open.

"You awful rotters!" shrieked Bunter. "Lemme out!"

"Bow-wow!"

"I'm hungry already—"

"You must be!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "You've only eaten enough for five! You must be famished!"

"Dear old chaps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter hammered frantically on the door. As he had lately consumed a feed intended for five fellows, it might have been supposed that Bunter would view with equanimity, the prospect of missing his tea. But that could only have been supposed by a person who did not know Bunter. Whatsoever the Owl of the Remove might consume between meals, he could always be relied on to be ready—more than ready—for the



next meal. He was not, perhaps, actually hungry at the moment! But the prospect of getting hungry was horrifying.

"I say, you fellows—" he pleaded through the door.

"Good-bye, fatty."

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Bunter hammered furiously on the door.

While he was hammering, Harry Wharton softly and silently turned back the key, took it out, and put it in his pocket. The door was unlocked now; but William George Bunter remained in blissful ignorance of that fact.

He continued to hammer on the door, while the chums of the Remove, chuckling, cleared off. Picnics being off that day owing to Bunter's depredations, they decided to put in the rest of the afternoon at cricket, and leave the excursion up the river till Saturday. So they repaired to Little Side, where they forgot the existence of the Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter hammered on the study door till he was tired.

It did not occur to his powerful intellect to turn the handle again, as he did not doubt that the door was still locked.

He hammered and thumped, and thumped and hammered, and roared and yelled, till fatigue supervened, and he gave it up.

"The awful beasts!" gasped Bunter. Tea-time was still a long way off, and Bunter was already loaded over the Plimsoll line. But the possibility of missing tea was unnerving.

Bunter's anxiety was keen, and his wrath was great. It grew greater and greater. Bunter was not a bad-tempered fellow, or a vengeful fellow; but circumstances alter cases. The prospect of missing a meal roused all the ferocity there was in Bunter. His fat thoughts turned to vengeance.

The beasts had to come back to their study sooner or later. The vengeful Owl of the Remove proceeded to make preparations for them. He raked soot down the study chimney, and filled the picnic basket to the brim with a mixture of soot, cinders, ashes, and all the ink he could find in the study. There was a lid to the basket, but this, Bunter jerked off. The basket did not belong to him, so damage to it did not matter.

He sorted a long nail out of the cupboard and, standing on the table, drove the nail into the study ceiling just inside the doorway. As he used a poker for a hammer, there was considerable damage done to the plaster. Still, it was not Bunter's study, so he was not concerned about the state of the ceiling.

To the nail he attached a string, to the string he attached the basket.

Then he dragged the table back to its place, and surveyed his handiwork with a fat grin of satisfaction.

The basket of sooty, inky mixture was suspended just within the top of the door. The opening door could not fail to catch it, push it back, and overturn it, shooting out the contents on the head of the person entering.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter felt, with reason, that this time he would get his own back. Really it was a masterly sort of booby-trap.

Having surveyed his handiwork, and pronounced that it was good, Bunter retired to the study armchair, and sat down to rest. After taking on board the whole of the picnic feast, Bunter really needed a rest. His eyes closed behind his spectacles, and he slumbered. The rumble of his snore echoed through the study—till suddenly William George

Bunter was awakened by a crash and a frightful yell!

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### The Wrong Man!

"YOU mean it?" growled Loder.

Wingate knitted his brows.

"Certainly!" he snapped.

"We don't play St. Jim's till next Wednesday," said Loder sullenly. "I admit I'm not at the top of my form. But there's plenty of time—"

"Your performance this afternoon was enough for me," answered Wingate dryly. "If you can't keep your end up against a Remove kid, you can't expect me to put you up to face St. Jim's bowlers."

"I admit I was off colour a little—"

"What's the good of talking?" exclaimed Wingate impatiently. "You are in absolutely rotten form. You can't bat for toffee. You've cut practice after practice, and when you turn up you make a fool of yourself. You're completely run to seed, and if I put you in the team next Wednesday the men would scrag me, and serve me right, too. And that isn't all. That kid, Hurree Singh, gave you some good bowling, and you lost your temper and pitched into him. If you think that sort of thing will do for Greyfriars games, I don't! That's all!"

"Do you think I should pitch into a St. Jim's man who bowled me?" growled Loder.

"Blessed if I can say what you'd do! I know you can't keep your temper in a game, and, until you learn, you're no good for the First Eleven!"

Loder, standing in the doorway of Wingate's study in the Sixth Form passage, stared sullenly at the captain of Greyfriars. He had expected it; but it came as a blow, all the same. Loder seemed to have been under the delusion that his place in the First Eleven belonged to him by some sort of divine right. He had found out his mistake now.

"Then I'm dropped?" he said sullenly.

"Yes."

"I shan't take it lying down."

Wingate shrugged his shoulders.

"That's rot, and you know it!" he said. "You're no good for the match, and you're left out. Pull yourself together, stick to practice, and you get another chance later. But you're dropped out of the St. Jim's match. That's settled. I can't imagine what else you expected, after the show you put up to-day."

"Those fags ragging me rather rattled me," said Loder. "Barracking puts a man off his form."

"You were off your form to begin with. You've never been in form since the term started, and you've never tried!"

Loder scowled.

"You mean that whatever I say won't make any difference, and that I'm chucked out of the team?"

"I mean exactly that!"

"That's enough, then."

Loder swung out of the study, and slammed the door after him. His face was dark as he went along to his own study. It was a deep and bitter humiliation to be dropped out of the eleven, and Loder, slacker as he was, felt it keenly.

He knew that most of the men would agree heartily with Wingate's decision, but that did not make it any the more palatable; rather the reverse. Even his own friends, who would condole with him, would have a touch of mockery in their condolences. He could already see, in his mind's eyes, Walker's ironical smile, and Carne's sarcastic grin. He tramped into his study, kicked a chair out of his way, and lighted a cigarette—which certainly was not the way to keep fit for games.

A fellow who finds himself up against it, would be wise to examine his own conduct carefully, and discover whether the fault lay there, and amend it. But that was not Loder's way. He had never been friends with Wingate, and he preferred to attribute his disgrace to that. The Greyfriars captain favoured his friends, and Loder was not a friend of his. There it was in a nutshell. Loder believed this more or less, but he could not wholly believe it. Some of the blame he laid on the chums of the Remove.

(Continued on next page.)

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this, Lads!



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Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had been delighted to knock his wicket over, and his chums had been delighted to see him do it. That was true enough. But Loder could hardly condemn with any reason, the quality of the bowler he had picked out to fag at bowling for him. But Loder was not in a reasonable mood. He did not, in fact, want to be reasonable; he wanted to be revenged.

Vengeance on the captain of the school did not seem practicable. But the junior who had wrecked his wicket so easily, and the other juniors who had been hugely entertained thereby, were within reach of vengeance. So, after tramping round his study for some time, smoking a few cigarettes, the bully of the Sixth put his ashplant under his arm, and left the study, and made his way to the Remove passage.

Whether Harry Wharton & Co. were in their quarters he did not know; but as it was getting near tea-time, they probably were there. If not, he could look further for them. He was simply yearning to take it out of somebody, and most of all he wanted to take it out of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. So he walked along to Study No. 13 in the Remove, which Hurree Singh shared with Bob Cherry, Mark Linley, and Wun Lung the Chinese.

He found only the little Chinese there, curled up in Bob's armchair.

"Where's Hurree Singh?" he rapped out.

Wun Lung blinked at him through his slanting eyelids.

"Me no savvy," he answered.

"Is he in Wharton's study?" asked Loder. "Or Bull's?"

"Me no savvy."

"You confounded little heathen!" growled Loder, and he gave the Chinese a lick with the ashplant, and left the study—leaving Wun Lung squeaking dismally.

Study No. 14, which belonged to Johnny Bull, Squiff, and Fisher T. Fish, was close at hand, so Loder looked in there next. The young sweeps were generally to be found in a bunch. But in No. 14 there was only a skinny, bony youth, who answered to the name of Fisher T. Fish. Fishy was having his tea in rather a hurry to get it over before his study-mates came in, lest any of his foodstuffs should be annexed. Fisher T. Fish seldom had tea in his study, but on the present occasion he had bought a cake at a bargain from a fellow who had had it from home, and who preferred cash.

Fishy hated spending money, but he could not resist the temptation of getting a cake at half its value. So there was Fisher T. Fish guzzling cake. And he looked up in alarm at Loder's tread, fearing to see a Remove man, who might possibly have annexed a crumb or a plum.

It was quite a relief to see Loder, unwelcome as the sight of the bully of the Sixth generally was. His cake, at least, was safe from Gerald Loder.

"Isn't Hurree Singh here?" snapped Loder.

"Nopa!"

"Where is he?"

"I guess I ain't wise to that."

There was another lick from the ashplant, and Fisher T. Fish yelled, as Loder left the study.

The bully of the Sixth then tramped down the passage to Study No. 1. Nos. 13 and 14 having been drawn blank, Hurree Singh would be there, if he was in the Remove quarters at all. Loder gripped the ashplant hard as he approached that study. Even a bully like Loder had to have some excuse for

administering a licking; but he had his excuse all ready. Hurree Singh had cleared off the cricket ground without waiting for permission. It was not a very good excuse, but it was good enough for Loder. If Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was there, he was "for it."

Loder turned the handle of the door, hurled it open, and strode in.

The top of the door knocked against the bottom of a swinging basket. Loder naturally did not notice that. He had no eyes in the top of his head.

But he noticed what happened next.

He couldn't help noticing that.

The basket, tilted up by the door, shot out its contents with a swoop, and an avalanche of soot, cinders, and ashes, mixed with ink, swamped over Loder's head.

The catastrophe was bound to happen when the door opened. It happened all the more suddenly and unavoidably because Loder hurled the door open with a crash. In an instant, Loder was smothered with the contents of Bunter's masterly booby-trap, and the yell he uttered awoke every echo of Study No. 1 and the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter was not easy to awaken when once he was asleep. But Loder's roar would have awakened Rip Van Winkle, or the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. Bunter started up from the armchair, blinking.

In the open doorway stood a weird figure, black as a Christy minstrel, shedding dust and ashes on all sides, gurgling, spluttering, guggling, and gasping.

Bunter gazed at it.

The chuckle died on his lips. He could not recognise the stranger—Loder's nearest and dearest relative could not have recognised him at that moment. But he knew from its height that it could not possibly be a Remove fellow. Bunter had laid the trap with care. But he had caught the wrong bird.

He gazed at his victim in consternation.

Loder staggered into the study. He was choked and blinded; soot and ashes were in his eyes, his nose, his ears, his hair, and everything that was his. He gouged the horrible mixture from his eyes with his knuckles, striving to see, what time his powerful voice roused all the echoes.

Bunter was not often quick on the uptake. But dire peril sharpened his fat wits. The face might have been anybody's, but the voice was Loder's. The discovery that he had sooted, ashed, cindered, and inked Loder of the Sixth, almost made the fat junior's blood run cold in his veins. Loder, for the moment, could see nothing. That moment was Bunter's. With amazing promptness, Bunter circled round the staggering prefect and whipped out of the study. He had laid that trap for Harry Wharton & Co. He had been prepared to chuckle loud and long when they fell into it. Now he preferred to do his chuckling in his own study, with the door locked.

"Grooooooh! Yaroooooh! Hoooooooh! Goooooch! Moooooooooooooh!" spluttered Loder, gouging and grabbing at the hideous mixture that draped his features like a garment. "Ooooooh! Grooooooh! You young scoundrel! Oh! Ow! I'll smash you! Yooooop! Oh, my hat! Yoooooooh!"

He gouged and gouged, and his blood-shot eyes emerged from soot and ashes at last. He glared round the study with a homicidal glare.

Had anyone been present that one would have had the time of his life. But no one was present. Loder was sure

that he had heard someone in the study. But that someone was gone.

He glared round, and then stepped out of the study, his ashplant gripped convulsively in his hand. But the someone who had been in the study was not in sight. That someone was in Study No. 7 by that time, with the key turned in the lock.

Loder raved.

Obviously, to Loder, the young scoundrels had seen him coming, and had prepared that trap for him. While he was blinded by the soot they had sneaked away. To seek them, all over Greyfriars, in his present state, was impossible. But Loder knew a trick worth two of that. A fellow who smothered a Sixth Form prefect with soot and ashes and ink was liable to the most condign punishment—a Head's flogging, at least. Loder tramped down the Remove staircase. Just as he was, he was going to the Head to report this outrage. There was a savage satisfaction in the thought of what would follow—those detestable juniors up before the Head and flogged all round! It was almost worth while to be sooted and inked for the pleasure of seeing his old enemies of the Remove flogged by the Head. From that happy prospect Loder drew what comfort he could as he tramped down the stairs, leaving behind him a trail of ashes and soot that a blind man could have followed.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Spill in the Passage!

"MY dear Quelch!"

"My dear sir!"

It was quite an amicable argument. It was waxing a little warm but it was very amicable.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was in the Head's study. He sat at ease in an easy chair; the Head sat at ease in another. On a table lay a volume of that entrancing poet, *Æschylus*.

To learned and scholastic minds like those of Henry Samuel Quelch and Dr. Locke, *Æschylus* was like unto a mine of gold.

But like all gold mines, this one had its dark and dim recesses, where it was not easy to find one's way.

On occasions, when a school holiday freed them from their multifarious duties, the two old gentlemen loved to explore those deep, dim, and dark passages.

They made wonderful discoveries there—elucidating what *Æschylus* really meant, admitting, of course, that he meant anything.

They did not always agree about these discoveries; they often argued about them. But such arguments were sheer enjoyment. The subject was an important one. For long centuries the world had gone on its way, while many an obscure passage in *Æschylus* remained unelucidated. Probably the world would continue to roll on its appointed course, even if those passages continued unelucidated. Even if they were satisfactorily elucidated, it was highly improbable that the world would sit up and take notice. But to a scholastic gentleman like Dr. Locke, the big world hardly existed. He lived in a little learned world of his own. After many years of patient investigation Dr. Locke was practically certain that he had got at the true reading of the twelfth verse in the "Seven Against Thebes!"

This was thrilling.

When this epoch-making discovery came to be published, two or three dozen bald heads at Oxford would nod over





Bunter had laid the booby-trap for Harry Wharton & Co. But when he made the discovery that he had sooted, ashed, clundered, and inked Loder of the Sixth, the blood ran cold in his veins. With amazing promptness he circled round the staggering prefect, and dodged out of the study. (See Chapter 4.)

it ecstatically. This was Dr. Locke's world, and all his world would be set agog with excitement.

Mr. Quelch did not wholly concur in the Head's reading.

He quoted Hermann, Madvig, and Dindorf against him. Dr. Locke, of course, had a proper respect for Hermann, Madvig and Dindorf, previous explorers in this gold-mine of inestimable value. Nevertheless, he kept to his own opinion. He was firmly convinced that Æschylus had meant something, improbable as that appeared at first sight. He was convinced that he had penetrated the hidden meaning of the great Greek. He was prepared to maintain his opinion against Mr. Quelch, against Hermann, against Dindorf, against Madvig, against all the bald heads that had ever nodded over the "Epta epi Thebas." And he was enjoying the discussion as keenly as Harry Wharton & Co were enjoying cricket, almost as keenly as Billy Bunter had enjoyed the contents of the picnic basket.

Talking is dry work, especially talking Æschylus. Dr. Locke rang for tea to be brought to the study.

"Kai ton exebon chrono blastemon!" murmured the Head, in a dreamy voice—when he was suddenly interrupted.

The cause of the interruption was Loder of the Sixth.

Loder of the Sixth did not know that the Head and the Remove master were deep in that gold mine of theirs. He would not have cared had he known. The circumstance that he had been swamped in soot, ashes and ink was more important to Loder than any reading of Æschylus, correct or incorrect.

Loder, black as the ace of spades, splut-

tering with soot and fury, rushed into Head's passage from one end, while a trim maid was entering it from the other, bearing a tray on which were refreshments for the two learned and argumentative gentlemen in the study.

Mary Beatrice Winifred was proceeding calmly on her way, bearing the tray, and had almost reached the Head's door, when she became aware of a wild, dishevelled and blackened figure rushing down the corridor towards her.

For an instant Mary Beatrice Winifred stood transfixed with terror.

Then there was a crash!

The tray and all with which it was laden went to the floor, with a terrific smashing of crockery.

Mary Beatrice Winifred let out one horrified shriek, tore open the Head's door, and rushed into the study.

Shriek on shriek pealed from Mary Beatrice Winifred.

"Help! Murder! Help! Murder! Help! Save me!" shrieked Mary.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head. Æschylus and all his works were forgotten for the moment.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "What—"

The two gentlemen leaped to their feet.

"Save me!" shrieked Mary.

In her terror and excitement, she threw herself into the Head's arms, and clasped him hysterically.

"Help! Murder! Save me—"

"Bless my soul! What—what—"

"A dreadful negro!" shrieked Mary.

"In the passage—a fearful negro! Help! Help! Save me!"

"A—a—a negro!" gasped the Head.

"Impossible, Mary! Control yourself! Release me! This—this—this is most—"

most improper! I insist upon your releasing me immediately."

"Save me!" screamed Mary, clinging more tightly than before, as the dreadful negro appeared in the doorway of the study.

"Good gracious!" gasped the Head, staring over the terrified maid's head at the startling apparition. "What—what—what—"

"Who—what—what—" stuttered Mr. Quelch. "Stand back! Whoever you are, stand back! I warn you—"

There was no weapon at hand, excepting Æschylus; and Mr. Quelch grasped that ponderous volume. "Stand back!" he repeated. "Wretch, enter this room and I will fell you—"

"Save me!"

"Bless my soul!"

"Stand back, ruffian! I warn you that—"

"It's me!" shrieked Loder, amazed at his reception, and not realising how completely the soot and ink disguised him. "Me—"

"Whoever you are, stand back!" thundered the Remove master, lifting the hefty volume in the air. "I will fell you to the earth!"

"It's me—Loder!" yelled the hapless prefect.

"What?"

"Loder?"

"Yes!" spluttered Loder. "Don't you know me—Loder of the Sixth!"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch, and Æschylus dropped from his hand with a bump to the floor.

"Loder!" stuttered the Head. "Loder—a prefect of the Sixth Form—Loder! You—you—you have disguised yourself



in this ridiculous manner to frighten maids! Loder! How dare you?"

"I—I—I—" "Explain yourself, sir!" thundered the Head. "How dare you? Mary, release me! I command you to release me! I distinctly refuse to allow you to clutch me in this absurd manner. There is nothing to be afraid of. That—that absurd person is a boy of this school, not a negro at all! Release me, I tell you."

Mary Beatrice Winifred released the Head at last. Promptly she went into hysterics. A maid frightened by a Sixth Form fellow got up as a dreadful negro, had a right to hysterics; and Mary exercised her right. She screamed and howled and yelled.

"Bless my soul!" stuttered the Head. "This—this—this is—is—is most unnerving! Mary, calm yourself! Mr. Quelch, do you know how to deal with a foolish girl in hysterics?"

"I—I think cold water should be dashed in her face, sir," gasped Mr. Quelch, who knew much less about hysterics than he knew about Æschylus. "I will try the effect of the ink—perhaps ink will have the same effect as cold water—"

Mary Beatrice Winifred suddenly recovered—in time to dodge the ink. No doubt she wanted attention; but certainly not in the form of a shower of ink. She recovered sufficiently to dodge out of the study, leaving Mr. Quelch with the inkpot in his hand. Still, a woman's rights were a woman's rights; and she indemnified herself by uttering a series of piercing shrieks as she faded away down the corridor.

Loder of the Sixth was left facing the Head and Mr. Quelch.

Both of them addressed him at once. He was called upon to explain his foolish, reckless, unthinking, absurd, unaccountable conduct; but he was not given time to do so. The two masters seemed to be bursting with eloquence. If the Head lost breath, Mr. Quelch took up the tale; when Mr. Quelch slacked down, the Head resumed the

attack. In turns, or both together, they talked to Loder of the Sixth, while Loder gasped and spluttered and strove in vain to get in a word edge-wise.

Not till both the old gentlemen were out of breath simultaneously, did Loder have a chance to speak, and explain that he really hadn't got himself up like that to frighten the maids, but was the victim of an outrage perpetrated by young rascals in the Remove.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Not Guilty!

"WHARTON! Nugent!" Gwynne of the Sixth called out the names.

The junior cricketers were knocking off practice for tea, when the prefect came along to Little Side. Gwynne did not look very amiable. He had been going to tea with his chum in the Sixth, Wingate, when he was requested to find those two Remove men and send them in to their Form master's study. And Gwynne had had to look up and down and round about before he learned that Wharton and Nugent were on the junior cricket ground.

"Hallo, Gwynne!" called back Harry Wharton. "Want me?"

"No!" growled Gwynne. "But your Form master does! You and Nugent get along to his study at once!"

"Anything up?" asked Nugent.

Gwynne grinned. He was a good-tempered fellow, though annoyed at having his valuable time wasted in a hunt for fags.

"Quelch looked like it," he answered. "Loder looked still more like it. You two are to go in; and if any of your friends were with you at the time, they're to go in, too."

"Eh? At what time?"

"When you mopped all that muck over Loder in your study," said Gwynne. "You know jolly well!"

The two juniors stared at him blankly.

"There's some mistake here, Gwynne," said Harry. "We've been here on Little Side for hours now. If

anything's happened to Loder, we've had no hand in it."

"Better tell Quelch so," said Gwynne dryly. "Anyhow, you two go in to his study."

And Gwynne walked away, more concerned about tea in Wingate's study than about an inquiry in Mr. Quelch's.

Wharton and Nugent exchanged glances.

"What's up now, Franky?" asked Wharton.

"Goodness knows," answered Nugent. "Anyhow, we had nothing to do with it, old scout! We've only to tell Quelch so."

The two juniors went into the House. It was not prudent to keep Henry Samuel Quelch waiting, so they repaired to his study without changing out of their flannels.

Mr. Quelch greeted them with an expression strongly resembling that of the fabulous Gorgon. Loder was in the study, newly swept and garnished, as it were, but still showing a lot of traces of the horrible mixture with which he had been smothered. Loder's face was bitter, his eyes glittering. Mr. Quelch's was set and grim. Quelch's view was that it was hard that a Form master could not be given a little leisure on a half-holiday. It was hard that a thoroughly enjoyable discussion of Æschylus, and the mysteries thereof, should be interrupted by so absurd and unnecessary an incident as this.

Certainly, Loder and his wrongs could have been postponed, while the Head and Quelch thrashed out that obscure passage in the great poet to their heart's content. But the interruption had spoiled the whole thing. After such an interruption, it was impossible to pick up the happy thread again. The crash of the crockery, the hysterics of Mary Beatrice Winifred, the slanging of Loder, the whole episode, in fact, had been too disturbing. The Head and Quelch simply couldn't get back into that mood of quiet, sedate, scholarly repose, which was necessary for dealing adequately with a customer like Æschylus. So they gave Æschylus a miss in baulk, as it were. The Head went to tea in his own house, and Mr. Quelch went to his study, there to inquire into the outrage that had occurred in the Remove passage. In the circumstances, it was natural that Mr. Quelch's expression should rather resemble that of Roderick Dhu, on the occasion when dark lightnings flashed from Roderick's eye.

"Wharton! Nugent!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "Were you two boys alone concerned in this disgraceful affair, or were others involved in it?"

"What affair, sir?" asked Harry meekly.

"I allude, as you know very well, to the outrage committed in your study, Wharton."

"What outrage, sir?"

"You do not, I presume, deny being responsible for what happened to Loder in your study half an hour ago, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was Loder in our study half an hour ago, sir?" asked Nugent.

"I hardly expected them to tell lies about it, sir," said Loder bitterly.

"I should prefer you not to interrupt, Loder," said Mr. Quelch acidly.

Loder bit his lip and was silent.

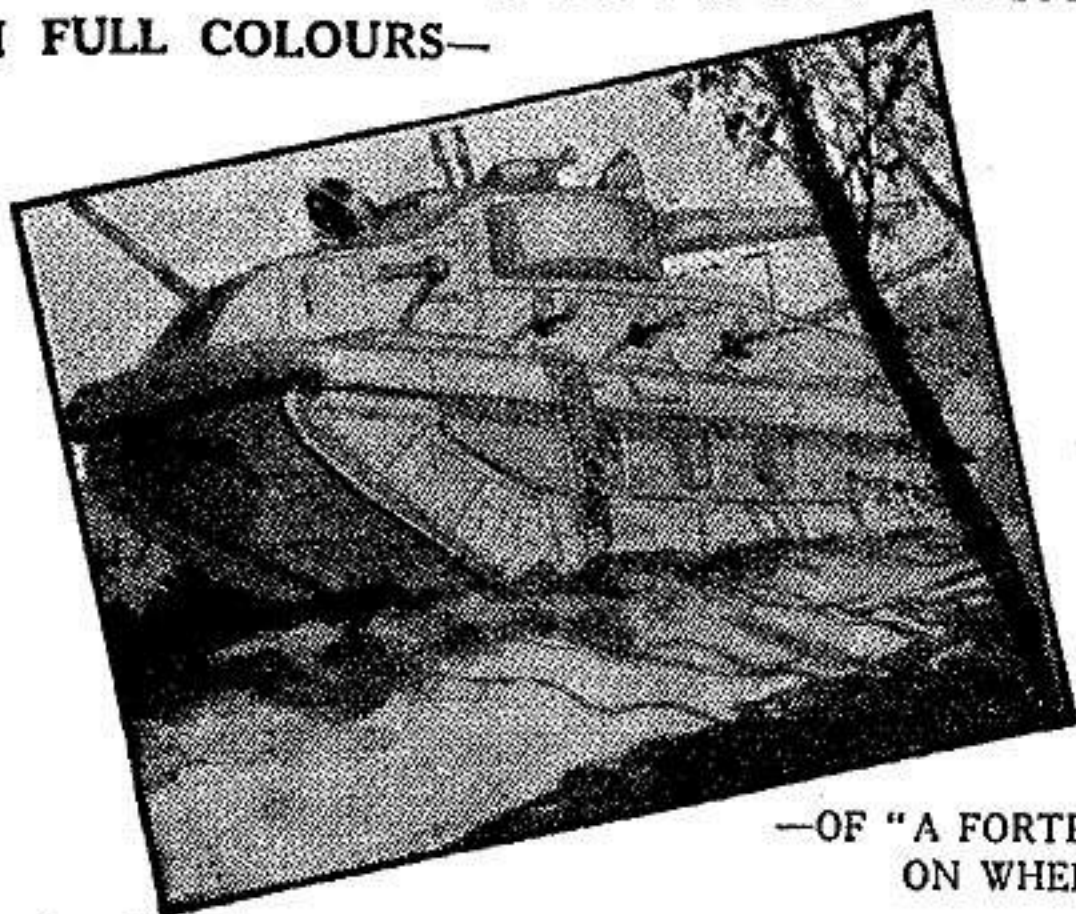
"Now, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, "you had better deal with me frankly. Do you state that you are unaware of what happened in your study?"

"Quite, sir."

"Were you not there?"

"No, sir."

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"Where were you half an hour ago?"  
"Playing cricket, sir."  
"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch.  
"Both of us have been on Little Side for a couple of hours, sir," said Nugent. "Lots of other fellows there with us, if you like to ask them, sir."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.  
"That is not necessary," he said. "I can accept your word. Loder, you stated clearly that these juniors attacked you in their study and smothered you with soot and—and other things. It appears that they have not been in the study at all. What do you mean by it?"

Loder glared at the chums of the Remove.

"I was blinded by the soot for some moments," he said. "Whoever was there cleared off before I could see him or them. Naturally I supposed that the juniors there were the ones to whom the study belonged."

"A mere supposition, Loder, is not sufficient for bringing a serious accusation against boys in my Form!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"I've no doubt that they arranged it with their friends, and took care to be off the scene themselves," said Loder bitterly.

"Were your friends in the study, Wharton?"

"No, sir! All my friends were at cricket with me."

"Then you had nothing to do with the incident in your study?"

"No, sir. I don't even know what happened yet," said Harry. "First I heard of it was from Gwynne, who called us in, and he only said something about Loder being mopped over with muck."

"Loder was smothered with a detestable compound of soot and ashes and other things," said Mr. Quelch. "He was—— What are you laughing at, Wharton?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!"

"This is not a laughing matter!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"N-n-no, sir!"

"It appears that something in the nature of what is, I believe, called a booby-trap was fixed in the study," said Mr. Quelch. "I have visited the study and ascertained that a basket was hung on a nail in the ceiling, just within the door, in such a way that when the door was opened it would be tilted over on the person who entered——"

"Oh crumbs!"

"What what!"

"I—I mean——"

"Do not utter ridiculous ejaculations, Wharton, please!"

"Hem! Very well, sir."

"If you know nothing of this, Wharton——"

"Nothing at all, sir," said Harry, trying not to smile. "But it's jolly clear that somebody fixed up that booby-trap for me, as it was my study. I suppose I should have butted into it when I went in if Loder hadn't gone in. It must have been meant for Nugent and me."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"It's rather lucky Loder went there, sir, as it turns out," said Frank Nugent demurely.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, with a stare.

"Yes, sir; otherwise, we should have got it when we went to the study," said Frank innocently.

Loder breathed hard.

"It appears, Loder, that this incident was not, as you have hastily supposed, an attack on a Sixth Form prefect!" said Mr. Quelch sharply. "I really wish you would stop to reflect before you make such hasty and unwarrantable accusations. Obviously, this foolish trick was played by some junior on

Wharton and Nugent, and, by sheer accident, you walked into the trap, instead of these juniors."

"I don't believe so for a moment, sir," said Loder savagely. "I believe the trap was laid for me, and that these juniors knew all about it."

Mr. Quelch eyed him.

"Had these juniors any reason to suppose that you were going to their study, Loder?"

"I've no doubt they saw me coming, sir. I'm perfectly convinced that the trap was laid for me."

"I have very great doubts on that point. I see no reason whatever to believe that these juniors were concerned in the matter at all, except as intended victims," snapped Mr. Quelch. "Such a trick, however, cannot be played with impunity. Much damage has been done in the study—reckless damage. The perpetrator must be discovered. Practical jokes of this kind cannot be too strongly condemned. These juniors are, in my opinion, completely exonerated. I shall take measures to discover the perpetrator of

I say, chums, you'll be tickled to death with the following joke which was sent in by Charles Rickett, of 43, Guildford Road, Southend-on-Sea.

Business was in full swing at a charity bazaar when a young man strolled around evidently with no intention of purchasing anything. As he passed one stall a charming girl detained him.

"Won't you buy a cigarette-holder, sir?" she asked.

"No, thank you," answered the young man. "I don't smoke."

"Or a pen-wiper worked with my own hands?"

"I don't write."

"Then do have this nice box of chocolates?"

"I never eat sweets."

The girl's patience was exhausted.

"Sir," she said grimly, "will you buy this cake of soap?"

The young man bought it.

One of our useful penknives has been sent to Charles. It's up to you other chaps to win these knives. Get busy, right away!

this foolish trick. Wharton and Nugent, you may go."

"Thank you, sir."

Wharton and Nugent went. Loder's glance followed them with a wolfish glare. As a matter of fact, Loder had very little doubt himself that the chums of the Remove had had nothing to do with the booby-trap, and that it had been intended for them, and not for him at all. But what Loder wanted was a victim, and it was exasperating to see his victims walk off cheerfully with smiling faces. But Mr. Quelch's word on the subject was law, and they walked off—and that was that!

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Loder Climbs Down!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What's the jolly old verdict?"

"Not licked!"

"You have got off scotchfully free, my esteemed chums?"

Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh were waiting for their friends on the Remove landing. The smiling looks of Wharton and Nugent showed that it had not been a licking. Indeed, they seemed to have derived

entertainment from their visit to their Form master's study.

There was a chortle from the Co. when they explained Gerald Loder's butting into the study, and what he had found there struck the juniors as comic.

"But who could have fixed up that booby trap?" asked Johnny Bull. "Like his cheek, whoever he was! It turns out all right, as it bagged Loder; but it might have bagged us!"

"The bagfulness in that esteemed case would not have been a boonful blessing," remarked Hurree Singh.

"Bunter, of course!" said Harry. "We left the fat idiot in Study No. 1, and he must have gone on thinking he was locked in; he would, with a brain like his! He fixed that up for us when we came back, and Loder——"

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

"Loder was the right man in the right place, for once," said Wharton, laughing. "But Quelch said a lot of damage was done. Let's go and see."

The Famous Five went along to Study No. 1 and looked in. One glance was enough to tell them that Quelch's statement was well-founded. A lot of damage had been done. A large patch of plaster had been knocked out of the ceiling where Bunter had driven in the nail. The floor was a sea of mixed soot and ink and cinders and ashes. A considerable amount of cleaning was required to make Study No. 1 habitable.

"The fat villain!" said Harry, as he surveyed the damage. "Somebody's got to clean that up!"

"Bunter!" suggested Nugent.

"That's only fair! He did it—and he can clean up the rubbish! Let's root him out."

As it was now tea-time it was easy to root Bunter out. He was in his study, with Peter Todd and Tom Dutton, at tea. He blinked round rather nervously at the Famous Five as they looked into Study No. 7.

"I say, you fellows," exclaimed Bunter at once, "it wasn't me! You needn't ask me who fixed up that booby-trap in your study. I know nothing whatever about it. I wasn't there when Loder came in."

"You fat fraud?"

"Toddy can bear me out," said Bunter. "I was here with Toddy at the time. Not that I know when it happened, you know. I know nothing whatever on the subject at all."

"What's he been up to?" asked Peter Todd. "I found the fat ass locked in this study, and I had to tell him through the keyhole that I wasn't Loder before he would unlock the door."

"Oh, really, Toddy! You'll make these fellows think that I fixed up that basket of soot in their study!" exclaimed Bunter reproachfully.

"You fat chump, we know you did!" said Harry. "Why, you spoofing owl, you've got soot on your pants now!"

"Have I?" ejaculated Bunter. "Oh, I—I was going to wash my hands after mixing up that stuff in the basket, only you see, I was locked in the study. I mean, I thought you fellows had left the door locked. That is, I wasn't in the study at all. I'd left some time earlier—long before Loder came. I think some Fourth-Form chap came and fixed up that booby-trap. Now I think of it, I remember seeing Temple of the Fourth sneaking about the doorway. Not that I was anywhere near the study myself, you know. I haven't set eyes on it."

"Finished your tea?" asked Harry.

"Yes, old chap," said Bunter brightly. "I'm ready to come along if you fellows are going to have tea. I never have much in this study. Toddy thinks it's all right if he stands a few measly



sardines and a biscuit or two. He's rather mean, you know. What are you fellows having?"

"We're having our study cleaned up."

"Eh?"

"And you're going to do it."

"Wha-a-at?"

"So if you've finished tea, come along."

"I—I haven't quite finished tea. And—and I'm not going to clean up the study. Ask Hobson of the Shell. I saw him sneaking round the place, and I'm pretty certain he was the fellow that did it."

Harry Wharton grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar and jerked him out of his chair.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "Help! Rescue! Toddy, old chap, lend me a hand! You can lick this beast, Toddy!"

But Peter Todd only grinned, and the Owl of the Remove was jerked out of Study No. 7. He was jerked along to Study No. 1, loudly protesting.

"You beasts! Let a chap go! I tell you I never did it! Besides, it was your own fault for locking me in the study. I can jolly well tell you I'm not going to clean up your study. I refuse to do anything of the sort. If you think I'm the chap to do menial work, you're jolly well mistaken, see?"

"Roll him in it," suggested Bob Cherry.

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter was projected into Study No. 1.

"Now," said Harry Wharton, "we'll give you a quarter of an hour. If the study isn't clean by that time, look out. You spread all this muck about, and you've got to clean it up!"

"Shan't!" roared Bunter.

"If it isn't cleaned up when we come back, look out for squalls," said the captain of the Remove. "You've got to learn not to be so jolly funny in other fellows' studies."

"Beast!"

"We'll come back to tea in fifteen minutes," said Nugent. "If you've finished by then, you can stop to tea."

Bunter calmed down at once. He had had only one tea that afternoon, since devouring the picnic feast. So the prospect of another naturally appealed to him.

"What are you going to have for tea?" he inquired.

"Ham sandwiches and cake and jam," said Nugent, laughing.

"I'll clean this up for you with pleasure, old chap," said Bunter. "Not that I had anything to do with it, you know; because we're pals. Leave it to me."

And it was left to Bunter; and the Famous Five walked away to do some shopping for tea. As they came down the staircase they encountered Loder of the Sixth. He looked at them with a baleful eye, and called to the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I've been looking for you, Hurree Singh," he said.

"The kindness of the esteemed Loder is terrific," answered the nabob. "The pleasurefulness of beholding your esteemed and absurd countenance is great."

"You cut off from Big Side after I'd told you I wanted you to fag at bowling, and—"

"The respected and ridiculous Wingate told me to cut," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Come to my study."

"But the respected and absurd Wingate—"

"I've told you to come to my study."

Loder stalked away to the Sixth Form passage, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh followed him. Harry Wharton & Co. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,111.

followed on, with frowning faces. It was plain that the bully of the Sixth was going to wreck his wrath on the nabob on the flimsiest of excuses, and the chums of the Remove were in a rebellious mood.

"Look here, we're not having this, you men," growled Bob Cherry. "Perfect or not, Loder's not going to take it out of Inky."

"Leave it to my esteemed self, my absurd chum," said the nabob.

And instead of following Loder down the Sixth Form passage Hurree Singh stopped at Wingate's door and tapped.

Loder glanced round as he heard the tap.

"Hurree Singh! Come here!" he shouted.

The nabob did not heed. He opened Wingate's door, and the captain of Greyfriars and Gwynno glanced round at him. Loder came back along the passage with rapid strides.

"Hallo, kid, what do you want?" asked Wingate.

"The esteemed Loder is terrifically infuriated because I cut when your respected and ridiculous self told me to do so," explained the nabob. "Perhapsfully you would be so beneficent as to tell the absurd Loder that the canefulness is not the proper caper."

Wingate rose to his feet, frowning, as Loder reached the doorway and grabbed the dusky junior by the shoulder.

"Stop that, Loder!" he snapped.

Loder gave him a glare.

"Are you interfering with a prefect, Wingate?" he demanded. "You'd better be careful you don't go too far."

"As head prefect, I shall naturally interfere if I see fit to do so," answered the Greyfriars captain. "What has Hurree Singh done?"

"I prefer to deal with the matter myself. When I want your assistance I'll ask for it."

"In this case you'll get it without asking for it. Let that junior alone at once, or tell me what he's done."

Loder gritted his teeth.

"I told him to fag at bowling, and he cut off—"

"I told him to cut off after you lost your temper and made a fool and a blackguard of yourself. Leave him alone!" snapped Wingate. "You can go, Hurree Singh."

"Thank you, my esteemed Wingate," said the nabob meekly. And he went.

Loder stared at Wingate, his face white with rage.

"So you're going to interfere with a prefect and back up cheeky fags against him!" he said between his teeth.

The Greyfriars captain looked at him steadily and contemptuously.

"I'm going to interfere with a bully," he answered, "and if you don't mind your p's and q's, Loder, I shall report you to the Head. Bullying isn't good enough for Greyfriars, and you've got to stop it. If you want to remain a prefect, don't let me catch you bullying the fags. You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself."

Loder did not trust himself to reply. His feelings were too deep for words as he tramped away.

Harry Wharton & Co. went out of the House, and strolled away to the tuckshop with smiling faces. The bully of the Sixth was on the warpath; but he did not seem to be prospering much.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### In the Lion's Den!

**M**R. QUELCH stopped.

There was a sound of mopping and swishing in Study No. 1 as the Form master came up to the Remove passage.

He glanced into that celebrated study. Billy Bunter was busy there. Bunter had borrowed a mop and a pail, and he was hard at work cleaning up the floor. There was plenty to be done—soot and ashes were scattered thickly. Hard work did not, as a rule, appeal to William George Bunter. But his cleaning job was to be followed by a study spread, and that made all the difference. So the Owl of the Remove, for once, was industrious. He wanted to get the job done before the fellows came in with supplies for tea. Otherwise there would be delay in getting at the foodstuffs.

Mr. Quelch surveyed him grimly.

He had come into the Remove quarters to inquire into that very matter. Finding Billy Bunter at work cleaning up the remains of the booby-trap, the Remove master opined—correctly—that he had not much farther to look for the author thereof. He did not need to be a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that the owners of Study No. 1 had found out who was the cause of that horrid mixture being spread about their study, and had set him to clean it up.

"Bunter!"

Billy Bunter jumped, and blinked round through his big spectacles.

"Oh, yes, sir!" he gasped.

"It was you, Bunter, who caused this study to be in this—this revolting and disgusting state!"

"Oh, no, sir!" stuttered Bunter.

"Not at all, sir!"

"Then why are you cleaning it?"

"Only my good nature, sir," explained Bunter. "I'm always doing things for other fellows, out of good nature, sir. Wharton's quite mistaken in thinking that I did it. So is Nugent. But I'm doing this to oblige them, sir. I'm such an obliging chap."

"So Wharton and Nugent think that you were guilty of this, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch grimly.

"Oh, no, sir! They—they know I wouldn't do anything of the kind!" gasped Bunter.

"You have just said that they were mistaken in thinking that you did it!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes-es, sir. You see, sir, knowing that I didn't do it, of course they're mistaken in thinking that I did, sir," gasped Bunter.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch. "Where were you, Bunter, at the time of this—this outrageous occurrence?"

"I—I wasn't anywhere, sir."

"What?"

"I—I mean, I—I was in my study, sir. Lots of fellows can tell you that I was in my study at the time, sir."

"Oh, if you were in your study, and other boys were there with you at the time—"

"That's it, sir," said Bunter, in great relief. "Quite a lot of fellows, sir—six or seven. In fact, it was quite a party, sir."

"Their names, Bunter?"

"Eh?"

"Give me the names of the boys who were with you in your study."

"Oh, crikey!"

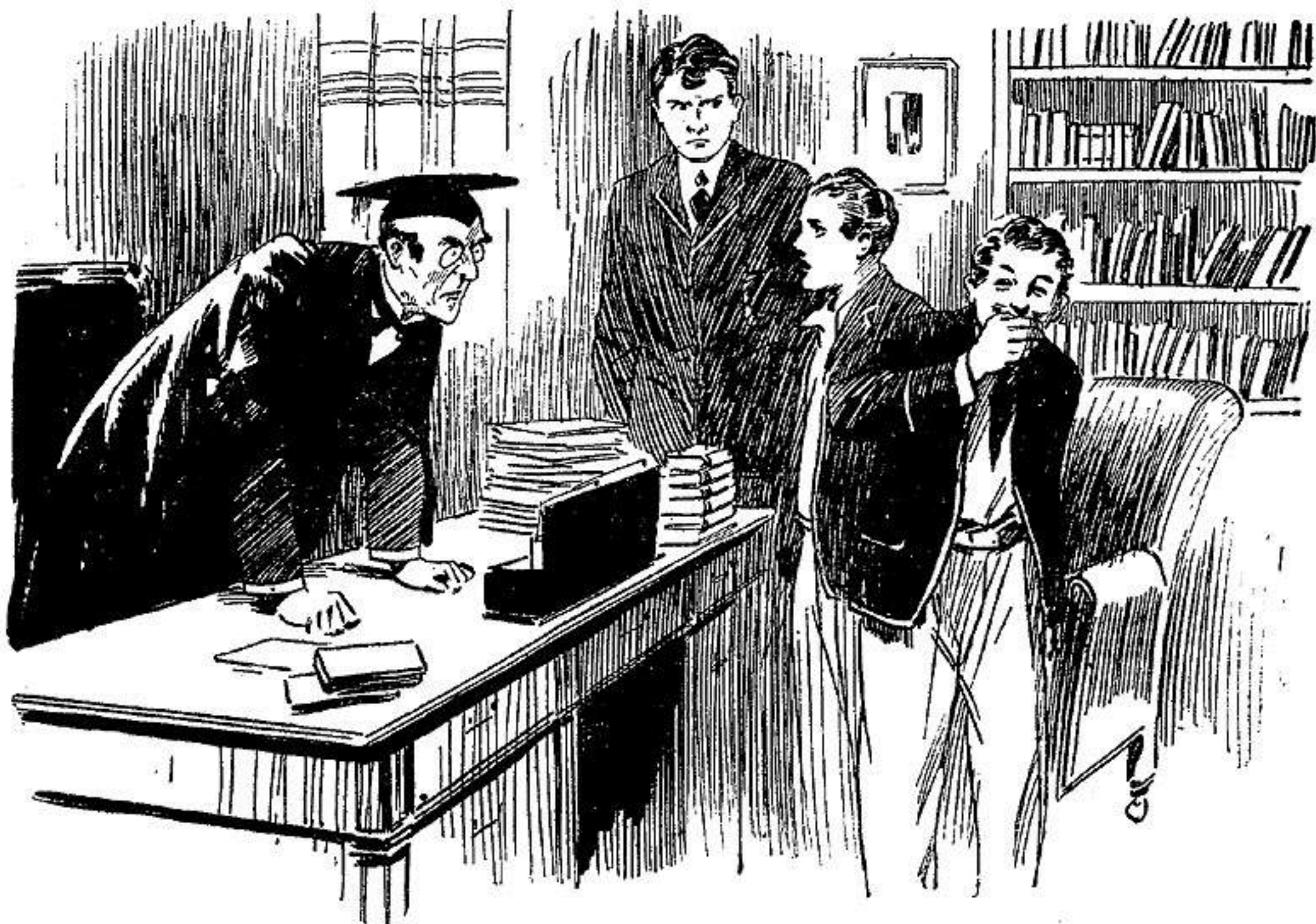
"What—what did you say, Bunter?"

"N-n-nothing, sir! I—I mean, now I come to think of it, sir, I—I was alone in my study. That—that was what I meant to say, sir."

"You are prevaricating, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "You are speaking untruthfully. It is perfectly clear to me that you were the author of this outrage."

"I—I hope you can take my word, sir," stuttered Bunter. "The actual fact is, sir, that I was out of gates at the time. Being a half-holiday, I thought I'd go up the river, sir. And I—I went."





"Loder was smothered over with a detestable compound of soot and ashes and other things," said Mr. Quelch. "He was—what are you laughing at, Wharton?" "N-n-nothing, sir," said the captain of the Remove, trying hard to contain himself. "Wharton!" snapped the Remove master. "This is not a laughing matter! Do you hear me?" (See Chapter 6.)

"You have just told me that you were in your study!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Oh, I—I—I mean—"

"You need prevaricate no further, Bunter." Mr. Quelch raised a commanding hand. "I shall not punish you for this myself, Bunter."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "You're always so kind, sir. That—that's why we all—all love you so much, sir. I've often said to the fellows, sir, that you ain't half the beast you look, sir."

"Upon my word! Bunter, I shall not punish you myself. As Loder fell a victim to your outrageous and foolish practical joke, I shall leave you in Loder's hands."

"Oh, lor'!"

"You will go to Loder's study immediately, and report yourself for punishment," said Mr. Quelch. "You will say that I have sent you, having discovered you to be the author of this—this outrage."

"Ow!"

"I shall speak to Loder on the subject later, and ascertain whether you have duly reported yourself, Bunter. If I find that you have neglected to do so, beware!"

"Wow!"

Having uttered that awful warning Mr. Quelch rustled away, probably glad to be done with the matter.

He did not leave Bunter feeling glad.

The Owl of the Remove was left in the lowest of spirits.

A licking from Quelch was bad enough, but a licking from Loder, in his present probable state of mind, was fearful to contemplate. Loder was a beast at the best of times—a beast who had been smothered with inky ashes and soot was likely to be uncommonly

beastly. Bunter shuddered at the prospect.

But there was no help for it.

Mr. Quelch was not a man to be trifled with. When he gave an order, that order had to be obeyed, lest worse should befall.

"Oh, lor'!" groaned Bunter.

He left the mop and the pail, and the remains of the mixture, and limped from the study. Even the prospect of a spread had ceased to interest him. Slowly and dismally the Owl of the Remove descended the stairs, and rolled away to the Sixth Form passage.

Still more slowly he rolled along that passage. Slower and slower grew his steps as he approached Loder's door. Had Loder's study been a wild beast's den, Bunter could hardly have approached it more reluctantly.

But he reached the door at last, and tapped feebly.

There was no answer to his tap.

Bunter opened the door.

"I—I say, Loder!" he gasped. "It really wasn't me, but Quelch says I'm to come here and say it was."

The study was empty.

Bunter rolled into it and blinked round him. Loder was not there, which was a great relief. Still, it only postponed the evil hour. He had to see Loder sooner or later. The Owl of the Remove stood in the study and reflected dismally. Should he wait for Loder to come in and get it over, or should he clear off while he had a chance?

Bunter was still debating that painful problem in his fat mind, when there were footsteps and voices in the passage. He recognised the voices of Loder and Carne, and had no doubt that they were coming to Loder's study. The fat junior shivered.

Common sense urged him to face the music and get it over, since it had to be faced and got over. The sooner it was over the better. Bunter quite realised that. But instinct was stronger than reason. The thought of Loder's ashplant was too much for him. He blinked round wildly for a way of escape.

Loder's footsteps were almost at the door when Bunter, forgetting everything but his dread of the ashplant in an over-vigorous hand, bolted into the alcove in the study where the bed stood. He plunged under the bed and vanished, only a few seconds before Loder and Carne of the Sixth walked into the study.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Loder's Plot!

GERALD LODER flung the door shut, with a slam that made Bunter jump. Even up to that moment Bunter was debating whether he shouldn't show up and take his medicine and get it over. But that vicious slam of the door settled the question for good. Loder was in a vile temper, and it was anything but a propitious moment for presenting himself for punishment. It was only prudent to wait till Loder had cooled down. Bunter did not want to be caned by a fellow who was in a door-slammng mood. Bunter sagely decided to wait where he was till the two seniors were gone, and then leave the study. Later on he might catch Loder in a better temper. He couldn't catch him in a worse.

That was made quite clear. After

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(Continued from page 13.)

slamming the door Loder kicked a chair across the study. It crashed. Loder gave a sharp yelp. He seemed to have damaged himself as well as the chair. Bunter hardly breathed. Not for worlds, not for whole universes, would he have revealed himself to Gerald Loder then.

Arthur Carne, of the Sixth, was watching his friend with an amused and sarcastic smile.

"Breakin' up the jolly old home?" he asked.

"Oh, shut up!"

"Thanks! As you're in such a sweet temper, old bean, I'll travel, and see you later," yawned Carne.

"Stop where you are."

"Then, for goodness' sake, chuck playing the goat, put on a smoke, and have a little sense!" said Carne tartly.

Loder flung himself savagely into a chair. It creaked under him. For a minute or two Loder's voice was heard, making remarks that would have startled the Head, had he heard them, and certainly driven Æschylus and his mysteries from his mind.

Bunter, hidden under the bed in the corner, shivered. Bunter blessed the arrangement by which Sixth Form men had beds in their studies, instead of going to roost in a dormitory like the other Forms. But for that, the wrath that consumed Loder would undoubtedly have been wreaked upon the hapless Owl of the Remove.

Mr. Quelch had been far from guessing to what he was sending Bunter when he sent him to Loder for a caning. Naturally, the Remove master was unacquainted with the workings of Gerald Loder's mind; also, he knew nothing of the trouble in the first eleven and its effect on Loder's temper.

There was an aroma of tobacco in the study, and Loder ceased to swear. For some minutes the two black sheep of the Sixth smoked their cigarettes in silence. Bunter, needless to say, was very silent. He had heard Loder swearing, and he knew that he was smoking; and in such matters a little knowledge was a dangerous thing. What Loder would do if he found Bunter there was hard to say; but there was no doubt that it would be something extremely unpleasant. Bunter was determined to remain unfound.

"I'm not standing it, Carne!" Loder broke out at last, in so savage a voice that it startled Bunter. "It's the limit!"

"Which and what?" yawned Carne over his cigarette.

"You know what I mean. That cad Wingate is chuckin' me out of the St. Jim's game on Wednesday!"

"You'll have to stand that, old bean. Isn't Wingate's word law?" asked Carne, with a sneer. "Isn't he our jolly old Panjandrum? Doesn't wisdom fall from his lips? He's left me out, and

I'm standin' it. Now you've got to stand it."

"I think you like it just about as much as I do, Carne."

"Just about," agreed Carne.

"He's not getting away with this," said Loder. "If I'm dished for the St. Jim's game Wingate is going to be dished, too."

"I'd like to see him dished and done, old bean; but you're talking rot. Nothin' in it."

"If Wingate were called away suddenly before the match—"

"He won't be."

"If he were, Gwynne would captain the team. He doesn't like either of us much more than Wingate does; but he's got to play eleven men, whether he likes us or not. He would be bound to put me in; or, failing me, you."

"I suppose so. What on earth have you got into your head now?" asked Carne, staring at his chum. "How the thump are you goin' to work it to call Wingate off the field?"

"I've been thinkin' it out."

"Thinkin', as well as swearin' and kickin' the furniture about?" grinned Carne. "Better stick to the swearin' and the furniture, old bean. Wingate's over our weight."

"His people live at Chester," said Loder.

"What about it?"

"You've got a relation, the sportin' man who sometimes sends you tips on the races," said Loder. "He's generally at Manchester, isn't he? That's not far from Chester."

"You're right, if I haven't forgotten my Third Form geography," yawned Carne. "What about it?"

"That merchant would get over to Chester, if you asked him, and send a telegram, I suppose?"

"He would do anythin' I asked him, if it was safe. He sucks up to me because I'm a public school man, and he's a bit of an outsider," answered Carne. "But what the thump is he to send a telegram for, and to whom?"

"To Wingate, next Wednesday."

"But what the thump—"

"Somethin' like this. 'Motor accident, father seriously injured, come home at once,'"

said Loder quietly.

Arthur Carne almost jumped from his chair.

"Loder, you're poity!" he ejaculated.

"Quite sane, old man," said Loder coolly. "What do you think Wingate will do if he gets that wire on Wednesday?"

"What any fellow would do—jump into the first train to get home," answered Carne.

"Exactly. That leaves the St. Jim's match to be played without him. He misses the match, and serve him right, hang him! One of us bags the vacant place in the team."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I dare say it sounds a bit steep," said Loder. "But think it over, and you'll see that it will work like a charm. Your man in the North sends that wire signed by the name of Wingate—the brute's got a lot of relations, and it might be any one of them wired for him. I know his father drives his own car, so it sounds plausible enough. Wingate will fall to it without the slightest suspicion."

"But—but—" stammered Carne, "it's illegal to send a telegram in another man's name—it amounts to forgery or somethin'. Like forgin' a name to a letter."

"Who's to know?"

"But—" muttered Carne uneasily.

"A perfect stranger walks into a telegraph office, where he's never been seen

before, and sends a wire," said Loder. "He leaves the town after sendin' it. Safe as houses."

"I—I suppose so. But—"

"There's absolutely no risk. The wire must come from Chester, because Wingate's people live there. That's all the better, as your sportin' relation is a stranger there. He's near enough to the place to send the wire without a lot of trouble. He clears off after sendin' it. Where's the risk?"

Carne was silent.

"There's lots of time to write to him and fix it up. It's a week to the St. Jim's match. You can write and get an answer long before then."

"I know. But—"

"Your bookmakin' relation won't be shocked," said Loder, with a sneer. "He knows all about spoof telegrams in his line of business."

"He will do it if I ask him; but—"

"Well, ask him. We dish Wingate out of the match, and one of us gets a place in the team. Nobody could possibly suspect that we had anything to do with it, when it comes out that the wire was a spoof. Chester's three or four hundred miles from here, and everybody will know that a Greyfriars man couldn't have got there to send the wire."

"Of course. But—"

"Smoke another fag, and think it over, and you'll see that it's a real catch," said Loder.

There was silence in the study for some minutes.

"It's too thick," said Carne at last.

"Don't be an ass! Not so thick as chuckin' fellows out of a game, from personal dislike," said Loder.

"Oh, rot!" said Carne. "What's the good of that between ourselves, Loder? After the show you put up to-day, lettin' a Lower Fourth kid make hay of your wicket—"

"Cut that out," snarled Loder, "and pull yourself together, and have a little nerve. You don't like Wingate any more than I do."

"Not a bit. But—"

"Well, this is a way of dishin' the cad. I tell you there's not the slightest risk for anybody. You can see that."

"It seems safe enough," admitted Carne.

"What else is there to worry about?"

"Nothin', I suppose. After all, the brute makes himself unpleasant enough to us," said Carne. "I got a jaw from him only yesterday, because I walloped my fag with a cricket-stump. The little beast had burned my toast. Wingate came in while he was yellin', and I thought for a minute he was goin' to lay the stump on me. I can tell you I'm fed up with him!"

"This is where we get our own back," said Loder.

"I'll do it," said Carne at last.

Loder rose from his chair. "Write the letter now. We'll walk down to Friardale and post it. We can drop in at the Cross Keys for a game of billiards afterwards."

"Better think it over a bit farther first—" said Carne hesitating.

"What rot! Strike the iron while it's hot!" said Loder.

And Arthur Carne sat down at Loder's table, and the letter was written. Then the two black sheep of the Sixth quitted the study.

As the door closed behind them there was a deep gasp of relief from a fat Removeite who was palpitating with terror under the bed. Fortunately for the Sixth-Formers' peace of mind they did not hear that gasp—which was more fortunate still for Bunter!



# THE TENTH CHAPTER.

## Tea in No. 1. Study!

**B**ILLY BUNTER crawled out from under the bed.

His fat face was quite pale. His little round eyes goggled behind his big spectacles.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

Every word that had been uttered by Loder and Carne, had reached the fat ears of the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter was, no doubt, shocked; but he was not so much shocked as terrified.

What would happen to him, if Loder discovered that he had overheard that rascally plot, he could hardly imagine. Never had the fat junior been so immensely relieved, as when the footsteps of Loder and Carne died away down the Sixth Form passage.

Bunter blinked cautiously from the study window, keeping out of sight from the quad. He had a glimpse of Loder and Carne walking down to the gates.

Not till they had gone out of gates, did the Owl of the Remove venture to leave the study.

Then he cut off to the Remove passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry's voice hailed him from the open doorway of Study No. 1. "Roll in, fatty!"

Bunter rolled in.

The Famous Five were at tea. They had wondered at finding Bunter missing when they came in. It was not like the Owl of the Remove to be missing at a spread.

"You fat bounder!" said Harry Wharton, "why didn't you finish your cleaning job?"

"You haven't earned your tea," said Nugent.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"What on earth's the matter with you?" asked Harry, staring at the fat junior. "Seen a ghost?"

"Worse!" gasped Bunter. "I say, you fellows, it's awful! I'm not going to tell you anything. The beast would jolly well cut me to pieces if he knew I knew. Oh, dear!"

"What beast?"

"I'm not going to tell you. You know what Loder's like. I'm not saying a word."

The juniors chuckled. Bunter apparently had a secret to keep; but the fat and fatuous Owl had his own peculiar ways of keeping a secret.

"Something about Loder, and you're not going to let us know it's about Loder?" asked Bob.

"Yes. I mean, no! I wasn't in his study," explained Bunter, "I never heard him talking to Carne. Oh, dear!"

"You've been eavesdropping again, you fat villain?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I suppose I couldn't help hearing what they said, when I was under the bed."

"Under the bed!" yelled Bob Cherry. "What the merry thump were you doing under the bed?"

"You'd have got under the bed, if you'd been sent to Loder to be caned, and he came in in a fearful temper," gasped Bunter. "That beast, Quelch, came up here, while you fellows were gone to the shop. For some reason, he jumped to the conclusion that I had fixed up that rotten booby trap. I told him I hadn't; but he refused to take my word, and he sent me to Loder to be caned for it."

"Hear, hear! I hope Loder laid it on hard," said Nugent.

"Beast!"

Bunter pulled a chair to the table and sat down. Deeply perturbed as he was, he was ready for tea. If the Last Trump had been sounding, Bunter would have been ready for tea.

"Well, did Loder lick you?" asked Harry.

"He wasn't there, you know. I say, these ham sandwiches are pretty good," said Bunter gobbling. "You see, I heard him coming, and decided to—to put it off. Of course, I'm not afraid of a licking. Not like some fellows I could name. Still, I decided to put it off, and got under the bed to wait till the beast was gone."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. You wouldn't cackle if you'd heard those two villains. I say, pass those sandwiches."

"My hat! If Loder had found you hiding in his study, he'd have skinned you," said Johnny Bull. "Rather a pity he didn't."

"Beast! I say, you fellows, fancy two Sixth Form men putting up a scheme like that! I wonder what the Head would think."

"Like what, ass?"

"Oh! Nothing!"

Bunter gobbled at a great rate. The other fellows had had a start, and Bunter naturally wanted to catch up with them. Only circumstances over which he had no control, could have made William George Bunter late for a feed. Now he was there, he was anxious to make up for lost time.

The Famous Five looked at him curiously. It was clear that Bunter, hidden in Loder's study, had overheard something that startled and terrified him. That was not really very surprising. The black sheep of the Sixth had many private affairs that it was safer for a junior to know nothing about.

"Look here, you fat duffer," said Harry. "If you've been listening to jaw in a Sixth Form study, you'd better keep it to yourself. Sixth Form men won't let you off so lightly as we do."

"I can jolly well tell you I'm not saying a word," said Bunter. "I'm sorry about Wingate, of course. But it's no business of mine. Very likely Wingate wouldn't believe me if I told him. He's doubted my word more than once."

"Those rotters got something up against old Wingate?" said Bob. "Well, I'm not surprised at that. It's like them. Anyhow, Wingate can keep his end up without help from the Remove."

Bunter blinked at the Famous Five, his mouth full.

"You fellows advise me to say nothing about it?" he asked.

"Certainly," said Wharton. "You'd no right to hear what Loder and Carne may have said; and no right to repeat it."

"Well, I ain't going to, of course," said Bunter. "It's not safe. 'Tain't as if it was one of our own matches, either. It's only a first-eleven match."

"What the thump—"

"I'm not telling you, Wharton. It might get round to Loder, and he would be frightfully wild. Any more sandwiches?"

"You've scoffed the lot, you fat cormorant."

"Pass the jam, then. I say, you fellows, if you've finished with the jam, I'll spoon it out of the pot. Saves trouble!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Without wasting time in ascertaining whether the other fellows had

finished with the jam, Bunter commenced operations on the jam-pot with a spoon, transferring the jam to his capacious mouth in bulk.

"Go it," said Nugent sarcastically. "Don't mind us!"

"Right-ho, old chap!" answered Bunter. "I say, this jam is all right. You might have got a three-pound pot. You know I like jam. Still, I never expect much of you fellows. It wouldn't be any good, would it?"

"Haden't you better take it on the mat?" asked Bob.

Bunter did not heed that question. He gobbled jam, and was sticky and happy.

The jam finished, Bunter looked round for fresh worlds to conquer. But the table was bare now, and he gave a grunt.

"I'll stand you fellows a better spread than this, when my postal-order comes," he said. "I say, you fellows, don't say a word about what I've told you. Loder would be as mad as a hatter. I say, I've got to go and see the beast some time—Quelch will be ratty if I don't. What do you fellows think is the best time for catching Loder in a good temper?"

"Somewhere about the Greek Kalends, I should say," answered Bob Cherry, laughing.

"I've got to go through it," said Bunter dismally. "I say, suppose I gave him a hint about what I know? Do you think he would let me off the licking, if I promised to keep mum? I could put it to him that one good turn deserves another, you know." Bunter blinked inquiringly at the chums of the Remove. "After all, a word from me would dish the whole thing. Wingate wouldn't be taken in next Wednesday, if he knew in advance that the telegram was coming, would he?"

"The telegram?" said Harry blankly. "What telegram?"

"I'm not going to tell you—it ain't safe. I—I'm only putting a case, you know," said Bunter cautiously. "The important thing is to get off that licking from Loder. Suppose I told him I'd tell Wingate? Would that frighten him, or make him all the more savage?"

"What on earth is that fat idiot burbling about?" asked Bob Cherry, in wonder.

"Well look at it," said Bunter argumentatively. "Would Wingate believe a telegram saying his father had been smashed up in a motor accident next Wednesday, if I told him in advance that the telegram was coming? Of course he wouldn't! Well, then, if he didn't believe the telegram he wouldn't clear off to Chester and leave the St. Jim's game to be played without him? That would dish Loder all right. If Wingate's here, he won't play Loder, or Carne, either. That's how I work it out. Suppose I tell Loder I know, and

(Continued on next page.)



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offer to keep it dark if he lets me off the licking? What do you fellows think of that for a wheeze?"

Bunter blinked at the Famous Five in anxious inquiry.

They did not tell him what they thought. They stared at him in blank astonishment.

"You might give a chap advice," said Bunter peevishly. "You know what a licking from Loder is like, especially when he's waxy. He might come to terms. On the other hand, he might lay it on extra hard because I've found him out. With a beast like Loder, you never can tell. He's what I call treacherous. He might chuck-up the whole game when he finds that I know, and pretend he never thought of such a thing, and take it out of me! Come to think of it, that's jolly likely! I'm not going to say anything to Loder!"

Bunter rose from his chair.

"Hold on, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton quietly.

"Sorry I can't stop—I'm going to see Mauleverer," answered Bunter. "He may not have finished tea yet—I mean, I want to speak to Mauly specially about something. See you later!"

Wharton rose and closed the study door, and put his back to it.

"You've said rather too much to keep the rest dark, Bunter," he said. "Now, cough it all up, from beginning to end."

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Startling!

"COUGH it up!"

"The coughfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"Buck up, fatty!"

Billy Bunter blinked uneasily round at the five grave faces in Study No. 1.

"I—I say, you fellows, it's nothing!" he mumbled. "I'm not telling you, you know—it ain't safe. Loder would be as mad as a hatter—"

"Out with it, fathead!"

"There isn't anything, old chap. The fact is I never heard Loder and Carne talking it over at all. As for sending a telegram from Chester, they never mentioned it. So far as I know, Carne hasn't any relations at Manchester. I know nothing about them, anyhow. I—I say, I've got to go and see Toddy."

"There's a fives bat on the shelf, Bob," said the captain of the Remove. "Hand it over, will you?"

"Here you are!"

"I—I say, old chap, I'm going to tell you all about it, of course," said Bunter hastily. "I came here specially to confide in you, you know, because we're pals."

"Get on with it, then."

"I—I say, you keep it dark, you know," said Bunter. "Loder would skin me if he knew. I rely on you fellows to keep it dark. 'Taint our business if those Sixth Form beasts spoof one another over a cricket match. Besides, I never heard anything at all. The actual fact is, I never went to Loder's study. I hardly know which is his study. I think—yarooooooh!"

A lick from the fives bat elicited a fiendish yell from William George Bunter.

"Better get on with it," said Harry.

"This isn't the way to treat a pal, Wharton, when he's just going to confide in you. Keep that bat away, you beast! I'm telling you as fast as I can, ain't I?" yelled Bunter.

And under the influence of the fives bat the whole story came out.

The Famous Five listened in horrified silence.

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They knew a good deal about Loder of the Sixth, and his ways; but what they heard now was a shock to them.

"My only hat!" said Bob Cherry, when Bunter had finished. "That's the giddy limit, even for Loder!"

"The limitfulness is terrific."

"The howling cad!" exclaimed Johnny Bull hotly. "Let's take Bunter to Wingate and tell him the whole thing!"

There was a terrified squeak from Bunter.

"Shan't! Beast! Loder would take it out of me! Yow-ow-ow!"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"That's no use!" he said. "In the first place, Wingate wouldn't believe, for a minute, such a yarn about a Sixth Form man of Greyfriars. It's so jolly thick that I can hardly believe it's true myself."

"Is it?" said Nugent dubiously. "You know Bunter! It may be one of his fatheaded yarns from beginning to end."

"Oh, really, Nugent!"

"I think Bunter's telling the truth," said Harry. "But I'm jolly certain that Wingate wouldn't think so. Bunter's got a jolly old reputation for lying, for one thing, and nobody takes the word of an eavesdropper, for another. Wingate would simply give him a licking for spinning such a yarn about a Sixth Form man."

"Wow!"

"There's no proof," said Harry quietly. "As soon as it got out, Loder would chuck the whole thing—the telegram never would come at all. He wouldn't dare carry on if he knew Bunter had spotted him."

"Well, then, it would be all right about the cricket match, anyhow," said Johnny Bull. "Wingate wouldn't be dished for the match, as those rotters mean him to be. A licking for Bunter doesn't matter much."

"Beast!"

"It's a week to the St. Jim's match," said Harry—"lots of time for those rotters to think of some other scheme, if they find that this one has gone wrong."

"My hat! You don't think of letting them get on with it?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We've got to stop it, now we know."

"Of course. But we'd better think it over before we do anything. More haste less speed," said the captain of the Remove.

"But a stitch in time saves the cracked pitcher from going longest to the well, my esteemed Wharton," remarked the nabob of Bhanipur.

"Lots of time," answered Harry. "It's useless to say anything to Wingate. It would only mean a licking for Bunter, and we don't want that—and Loder would make him sit up for the rest of the term. He can't bring such an accusation against a Sixth Form man, and a prefect, without the strongest proof."

"But there isn't any proof," said Nugent. "Only the word of the biggest fibber at Greyfriars."

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"That's the trouble," said Wharton. "We've got to stop Loder; but it's no good trying to do it by telling a yarn that the whole school would laugh at. Bunter's such a fool, and such a fibber—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"If we told the men in the Remove, they wouldn't believe it, as it comes from Bunter," said Harry. "Wingate would simply get wild and trot out his ashplant. There's no proof till the telegram comes, and turns out to be spoof."

"Then it will be too late, ass," said Bob.

"I know. If nothing's said beforehand it will be no use telling Wingate next Wednesday to take no notice of such a telegram. He will rush off home by the first train. Still, we can't say anything beforehand. It's a giddy problem. But problems were only made to be solved, and we shall jolly well think of a way. Not a word till then."

"That's right," said Bunter. "You see, it's important not to say anything about it. I've got to take a licking from Loder, anyhow. Think what it would be like if he knew I knew—"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"You'd better keep it dark, Bunter," said the captain of the Remove. "You can leave it in our hands."

"That's all right if you don't mention my name," said Bunter anxiously. "I've told you in confidence. You can say you were under Loder's bed and heard it all, if you like."

"Fathead!"

"Well, leave me out of it," said Bunter. "I'm not going to have Loder after me for the rest of the term like a savage tiger. You can do what you jolly well like, so long as I'm perfectly safe. That's important."

"Ass!"

"I'll cut now," said Bunter. "The fact is we're wasting time. Mauly may have finished his tea by now!"

Harry Wharton opened the study door, and the Owl of the Remove rolled out. He started at once for Lord Mauleverer's study, in the faint hope that his lordship might not yet have finished tea.

Harry Wharton & Co. were left to discuss the startling information they had received, and to lay plans for frustrating Loder's knavish tricks.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### "Bend Over!"

GERALD LODER was smiling when he came in with Carne from Friardale. At call-over, Billy Bunter blinked anxiously in the direction of the Sixth Form men, and discerned that Loder's face was good-humoured in its expression. He could guess the cause easily enough. The letter to Carne's sporting relative in the North had been posted, and Loder's plot was started on the way to success—as he supposed, at least. The prospect of "dishing" Wingate for the first big fixture of the cricket season brought that cheery smile to Loder's face. That did not matter to Bunter, however. All he cared about was to ascertain that the bully of the Sixth was no longer in a savage temper when he reported to him for punishment. He blinked anxiously at Loder through his big spectacles, and nudged Peter Todd in the ribs.

"I say, Peter—" whispered Bunter.

"Shurrup!" breathed Peter Todd.

"But I say—"

"Prout will get you, fathead!"

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form, was calling the roll. On such occasions Mr. Prout preferred Hall to echo to no sound but that of his own fruity voice.

"But look at Loder!" urged Bunter.

"Blow Loder!"

"Does he look good-tempered, old chap?" breathed Bunter. "I've got to report to him, you know—"

"Silence!" called out Gwynne of the Sixth.

"Peter, old chap, you know I'm a little short-sighted," whispered Bunter,





Finding Billy Bunter at work cleaning up the remains of the booby-trap, Mr. Quelch opined correctly that he had not much further to look for the author thereof. "So it was you, Bunter, who caused this study to be in this revolting and disgusting state?" "Oh, no, sir. Not at all, sir. This is only my good nature, sir. I'm an awfully obliging chap, you know, sir!" (See Chapter 8.)

as soon as Gwynne looked away. "Just squint at Loder and tell me—"

Toddy took a hasty squint.

"Yes, he looks quite tame for once," he said. "Now shut up. Looks as if his geegee has come home first instead of twenty-first, as usual."

"Is he grinning?" asked Bunter. "Looks to me as if he's grinning."

"I dare say he would call it a smile," said Peter.

"Good!" said the Owl of the Remove, greatly relieved. "I know why he's in a jolly good temper. He thinks it's going all right. But it jolly well isn't. He, he, he!"

"What on earth do you mean, ass?"

"That's telling," said Bunter, with a fat wink.

"Fathead!"

"Silence!" rapped out Mr. Quelch, his eagle eye turned on his Form; and the Owl was silent at last.

After roll-call, when the fellows were going out, Mr. Quelch called Bunter back. The fat junior reluctantly obeyed the call.

"Have you reported yourself to Loder, as I instructed you, Bunter," inquired the Remove master.

"I—I—I'm just going to, sir," stammered Bunter. "I—I wasn't waiting to catch him in a good temper, sir."

Mr. Quelch stared for a moment, and then smiled.

"Lose no more time, Bunter," he said.

"Yes, sir—I mean, no, sir," gasped Bunter.

And he hurried out after the Remove. Bunter made his way to the Sixth Form passage. There Loder passed him a little later, and Bunter blinked at him anxiously as he passed. Gerald Loder

certainly looked in a much better temper. He went into Walker's study, not his own; and Bunter could only hope that his chat with James Walker would have a further ameliorating effect on his temper. Bunter rolled on to Loder's study to wait for him there.

Footsteps sounded in the Sixth Form passage a few minutes later, and Bunter had a strong impulse to bolt in time. But he remembered the grin on Loder's face, and stood his ground. He had to face the beast some time; and, for once in a way, the beast was in a less beastly temper than usual. He blinked uneasily at the door.

But it was Fry of the Fourth who came in. He stared at Bunter.

"Hallo, fatty!" he said.

"You for it, too?" asked Bunter.

"Lines," said Fry. "I haven't done them, and I'm going to ask Loder to let me off till to-morrow. Know where he is?"

"In Walker's study. I'm waiting for him."

Fry grunted, and seated himself on the edge of Loder's table to wait. Bunter went to the door and blinked into the passage. There was no sign of Loder yet.

"Cheek, isn't it, thinking we're going to wait for him?" growled the Owl of the Remove. "These Sixth Form men have a lot too much side, if you ask me, Fry."

Fry grinned.

"Better tell 'em so," he remarked.

"I wouldn't mind telling them so," said Bunter. "I'm not afraid of the prefects, I can tell you. You may be, in the Fourth. The fact is, I've a jolly good mind not to wait for Loder. This

is the second time I've been here and he wasn't here. Cheek, I call it!"

"Hook it, then," suggested Fry.

"Well, the blighter's in a good temper for once," said Bunter. "I've got to get it over, and it's better to get it over while the rotter's in a good temper. You see, I caught the beast in a booby-trap, and Quelch's sent me up for a licking. You wouldn't have the nerve to catch a Sixth Form prefect in a booby-trap, Fry. I say, you should have seen him when he got the soot and ink over his chivvy. He, he, he!"

"Shut up, you ass!" said Fry, as he heard a footstep near the door of the study.

"He, he, he!" Bunter was deaf to any sound but that of his own musical cacchination. "I say, you should have seen him! Loder's ugly enough at the best of times, but with that mixture on his face he looked a picture—a real picture! I say, Fry, what are you staring at?"

Fry was staring at the face of Gerald Loder, framed in the study doorway behind Bunter.

The expression on that face was extraordinary.

Good-humour was quite gone. Bunter's cheery remarks had had the effect of banishing it.

"What's up?" asked Bunter. "You look as if you're staring at a ghost. Afraid Loder will come in? What you want is a little nerve, Fry, old chap. Like me! I'm not afraid of a prefect, specially Loder! I don't think much of any of them; but as for Loder, I must say, I despise him. A smoky bounder and a rank outsider, if you ask me. I

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can tell you, I jolly well got him in that booby-trap, and—"

Fry's horrified, fixed stare impressed even the obtuse Owl of the Remove at last, and he turned round. At the sight of Gerald Loder in the doorway his jaw dropped.

"Ow!" he gasped.

Loder came in.

"So it was you, Bunter!" he said grimly.

"Nunno!" gasped Bunter. "Quelch says I'm to come here and say it was, Loder; but it wasn't really. Besides, it was an accident. I fixed it for another beast, not you. I—"

"So I'm ugly at the best of times—what?" asked Loder, picking up his ashplant from the table.

"Nunno! Handsome, old chap," groaned Bunter. "I—I—I never saw a face I like so much as yours, Loder. Beautiful, I call it!"

"And you're not afraid of a prefect—specially me?" asked Loder, as he swished the ashplant in the air.

"Ow! Yes!" gasped Bunter. He was telling the truth now. "I—I am, you know! Awfully."

"You've got reason to be," said Loder grimly. "Bend over that chair."

"I—I say, Loder—"

"Bend over!" snapped Loder.

Bunter groaned and bent over the chair. He groaned in anticipation. But he soon had reason to groan in earnest.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yooop! Yarooop! Stoppit! Wow!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Whooooop!"

It was a dozen; and even Loder thought it was time to stop then. Billy Bunter thought it was long past time to stop.

"Cut!" said Loder briefly.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" groaned Bunter, as he wriggled his way to the door.

"Stop that row, if you don't want some more."

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Loder made a motion with the ashplant. Bunter ceased to wriggle, and made a jump for the passage. And the Sixth Form men in their studies, heard sounds of deep woe as Bunter negotiated the passage.

"Wow! Wow! Wow! Wow! Wow!"

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### No Good!

ON Friday, after class, Harry Wharton tapped at the door of Wingate's study in the Sixth.

He entered in response to the Greyfriars captain's cheery "come in."

Wingate was seated at his table, conning over a pencilled list. It was his list of men for the St. Jim's game on Wednesday; and the name of G. Loder was not included in it. He gave the junior an inquiring look, raising his eyebrows a little as Wharton carefully shut the door.

"Well," he asked, "what is it?"

Wharton coloured a little. He had a difficult task in hand and did not quite know how to begin.

The chums of the Remove had discussed over and over again, the discovery Bunter had made in Loder's study. There was, as Wharton had said, no hurry to act; and they had sagely taken time to think it over. But now it was Friday, and the match was on Wednesday; and something had to be done. Hence Wharton's visit to the study of the captain of the school.

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"Can I speak to you for a few minutes, Wingate?" asked Harry.

"Go ahead."

"It's rather an unusual matter," said the captain of the Remove uncomfortably. "There's something going on, that we've got on to—"

Wingate raised his hand.

"Is it something that you're bound to report to me, as head prefect, in your position as captain of your Form?" he asked.

"Well, hardly that."

"Then you'd better think twice before you tell me anything," said Wingate rather dryly. "I'm sure you're not the kind of fellow to tell tales, Wharton; but you can't be too careful."

Wharton flushed hotly.

"If you think it's tale-bearing, I'd better shut up and clear!" he exclaimed.

This week's useful pocket wallet has been carried off by Miss E. M. Pessell, of 83, Bloomfield Avenue, Bath, for the following Greyfriars limerick:

There's a Greyfriars master named Prout,  
Who is lofty, conceited and stout.  
When he brings forth his gun,  
You should see the chaps run,  
For they know it's not safe to be out!

Who's the next clever girl—or boy? There's plenty more pocket wallets waiting to be won.

"I don't think so; I'm only warning you to be careful," said the Greyfriars captain. "Don't be a touchy young ass. But I can't imagine what you have to tell me outside what it's proper to report to me."

"I hardly know how to tell you," said Harry. "In the first place, there's no proof of anything. Something was heard by accident—"

"Look here, you're wasting my time and your own," said Wingate gruffly. "That sort of stuff is no good."

"It's about the St. Jim's match on Wednesday."

"What about that?" asked Wingate in astonishment. "Nothing in a cricket match to be so jolly mysterious about, is there?"

"You've dropped a man from the first eleven—a man who expected to play on Wednesday," said Wharton.

Wingate frowned.

"I suppose you mean Loder? That's not a matter for fags to discuss in the junior studies, Wharton; and not a matter for you to speak to me about. Have you come here to make a young ass of yourself?"

"There's going to be a trick played on Wednesday—"

"A trick!" repeated Wingate.

"Yes—a piece of rotten trickery, in connection with the St. Jim's match. We've found it out by sheer accident, and we've talked it over, and I've come here to give you the tip," said Harry. "We can't let it go on without saying a word."

Wingate stared at him.

"You're talking utter rot," he said curtly. "You haven't mentioned Loder's name, but you must be referring to Loder."

"Well, yes."

"Then what you say amounts to an accusation against him."

"I suppose it does."

"Well, you can stop just at that point," said the Greyfriars captain. "You know you can't come to me with

a story against another prefect of the Sixth Form. I know you're on bad terms with Loder, and I think very likely he's been to blame in some ways, so far as that goes. But this sort of thing—"

Wharton's face was crimson.

"That's not how it stands, at all," he interrupted. "Nobody in the Remove likes Loder; but that's got nothing to do with it."

"I fancy it has, though you may not have realised it yourself," said Wingate more kindly. "You've heard some silly talk and made a mountain out of a molehill. Isn't that it?"

"That isn't it at all. I'm bound to put you on your guard," said Harry. "A trick's going to be played, to muck up the match for you."

"That's rot! How could any man muck up a cricket match?" said Wingate. "That's sheer nonsense."

"It's a trick to get you away from the game—"

"Rubbish!"

"If you'll listen to me—"

"Hold on," said Wingate, "you've said that you've no proof of what you're going to tell me."

"That's so."

"So it comes to this; that you've heard Loder say something or other when he was in a ratty temper, and you think he's got some sort of a deep-dyed scheme on." Wingate laughed. "Young ass! Fellows say all sorts of things without meaning a word of it."

"I know," said Harry, "but—"

"In point of fact, Wharton, you ought not to have heard what Loder said, whatever it was. I know you're not an eavesdropping sort—but all the same—"

"It was not I who heard him!" snapped Wharton.

"Oh!" said Wingate. "Then what you've got to tell me is only hearsay? Some fellow's told you what Loder said, or what he fancies that Loder said?"

"It amounts to that," admitted Wharton, "but in this case it's true, on the face of it."

"Let's see about that. I won't ask you the name of the fellow in question; but is he the sort of fellow whose word you can trust absolutely?"

"No fear."

"Well, you young ass," exclaimed Wingate, "you're told a tall story by a fellow whose word you can't trust, and you take it with all this seriousness. Can't you see you're an ass?"

"I was afraid you'd look at it like that," said Harry, "all the same, I had to come to you, Wingate. If you'll let me tell you how the matter stands, you can judge for yourself."

"Not a single word," said the Greyfriars captain. "You must be potty, I think, to imagine that the captain of the school will listen to the tattle of an eavesdropper at second-hand. This isn't like you, Wharton. I'm afraid you've let your dislike of Loder carry you away."

Wharton stood silent.

He had more than half-expected the Greyfriars captain to take that view of the matter; indeed, it was hardly possible for Wingate to take any other. Yet to leave him in ignorance of the disgruntled prefect's scheme was impossible.

"Look here, Wingate," said the captain of the Remove at last, "I tell you that my personal feelings towards Loder have got nothing to do with it. I never meant to mention his name at all, only I see now it couldn't be avoided. I only want to put you on your guard."

"I know that—or I should tell you to



bend over for coming here with a silly tale about a Sixth Form man. But you're making a young ass of yourself, and the sooner you chuck it, the better."

"It's a trick to get you away from the game on Wednesday. It's all fixed up already—"

"Stop, I tell you!" rapped out Wingate. He rose to his feet, his brows knitted. "You tell me yourself that the whole thing was told you by some eaves-dropping young rascal whose word you can't trust. Yet you have the nerve to repeat it to me. Do you think I can listen to tale-bearing and back-biting like this—about a fellow prefect in my own Form? I think you must be out of your senses. Leave my study!"

Wharton compressed his lips. "Well, I've done all I can," he said. "I'm sorry if it's made you think badly of me, Wingate. You'll know better after Wednesday, though it will be too late then."

"You young ass! Cut off!"

"Very well!"

Wharton left the study.

The Greyfriars captain stared after him, till the door closed. He was frowning. The juniors had cause enough to dislike the bully of the Sixth, he knew that. He disliked Loder himself, and it seemed to him that an attempt had been made to work on his dislike of Loder. That thought was enough to make Wingate very angry indeed.

But his face cleared, and he smiled faintly. He had no doubt that Loder, in his annoyance at being dropped out of the team, had indulged in some wild talk. That sort of thing was not uncommon. Some young ass had heard Loder blowing off steam, taken it seriously, and told Wharton, whose feud with Loder made him take it more

seriously still. That was how it looked to Wingate. But there was a limit, and Wharton ought not to have come to him with such a story.

However, as his eyes fell on the cricket list again Wingate dismissed the matter from his mind, and soon forgot it completely.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton rejoined his chums in the quadrangle with a clouded brow. His interview with Wingate left him feeling very uncomfortable and dissatisfied. Nothing had been done, except to lower himself in the opinion of the Sixth-Former he respected and liked.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! How did it go?" asked Bob Cherry.

"N.G.!" grunted Wharton.

Bob Cherry whistled.

"Wingate thinks I've heard some tattle about Loder, and gone to him to repeat it," said Wharton bitterly. "That's the pleasant opinion I've left him with."

"That's rather rotten," said Bob. "But he will know the facts after Wednesday, after he's been spoofed. That will set you right, old chap."

"Well, yes; only it will be too late to prevent Wingate from being dished over the St. Jim's match."

"The too-lateness will be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But there are more ways of exterminating an esteemed cat than the chokefulness with cream. We must put our esteemed and idiotic heads together and think of something else."

"Blessed if I see what we can do," said Bob. "We can't let it go on, and we can't stop it. So there you are."

"The thoughtfulness of the proper caper," said the nabob. "Let us set our excellent and ridiculous brainfulness to

work, and the result will be the dishfulness of the honoured and disgusting Loder."

Wharton gave a grunt. He was feeling sore, and inclined for the moment, at least, to wash his hands of the matter. But that mood passed, and the Famous Five continued to give the matter their distinguished consideration, and it was Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the astute Nabob of Bhanipur, who finally hit on a solution of the problem.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Inky Does It!

"I SAY, you fellows."

"Oh, hook it, Bunter!"

"I haven't come to tea, you men," said Bunter, insinuating himself into Study No. 1 as he spoke. "In fact, I'd forgotten it was tea-time. I'm not always thinking about meals, like some fellows I could name. Still, as you're having tea—"

"Buzz off!"

"Waiting for somebody?" asked Bunter, observing that the tea-table was prepared in Study No. 1, but that the four juniors in the study had not commenced operations.

"Yes, ass."

"Waiting for me, old chap?" asked Bunter affectionately.

"We're waiting for Inky. Buzz off, you fat fly!"

"I shouldn't wait," said Bunter. "I think Inky isn't coming. In fact, I saw him go out on his bike. I'll tell you what, you fellows. I'll have tea with you instead of Inky. Mutual benefit, you know."

"Blessed if I see where the mutual benefit comes in," said Bob.

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"Well, I get the tea, and you get some good company," explained Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"  
"I suppose you'd rather have me to tea than Inky?"

"Something wrong with your supposer, then," said Nugent. "We wouldn't."

"Oh, really, Nugent! That isn't the way to talk to an old pal," said Bunter. "Of course, I know you're only joking. He, he, he!" Bunter drew a chair to the table. "As you're so pressing, you fellows, I'll stay to tea, though I really half-promised Mauleverer, and Smithy will be rather disappointed if I don't give him a look in. Still, friendship comes first. Pass that cake, will you?"

"We're waiting for Hurree Singh, fat-head."

"I shouldn't wait," said Bunter, shaking his head. "Inky's gone to see Quelchy, and you know Quelch—when he once begins to jaw, he never leaves off till his chin aches."

"Has he gone to see Quelchy on his bike?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Eh? I mean—"

"I know what you mean. Let that cake alone!"

"Oh, really, Bull! I say, you fellows, I really came here to tell you about Loder," said Bunter. "Carne's had a letter with the Manchester postmark on it. I saw it in the rack."

"Blow Carne and his letters."

"Well, you know what that letter's about," said Bunter, with a fat grin. "I saw Loder and Carne reading it together, and they were grinning like hyenas. They've fairly got Wingate on toast. I must say it serves him right, too. He kicked me yesterday; making out that I was listening at a door, you know, when I had only stooped to tie my shoe-lace."

"I hope he kicked you hard," said Wharton.

"Beast! I wasn't listening, you know. I passed Quelchy's door by sheer chance, only I wondered what the Head had gone to his study for. And what do you think I heard?" added Bunter in deep disgust. "They were talking about some old idiot called Æschylus or something. I thought the Head was swearing at first—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"But it was only some Greek word. Thank goodness we don't have Æschylus in the Remove. Lot of rot, you know," said Bunter, "and that was all I heard, and then that beast Wingate came along the passage and kicked me, making out that I was listening, you know. Just the sort of nasty suspicious thing he would think of."

The juniors chuckled. Really, it was hard lines on the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars to be rewarded for his keyhole work by nothing better than a discussion on a Greek poet, and to be kicked for it into the bargain.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at," said Bunter. "These Sixth-Form men think they can insult a Remove man just as they like. I'd have told Wingate what I thought of him, only—only it was beneath me. I say, you fellows, I wouldn't wait any longer for Inky. What's the good of waiting for a blinking nigger?"

"My esteemed fat Bunter—" said a soft voice in the doorway.

Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles as the Nabob of Bhanipur came in.

"Oh, I—I wasn't calling you a nigger, Inky! Jolly glad to see you, old chap! My dear fellow, I don't mind sitting down to table with a darkey, I assure you."

"The esteemed darkey is rather more

particular, my esteemed and idiotic Bunter."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Kick him out!" said Bob Cherry.

William George Bunter was gently but firmly deposited in the passage, and the door closed on him. Then Hurree Jamset Ram Singh produced a folded paper from his pocket.

"My esteemed chums, I have thoughtfully reflected on the preposterous problem," he said, "and I opine that I have arrived at a satisfactory and ridiculous solution. Look at that!"

The chums of the Remove looked at the paper the nabob laid on the table. They stared at it. The document was drawn up in the remarkable English that Hurree Singh had learned from the wisest and most learned moonshee at Bhanipur in his tender youth, and which he had never been able to unlearn at Greyfriars. It ran:

Honourable and Esteemed Wingate,—On Wednesday a ridiculous telegram will arrivefully reach you, stating that your never-sufficiently-to-be-respected paternal parent has experienced the disastrous eclipse of an accidental motor. To-day, being solely Friday, it will be apparent to your luminous and lofty intellect that this fore-knowledge of the spurious communication demonstrates that it will be only a fake, a snare, and a delusion. As you will have the comprehension that if your ridiculous father was going to be accidentally motored on Wednesday, next week, the writer hereof could not possibly know about it to-day, not being of the prophetic nature. And so you will surmise that the disgusting telegram from ancient and respectable city of Chester is merely a trick to absent you from cricket match. As the English proverb observes with sapient wisdom, fore-armed is fore-legged, this ridiculous letter will place you on your absurd guard."

"My only summer bonnet!" said Bob Cherry blankly. "If Wingate gets that it will make him sit up and take notice, I should think. It might give him a fit."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My esteemed chums, I have drawn up that communication with great care," said the nabob. "That is why I am lateful for excellent tea. The big idea is not to give this letter to Wingate now, when he would probably put it on the fire and perhapsfully lick the esteemed writer thereof."

"What's the idea, then?" asked Wharton.

The nabob smiled the smile of superior wisdom.

"The esteemed letter will be sealed in an absurd envelope," he explained, "and the honoured Wingate will be requested to take charge of it and lock it in his desk."

"What on earth good will that do?" asked Nugent.

"Lots, my excellent Franky. On Wednesday the ridiculous telegram will arrive for Wingate—"

"And then the fat will be in the fire," said Bob.

"Not if Wingate has had this letter in his absurd hands for several days, my worthy Bob. As soon as he receivefully gets the telegram from Chester we ask him to open this letter and read it."

"Oh!" exclaimed Wharton. "I see!"

"The excellent Wingate will then learn that the telegram was known about in advance, and therefore that it is a delusion and a snare, and he will not be caught trapfully," explained Hurree Singh.

"My hat!" exclaimed Bob. The juniors looked at one another. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had undoubtedly hit on a solution of the difficult problem. Wingate could hardly believe that the telegram, on Wednesday, was genuine if he had written proof in his hands that the Remove fellows had known about it on the Friday of the previous week.

"Inky, old black bean, you've worked the jolly old oracle," exclaimed Bob. "If we can get old Wingate to keep this in hand till Wednesday—"

"And open it after the telegram's come," chuckled Johnny Bull, "it will let Loder down with a bump."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"That does it!" he said. "Wingate can't be taken in by a spoof wire on Wednesday about a motor accident to his father with this in hand. It works the oracle. Perhaps we'd better write it out again—make a rather—hem!—shorter letter of it—"

"Perhaps we had," chuckled Bob.

"But whyfully, my esteemed chums?" asked the nabob reproachfully. "I have expended meticulous and terrific care upon this absurd epistle, and in my humble opinion the result is truly preposterous."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "The preposterousness is terrific, old scout. But the idea is to put it in English not learned at Bhanipur."

"What is the matterfulness with the letter in its present absurd and excellent state?" demanded Hurree Singh warmly. "As honourable and idiotic Shakespeare remarks, it is superfluous to gild refined gold and paint the absurd lily."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"After all, it's all right," said Wharton, laughing. "It's Inky's wheeze, and he has a right to put it in his own jolly old language. Wingate will be able to sort out what it means. Let it rip!"

And, with many chuckles, that was decided upon, and the letter was sealed up in an envelope, with a good allowance of sealing-wax, and then the Famous Five sat down cheerfully to tea.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### The Mysterious Letter!

**W**HAT the thump—"The captain of Greyfriars uttered that ejaculation.

Wingate of the Sixth was at tea in his study, and several men of the first eleven were with him—Gwynne, North, Lawrence, and Blundell of the Fifth. Tea, in fact, was over, but the great men were sitting and discussing the matter which, at that particular time, transcended all others in importance—the fixture with the first eleven of St. Jim's.

A tap at the door interrupted, and the door opened to reveal the smiling, dusky face of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The Nabob of Bhanipur walked cheerily into the study, and after him came four other members of the Remove—Wharton, Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Johnny Bull. Wingate and his friends stared at the invasion, and the captain of Greyfriars inquired, not too politely, what the thump it meant.

"Esteemed Wingate," said the nabob gently, "the regretfulness to interrupt absurd and long-winded jaw is terrific. But the begfulness of the favour is the cause of this idiotic visit."

Wingate grinned.

"You might have chosen another time for your idiotic visit, you young ass," he





"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "You should have seen him! Loder's ugly enough at the best of times—but with that mixture on his face he looked a picture—a real picture. I say, Fry, what are you staring at?" Fry was staring at the face of Gerald Loder, who had suddenly appeared in the doorway at that moment. (See Chapter 12.)

said. "But cut ahead, and get it over. Sharp!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh produced a sealed envelope from his pocket, and laid it on the table.

The seniors stared at it.

"What on earth's that?" asked Wingate.

"The esteemed envelope contains a preposterous letter of the greatest and most absurd value," explained Hurree Singh. "May we beg the great and ludicrous Wingate to take charge of this important document for a few days, as the lossfulness of the same would be an absurd disaster."

"Oh," said Wingate. "I see! If there's anything valuable in the letter, I'll lock it up in my desk for you, if that's what you mean."

"That is the precise meanfulness of my idiotic remarks," answered Hurree Jamset Ram Singh amiably. "If the absurd Wingate would be so beneficent as to lock up this letter in his esteemed desk, all would be gardenfully lovely."

"I don't mind, you young duffer," said Wingate, laughing. "You can leave it with me. Have all these young asses come with you to see it safe?"

"Just that, Wingate," said Bob Cherry. "That's really a very important letter, and if it gets lost, the fat will be in the fire."

"Awfully important, Wingate!" said Harry Wharton. "If you wouldn't mind taking care of it for a few days, we—"

"I don't mind in the least. Leave it there, and cut."

"The apologise is terrific!" murmured the nabob. "But if the worthy and ridiculous Wingate would lock it up

with immediate promptfulness, it would relieve my idiotic and preposterous mind."

Wingate grunted.

"Oh, all right!" he said impatiently.

And the Greyfriars captain rose to his feet, unlocked his desk, put the letter inside, and locked the desk again.

"There! Is that all right?" he demanded.

"The rightfulness is terrific!"

"Many thanks, Wingate!"

"Never mind the thanks—cut!" said Wingate, and the Famous Five cut. A smile passed round the circle of seniors—the tolerant smile of great men for the vagaries of lesser mortals. Then the cricket discussion was resumed, and they forgot the existence of the Remove. Certainly it did not occur to any of them that the letter locked in Wingate's desk had anything to do with the fixture they were discussing.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked away, quite satisfied in their minds. They had, as Bob Cherry expressed it, put a spoke in Loder's wheel.

Loder's plot was going on—and the cad of the Sixth had no doubt that it was going on successfully. Not till the scheme had been carried out to the end; not till the false telegram had been delivered at Greyfriars, and it was too late for the plotting prefect to turn to some other device, would he learn differently. Then would come the defeat of his scheme. That letter, locked up in Wingate's desk in the presence of witnesses, not to be produced until after the arrival of the telegram from Chester, could not fail to "work the oracle."

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows," said Bob Cherry. "I think we've handled

this giddy problem remarkably well and—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I don't know whether it's considered one of the regular duties of the Lower Fourth to look after the captain of the school—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we're the men to do it. Innocent old ducks like Wingate require looking after, and it's lucky for him he's got pals in the Remove."

"The luckfulness is terrific!"

"And on Wednesday morning," continued Bob, "Loder's face will be worth watching, when the jolly old scheme doesn't come off."

"It will!" chuckled Nugent.

"That's where we come in," said Bob. "We'll be on hand to watch Loder's face. I'm sure we shall enjoy the view."

Loder of the Sixth came across the quad, and he gave the chums of the Remove a sour stare as he passed.

"What's all that cackling about?" he snapped.

"You, old bean," said Bob.

"What?"

"Your face, you know. It has that effect on people."

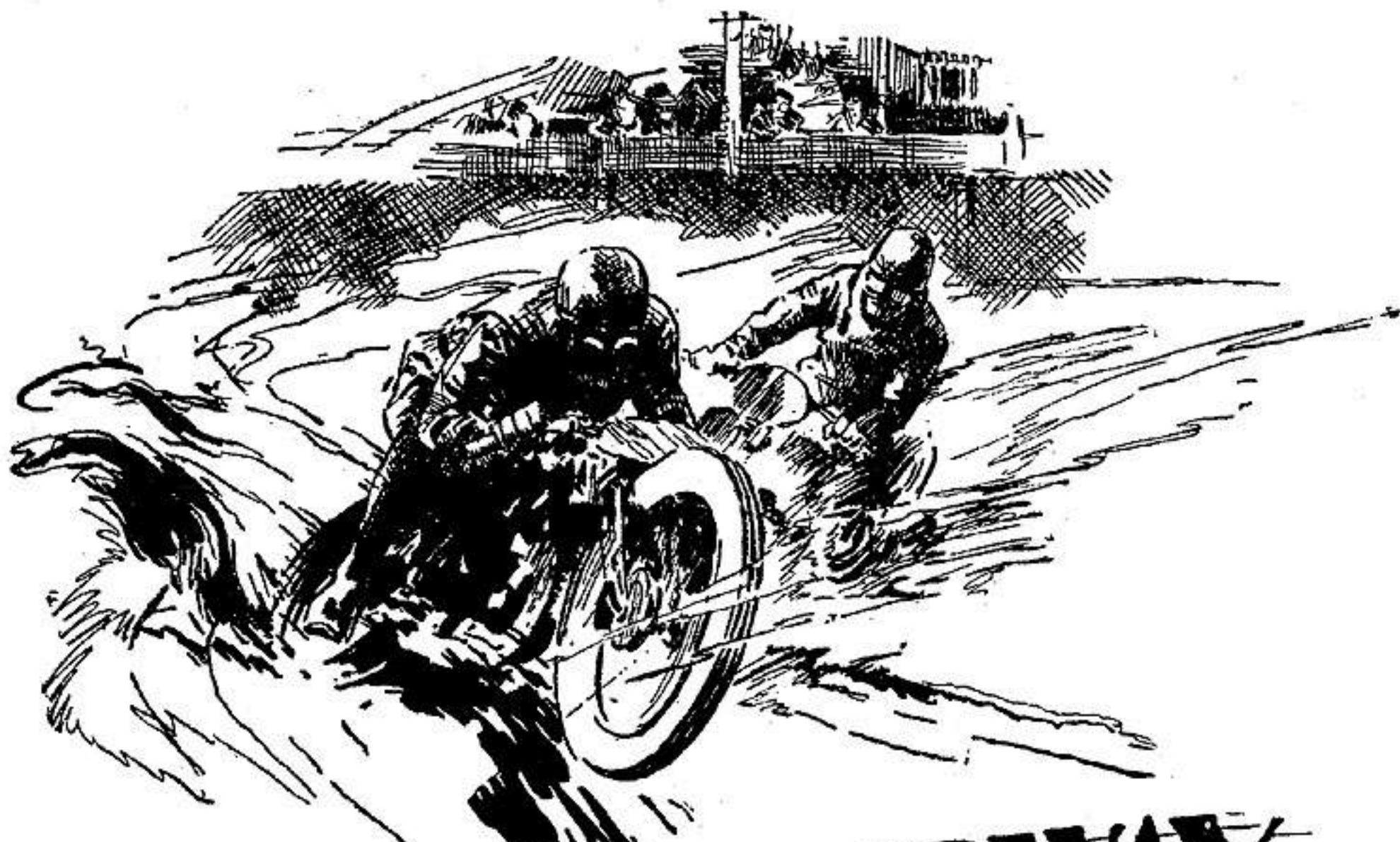
And the chums of the Remove hastily, and prudently, retired from the spot before Loder of the Sixth had time to get into action.

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss the grand sequel to this story, entitled: "PREFECTS AT WAR!" which will appear in next week's bumper issue of the MAGNET. Make a point of ordering your copy early!)

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**A Startling Surprise!**

**B**EHIND him Jimmy Beresford heard Carpenter come down in a helter-skelter smash, his speed-iron spinning on its side with whirling wheels.

Jimmy dashed on, and the checked flag fell for him. Meanwhile, attendants were running to the spot where Carpenter still lay, and it was discovered that he had injured his ankle too seriously to ride again that day.

"It was to be the best of three, Jimmy," said Ron Connolly, in the pits later; "but you beat him fairly and squarely the once, and I'd back you to lick him three times out of three. Jimmy, old son, Rossiter is going to meet his match at last—one day—"

From the Elsenham Park Speedway Ron and Jimmy took a tram to their "digs" and had a meal. At the "digs" Ron found a letter awaiting him, and as he read it over his face paled.

"Jimmy, you know Tom, my brother out in Canada," he said. "Well, he's been in pretty bad health for some time, but he's been making light of things. Now he suddenly lets out that he's got to go into a nursing-home to undergo an operation, and then he's going down south for six months. The whole lot will cost a couple of hundred at least. By gum, Jimmy, I'll be able to let him have two hundred if the invention's O.K.—and he'll need it, for he hasn't that amount of money himself."

"He's got to have this operation, Ron?" Jimmy inquired.

The other youngster nodded.

"Got to," he said a little hoarsely. "He's made light of his illness up till now; but in this letter he tells me it's a matter of life and death with him."

"Don't you worry, Ron," Jimmy said reassuringly. "Your invention's the goods all right."

Yet it was two somewhat seriously-inclined youngsters who made their way towards the Beresford Company's Works in the dusk.

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# **SPEEDWAY PALS!**

**A. CARNEY ALLAN**

The Beresford Works were situated some little distance from the "digs," and from the road they were marked by a number of great stacks that towered above a lofty wall. There was a double gate in the wall, with a watchman's box beside it.

Jimmy knew the watchman, and greeted the old fellow cheerfully as he and Ron passed through into a spacious yard.

**The Silver Helmet is one of the biggest prizes the dirt track has to offer to its daring performers. But if nerve, utter fearlessness and the will to win can bag that Silver Helmet, then Jimmy Beresford's head is the right size to fit it!**

At the other side of the yard were a number of factory and office buildings, with various extensions and sheds. The manager's quarters were immediately opposite the youngsters, and there was a light in one of the windows. Ron and Jimmy began to walk towards this office at a rapid pace, but they were still twenty or thirty paces from it when Jimmy gave an exclamation and caught his chum's arm.

"Look, Ron," he cried in a half-whisper, "just ahead of us! Do you recognise him?"

A stealthy figure had slipped out of a shed to the left of the manager's office, and on the instant Jimmy recognised that figure.

"Otto!" he breathed.

**The Test!**

**F**ROM the shed Otto, Jimmy's cousin, made his way towards the manager's office, and boldly entered. Seeing this, Jimmy and Ron looked at each other in utter bewilderment.

"I thought—I thought," said Ron, "that Otto was barred from the Beresford Works. Didn't Robertson take it upon himself to sack him?"

"Yes, he did," Jimmy answered, "meaning to tell dad later—when he was fit to hear the truth. Come on, Ron, we'll see what this precious cousin of mine is doing here."

The two youngsters hurried in the direction of the manager's office, and, knocking on the door, crossed the threshold. Suddenly they halted, for as they perceived

the occupants of the room they knew why Otto had been allowed by Robertson to remain on the premises.

One of the occupants was Robertson, the manager himself. Another, of course, was Otto. And the third was Gordon Beresford, a muffled figure hunched in a swivel-chair.

Jimmy immediately realised that Robertson had been compelled to accept Otto's presence because of the old man, who was still far from well. He realised something else; he realised that, for the very same reason, he must say nothing of Otto's mysterious behaviour.

"Hallo, dad!" was all that Jimmy could say. "I didn't expect to see you here!"



"Thought I'd come along to see the test," his father answered. "I'm interested in this new invention of Connolly's, and I felt well enough to come up from Westleigh. I'll probably go back there to-morrow."

Robertson rose to his feet.

"Well," he remarked, "I suppose we'd better make our way to the roof. First of all, though, we'll send up the bike."

He rang a bell on his desk, and two mechanics, who were there for the special purpose of handling the machine, came in answer to his summons. They were told to take the bike to the test-track.

Beresford Motors was a firm thoroughly up to date in many respects, and, in imitation of a famous Italian company, they had built a speedway on the roof of their main building. A lift took Jimmy and his companions to this speedway, which had a parapet on its outer rim, and was banked on the bends.

The works, of course, were at a standstill, the employees having finished for the day. The hour set for the test was perhaps unusual, but it had been the one most suitable for Robertson and for Ron as well, Ron being fairly tied by his duties as a mechanic at the dirt-track and at Glendale Richards. As for the darkness, this was not a drawback, for the private speedway was circled by lights that threw their radius inward.

Jimmy climbed into the saddle of the bike, and noticed that his father watched him with a lowering expression—mindful of the high words they had so often had concerning the youngster's craze for motor-cycles.

It had been arranged that Jimmy was to make a preliminary circuit of the track, and, on approaching the group of onlookers, was to give the machine full-throttle and cover four laps as hard as he could go. A standard Beresford machine had made it in eighty seconds "dead." A Volson could probably do it in seventy-seven or seventy-eight. It was hoped that Robertson, with a stop-watch in his hand, would announce a speed greater than either the standard Beresford or the Volson.

Jimmy was pushed off, and began to circle the track, switching open the throttle tentatively as he did so. The engine sounded healthy enough, he fancied, but he did not really force it until he swung round the second bend and came in sight of the group of spectators.

The engine roared and the machine seemed to surge forward. He passed the little group like a flash, and, exulting in the way she was answering to the acceleration, the youngster opened the throttle to the limit.

The engine-note remained the same. The speed of the bike did not increase.

Jimmy was puzzled. He was travelling by no means slowly, but at the same time, he knew that his own Beresford could move faster. He was more conscious of the fact on the bends, for it was here that he specially noticed the shortcoming.

He did all he knew to force pace out of the machine, for Ron's sake. But it was useless, for the new engine would not have it, and when he completed the four laps he saw that the faces of his father and Robertson were somewhat grim, while Ron's was distinctly downcast. Otto, standing in the background, looked slightly supercilious, and slightly—ever so slightly—triumphant.

"Eighty-four seconds!" said Robertson.

Old Gordon Beresford was supporting himself with a couple of sticks, and although the test had proved a failure he was a trifle flushed, as if with excitement. Jimmy noticed this as he wheeled the bike back towards the group, but at that moment he did not take much account of it.

"Maybe I don't ride so well as you could wish," he murmured, trying to be loyal to Ron by making excuses.

"Ride!" It was his father's voice, and Jimmy was startled by the tremulous note in it. "I never saw anybody ride like it in my life! If the machine had had it in her you'd have beaten all records with her!"

Then Gordon Beresford stopped sheepishly as he saw Jimmy's knowing grin and realised that he was betraying the fact that he had been almost carried away. When he spoke again he had changed his tune.

"I'm not sure that I agree with him," he said gruffly, "but Robertson thinks that a bike sells itself on its speed these days, and not on the quality of workmanship that's put into it, or on its small petrol consumption, or on its durability. As far as all these latter points are concerned, Connolly, your engine is the equal of the present Beresford model. But, accepting Robertson's word that it is speed we should aim at, I'm afraid the invention is a failure."

"Yes, sir; I'm thinking it is," Ron answered.

He was thinking of his brother out in Canada, and the money he needed so desperately.

Leaving the two mechanics to see to the bike, the five returned to the ground floor via the lift—Jimmy, his father, Ron, Robertson, and Otto. Walking out into the works yard, Robertson contrived to hang behind with Jimmy.

"Otto wandered in, as bold as brass," he said, in an undertone. "It seems he knew your father was coming here. What could I say? I had to keep my mouth closed, and Otto knew it. But what was his idea in coming here, anyhow?"

Before he could make any reply Jimmy saw the two mechanics emerge from the main building and wheel the bike across the yard. They entered a shed with it—a shed somewhat to the left of the manager's office.

Jimmy stopped dead.

"Is that where you housed the machine?" he demanded of Robertson, and, as the latter nodded: "Then I know why it wouldn't cover those four laps in less than eighty-four."

#### INTRODUCTION.

*Jimmy Beresford, a cheery, athletic youngster, is the son of Gordon Beresford, the head of Beresford Motors, who are working on the plans of a new motor-cycle engine invented by Ron Connolly, Jimmy's pal. Mainly owing to an encounter with his cousin Otto, Jimmy is told by his irate father that he will either have to take a position in the works or fend for himself. Jimmy decides to do the latter, and, helped by Ron's expert mechanical knowledge, rapidly makes a name for himself at the Elsenham Park Speedway. The youngster soon realises that by fair means or foul the scoundrelly Otto is determined to inherit Beresford Motors. An attempt on Jimmy's life only just fails, and shortly afterwards his father, who is recovering from a serious illness, is kidnapped by agents of Volson Motors, Beresford's unscrupulous rivals, with whom Otto is in league. Jimmy and Ron discover, however, that Mr. Beresford has been taken to the lonely house of Bernard Volson, near the south coast town of Westleigh, and the two chums succeed in rescuing him. After a long succession of victories on the dirt-track, Jimmy Beresford finds himself faced with the hardest race of his career—a match-race against a crack rider named Jem Carpenter. Half-way round the last bend Carpenter's machine swerves out of control. Quick as thought Jimmy wrenches his speed-iron towards the outer edge of the bend and misses disaster by a hair's-breadth.*

(Now read on.)

So saying, Jimmy Beresford hurried forward and overtook his father and the others.

"Dad," he said, "I want you to have Ron's engine tuned up and give it another trial."

Old Gordon Beresford paused. "Give it another trial?" he echoed. "What for?"

Jimmy shot a glance at Otto, and then looked at his father again.

"Well," he declared, "you know how the Volson people tried to get hold of the invention. It's my idea that the engine may have been tampered with."

"Nonsense!" Gordon Beresford retorted. "Robertson tells me that a special man was working on it up to half an hour ago, seeing that it was in order."

"But it may have been tampered with since then," Jimmy protested.

The old man scoffed at the idea.

"How could anyone have tampered with it?" he asked. "No one has been here but ourselves and the two mechanics, who are fellows to be trusted, believe me. Another trial? I should think not! Connolly's invention has had a fair test, and this firm's time is too precious to waste."

The group broke up at the gateway, Gordon Beresford shaking hands with Ron and giving him a kindly word of sympathy and regret. Then the old man turned to Jimmy.

"Well, boy," he said, in the gruff way he had with him, "when will we be seeing each other again?"

Jimmy thought of the hint of excitement that had crept into his father's manner during the try-out on the company's speedway. Gripping him by the hand, he answered, with a grin:

"You can see me on Monday night, dad. I'll be riding for the Silver Helmet, at Elsenham Park. Stay in town over the week-end and come along."

Gordon Beresford stuck out his jaw. "I—come to a dirt-track meeting?" he growled. "I wouldn't walk a yard to see one!"

#### The Silver Helmet!

**T**HE Elsenham Park Stadium was as crowded as ever it had been, and the "fans" were yelling themselves hoarse as a quartet of riders hurtled round the track under the brilliant glare of the arc-lamps. Excitement was rife, for in to-night's meeting several of the big men were riding. Among the latter was Tornado Rossiter, mystery man, and recognised champion of the tracks; and though his popularity was hardly at a premium, he was certain to provide his share of the thrills if pressed hard enough.

The event in progress having come to an end, the next item on the programme was a match-race between Tornado Rossiter and a rider from France—Louis Boucheron.

Boucheron had already won a formidable reputation during a brief stay in Britain, and rode in the neck-or-nothing style so common to most of his countrymen. It was generally admitted among the fans to-night that he was not in Rossiter's class when the latter was in form, but it was hoped that he would beat the champion by sheer reckless riding.

Boucheron did his best, and it was a best that drew roars of applause and enthusiasm from the spectators. But Rossiter rode magnificently—as daringly as the Frenchman, and more skilfully—and he finished with a six-lengths' lead.

The announcer gave out the time as seventy-six seconds—a record for the

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track—and then he passed on to the particulars of the next event.

"Heat one of the Silver Helmet," he said. "The riders—Jack Hunter, Roger Dugan, Mark Selwick, Colin Halloran—and Jimmy Beresford."

The cheer that went up as he uttered the last name was one that rose from every quarter of the Stadium, for in his meteoric career, in his smiling, reckless advance from triumph to triumph, young Jimmy had won the hearts of the fans.

His army of admirers was still increasing, too—with every appearance that he made—and it was beginning to be said prophetically that Rossiter would have to look to his laurels, as a certain youngster was shaping into a prospective challenger.

Thus Jimmy wheeled his bike across the ramp with a face that was flushed under the aviation mask that concealed it.

He was placed in the middle of the line, with Hunter and Dugan on the right of him, Selwick and Halloran on the left, and in the moment or two of waiting before the attendants pushed them off he reflected that he would have to go all out again to qualify for the final. Hunter and Halloran were the men he had to fear, and both of them rode Volsons.

As he looked at the bikes of his two most dangerous rivals Jimmy could not help thinking of the hopes that Ron had entertained over his invention. Those hopes had been shattered in the test—through the treachery of Otto, Jimmy was convinced—and a further attempt to secure a re-run had met with a peremptory refusal on the part of Gordon Beresford.

Ron was not present at the track, for he had had to work late at Glendale Richards, a despondent figure, weighed down by the trouble that his brother was going through.

Jimmy's mind was diverted from Ron as the attendants pushed the riders away. The "spouts" blazed deep-throatedly, and the crowds in the stands began to fidget and hunch forward in expectation.

The five competitors made the preliminary circuit and switched round the throttle-grips as they came out of the second bend into the front straight. The speed-irons stormed forward with thunderous racket, deafening the spectators, but Selwick, in his eagerness, "turned up the wick" too much and forged ahead as the starting-line was reached.

The starter signalled a fault, and the riders were "flagged." They slackened up and made the circuit comfortably again, accelerating when they swung back into the front straight.

At the second attempt they passed the starter in an immaculate line.

The five of them dashed for the first corner, but Hunter, Halloran, and Dugan moved in front. These three kept dead level, and a length or so behind them Jimmy rode abreast of Selwick.

Into the bend rushed the trio in the lead, and Halloran, high up towards the outer edge, raked the spectators beyond the safety fence with the cinder spray from his back wheel. Meanwhile, on the inside position, Hunter was scrabbling round by the white line, Dugan challenging him with a long slide.

Jimmy and Selwick swept into the curve and shut off, to thumb the cut-out buttons and juggle with the handlebars. The grit spurted from under Beresford's rear wheel, and Jimmy heard it

rattling on Selwick's petrol tank as the other bike skidded alongside him. But only for an instant did Jimmy hear it, for when he slashed out of the bend Selwick was a length behind him.

In front Jimmy saw the crouching figures of the other three riders. Halloran was on the outside, but had gained a slight lead of the other two by his tear-away effort on the first bend. Hunter ran him a close second, with the advantage of the inner position, and Dugan was close on the tail of Hunter's machine.

Jimmy "slammed in" with the throttle, and stormed after Dugan. He was still a length behind him when the second bend was reached, but he hurtled into the bend at fearsome speed, and ploughed round it with his back wheel threshing sidewise.

He was level with Dugan when they came on to the front straight for the second lap. But Hunter and Halloran had increased their advantage by another length, and they were a clear ten yards in front of Jimmy and his rival when the first bend loomed close again.

The two leaders tore into the corner, and Jimmy and Dugan followed them. Dugan made a tremendous bid to outstrip the youngster on the Beresford, but he overreached himself, and, with his machine out of control, he bumped first on to the turf, and then back to the track, full into Jimmy's path.

Jimmy saw him falling in front of him, and he just had time to swing outward, using his body to swerve his speed-iron round the toppling rider. A matter of inches, a matter of a split second, and he would have been involved.

It was unfortunate for Selwick that Dugan's bike, in coming down, spun out into the middle of the track—even as Selwick was scorching round in a gallant attempt to regain lost ground.

Selwick was not the rider that Jimmy was. Neither had he Jimmy's presence of mind to act with lightning promptitude. His front wheel crashed into the wreck of Dugan's machine, and, with a jarring impact, his back wheel was thrown upward, so that Selwick was flung out of the saddle.

The two bikes and their riders had been carried off the track when the remaining three came round on the third lap. Jimmy was still bringing up the rear, but with the curve in sight he held himself in readiness for a dare-all effort.

At top speed he rushed the corner, and the exhaust-spouts belched flame as the "cut-out" came into action once more. The tail of the Beresford wrenching sideways again, the handlebars twisted hard round against the skid, and Jimmy's toe-plate tearing through the cinders, the back-straight was reached in breathless fashion.

The crowd cheered Jimmy, and his army of special admirers roared themselves hoarse for him. For he had come on to the straight only half a length behind Halloran, who had now lost first place to Hunter.

Hunter, however, was leading by no more than a length, and the spectators knew that a fighting finish was in store. Every member of that huge crowd was on its feet and yelling.

Jimmy lost ground slightly on the back-straight, through the Volsons' superior acceleration, but with his teeth gritted and his hands clenched vice-like on the rubber grips, he hurled his speed-iron into the second bend; and he

hit the front stretch for the last lap with Halloran no more than half a length ahead of him again.

A green flag signalled the final circuit, and at full throttle Jimmy chased Hunter and Halloran into the first bend. Here Hunter lost his advantage by an ugly skid that brought him down, and before he could recover himself Halloran was level.

It was to be a fighting finish, sure enough, for on the back-straight they were in a close bunch—Halloran and Hunter abreast, Jimmy only a fraction behind them.

Lying along his petrol tank, Jimmy stormed after his rivals to the second and last bend. He saw the leaders' bikes heel over as they hurtled into the corner. Then his own speed-iron was slashing through the dirt.

He had made a terrific bid to snatch the victory, knowing that it was now or never, and his machine tore round the bend in a long, vicious slide.

Ahead of him were Hunter and Halloran, a narrow gap between them; but in a split second Jimmy calculated that the gap was just wide enough for him, and to take it would avoid a swerve that must necessarily lose him ground.

He forged straight through. For the fraction of an instant the three bikes seemed to quiver, and then the Beresford had nosed its way ahead—well ahead.

Jimmy came on to the home stretch and "cut in" with the throttle. There was a blurring roar from the "Twin's" exhaust-spouts, and the youngster raced on to cross the finishing-line with a two-length lead.

### The Offer!

THE other three heats of the Silver Helmet had been run, and in the final Jimmy found himself matched against a trio of formidable riders—Reg Croxon, Tommy Leveson, and Eric Bellamy.

They lined up opposite the starter, Jimmy in red, Croxon in white, Leveson in blue and Bellamy in yellow. Shoved off by the attendants, they made the preliminary circuit and passed the post in perfect formation.

From the get-away Leveson took the lead, and he was a length to the good when he flashed into the first bend. After him rode Jimmy, and then came Croxon and Bellamy.

Hugging the white line, Jimmy scraped round after Leveson and held him to that bare length. It was still only a length when the second curve was reached; but here, with Jimmy and Leveson scrabbling on the inner edge, Bellamy made a dare-devil bid.

Out of the corner of his eye Jimmy saw Bellamy's yellow slip draw level with him. Then it was past him, and level with Leveson.

On the front straight Bellamy and Leveson fought for the lead, with Jimmy chasing through the smoke from their speed-irons. To the rear was Croxon, but on the next bend Croxon tried to push ahead of the Beresford Twin.

He managed to do so, but only to lose control and come down in a smother of cinders, with his bike swinging spiral fashion across the track.

Jimmy rode on, and gave his machine full-throttle as he hit the back-straight. Rushing the second bend, he slung his



speed-iron into a screaming broadside, and ploughed through the cinders to finish up half a length from the leading pair.

The third lap saw little or no change in their positions, though Bellamy was a shade in advance of Leveson, if anything.

The green flag dropped to signal the last circuit, and Jimmy realised that he had two more bends on which to snatch first place. But Leveson was of the same mind, and on the first of those two bends Leveson took a chance with a neck-or-nothing skid.

It was too much for him, and his speed-iron switched out across the track, missing the tail of Bellamy's machine by an inch and veering directly into Jimmy's course.

Jimmy dragged on the handlebars with all his might, and pulled to the

they wrenched to and fro, he raked dead-level with Bellamy.

They seemed to cling together for a moment in the middle of the bend, and then the Beresford Twin pushed ahead. On the home stretch, Jimmy let his speed-iron have it with the throttle, and he was a clear length in front of Bellamy before the engine-note of the latter's bike blazed forth.

Jimmy swayed backward and forward in the saddle to eke the limit of speed out of his machine, and Bellamy did the same, striving desperately to catch up with the youngster before the finishing-line was reached.

But it was a forlorn effort on Bellamy's part, for Jimmy had the start of him, and it was Jimmy who flashed first past the post.

As Bellamy came up with him, some little distance beyond the line, Jimmy

lady answered the door and told him that a visitor was waiting to see him in the sitting-room—a man who had refused to give any name.

Ron entered the sitting-room, and found "Mr. Brown."

"What do you want?" Ron demanded curtly, as the man rose to his feet.

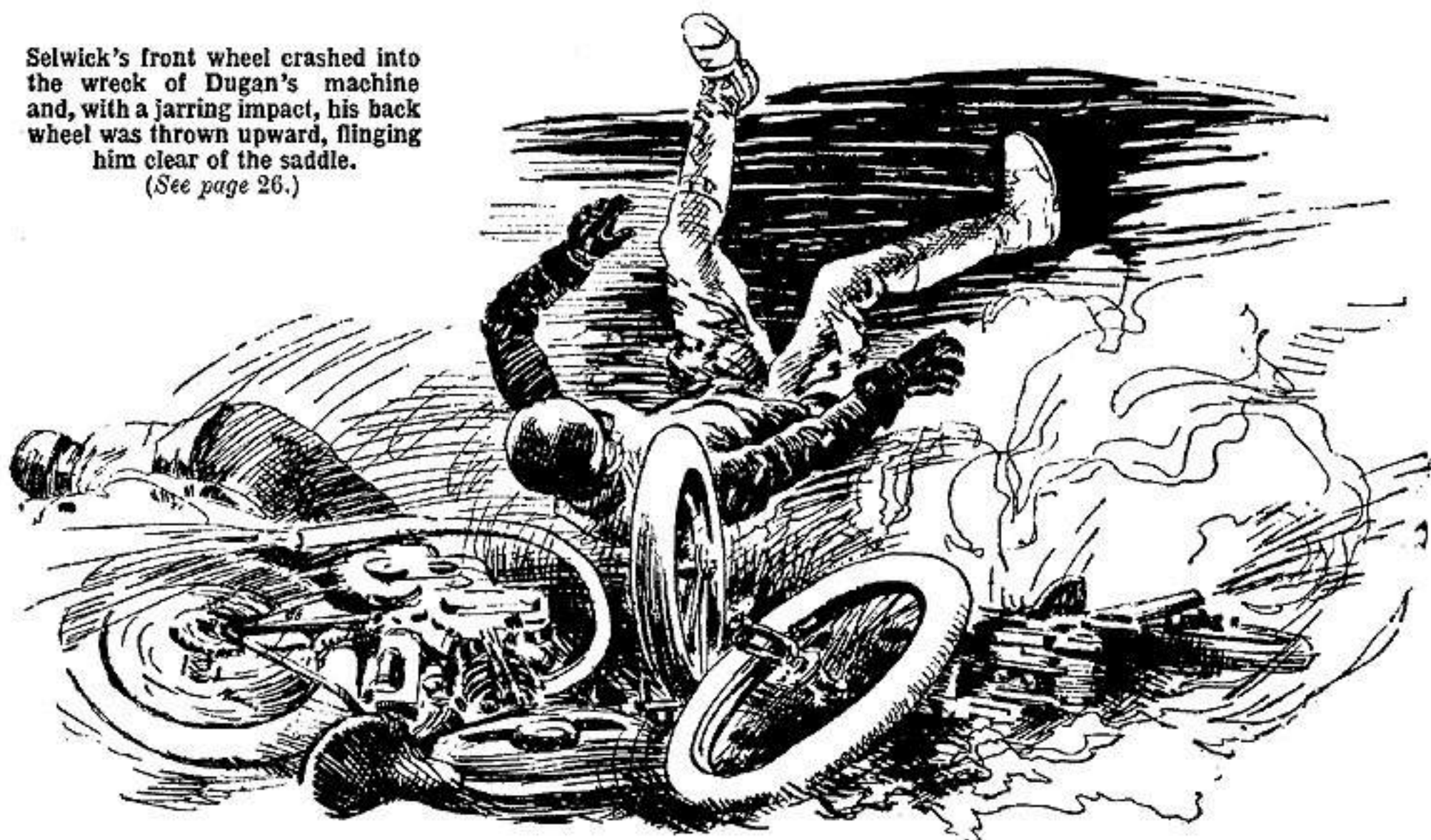
"I come, as I came some time ago, to put a proposition to you, my young friend," was the suave answer. "I am speaking on behalf of Mr. Bernard Volson, who is prepared to pay you immediately the sum of one thousand pounds for your invention."

Ron's lip curled. "You can have my reply right now," he said. "Tell Mr. Bernard Volson to go to blazes!"

Brown was very patient, and he came a step nearer, a mild expression on his lean face.

Selwick's front wheel crashed into the wreck of Dugan's machine and, with a jarring impact, his back wheel was thrown upward, flinging him clear of the saddle.

(See page 26.)



outer edge while in the act of passing Leveson. The two bikes streaked up across the curve towards the safety fence, Jimmy forced in that direction by his rival's uncontrollable side-slip. For an instant it seemed as if a double crash was inevitable, as if the youngster on the Beresford must be jammed between the wire and the bike.

But Jimmy was travelling a fraction faster than Leveson, and that extra fraction saved him. Riding along by the safety fence, he forged on round the curve as Leveson's bike dived into the wire after grazing the tail of the Beresford Twin.

Jimmy heard the ugly thud of the other man's machine as it hit the fence, and in a quick, backward glance he had an impression of Leveson coming out of the saddle.

Next second the youngster was on the back-stretch. He had lost ground to Bellamy through being forced to the outer edge; but with the throttle-grip twisted hard round, he stormed for the last curve at top speed.

He slashed into it three lengths behind Bellamy, and his "spouts" blazed savagely as he thumbed the "cut-out" button. Round came his back wheel once more in an amazing broadside, and, with his gauntleted fists struggling against the handlebars as

held out his gauntleted hand to him in a sportsman-like gesture, and the two of them gripped. Meanwhile, the crowd was cheering, and they continued to cheer till the announcer raised his voice.

"Winner of the Silver Helmet, Jimmy Beresford! His time, seventy-nine seconds, dead—his best yet, I fancy; and only three seconds outside the record."

There was more cheering, and in the midst of that cheering Jimmy suddenly heard his name coupled with that of Rossiter.

"Look out, Rossiter!" That was what they were shouting. "Jimmy Beresford's after you!"

From the hands of a celebrity in the sports world Jimmy received the trophy of his victory, the Silver Helmet, and, wearing it, he rode round the track with the plaudits of the crowd dinning in his ears.

Having finished work at Glendale Richards, Ron Connolly made his way home to the "digs," where he shared a room with Jimmy.

He was in a despondent mood, for he was thinking of his brother again. He was tired, too—tired with a long day's toil—and this, together with the worry on his mind, had sapped the spirit out of him.

When he reached the digs his land-

"Now listen!" he started. "Beresford Motors have turned your invention down and—"

"Yes, because that rotter, Otto, tampered with it!" Ron cut in.

Brown shrugged his shoulders.

"I am afraid I do not understand," he lied. "But hear what I have to say, if you please. I suppose a thousand pounds would be acceptable to you? A thousand pounds! Think what you could do with that amount, my young friend."

And Ron Connolly thought, for, unwittingly, Brown had got home with the finest line of argument, he could have put forward.

It was of his brother in Canada that Ron thought, the brother who needed two hundred pounds to avert disaster and ruin.

Brown saw the wavering in the youngster's eyes, and with an exultant expression on his countenance he moved closer still and laid a hand on Ron's shoulder.

"Think," he resumed. "Think how you—"

But before he could say more the door was jerked open and a tall figure came into the room.

(Could Ron but realise it, this sudden interruption has saved him from blundering badly! Look out for another thrilling instalment in next week's MAGNET.)

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## "FILM STRUCK!"

(Continued from page 15.)

"No, thank you! I never touch the horrid things," said the Head with a shudder. "Usually, I smoke hashish or opium. And now to bizziness! You may go, my boys."

"Say, let 'em stay on, Doc! I figger on giving them parts in the picture."

"Oh, very well, then," agreed Dr. Birchmall, rather grudgingly. "Well, Mr. Reeler, I understand you want to produce a film at St. Sam's?"

"You've said it! I'm gonna make the greatest collidge drama ever, right hyer! Just say the word 'go,' Doc, and I'll get bizzzy!"

Dr. Birchmall nodded, and a crafty look appeared in his eyes.

"Goodenuffski!" he said, lapsing into Russian with skollerly ease. "I'll give you permission with grate plezzure, sir. There's only one thing—"

"Waal?"

"I take it for granted you will want me to play the leading part in your film?"

Flicker Y. Reeler fairly jumped.

"You play the leading part?" he repeated, in astonishment. "Waal, carry me home to dy'e! I guess you ain't serious, Doc?"

"Well, guess again, then!" snapped Dr. Birchmall, rather annoyed to find that the grate producer didn't immediately fall on his neck and thank him for the offer.

"I insist on playing the leading part, anyway. Otherwise, I shall refuse to allow you the use of St. Sam's at all!"

"Oh, grate pip!" merrimed Jack Jolly & Co. in dismay.

Flicker Y. Reeler chewed his seegar savvidgely.

"Look hyer, sir, you surely ain't going to stop the entire caboosh jest because you cain't play lead in the picture, are you? Give the old think-box another go, Doc! I'll give you a small part in the crowd, if you like—"

"A small part in the crowd!" cried the Head, skornfully. "If you think I shall be satisfied with that, you've made a big

mistake! Those are my terms, anyway. Take 'em, or leave 'em. Either I take the leading part, or you don't take your film at St. Sam's!"

"Then I quit!" said the grate Film King, without hezzitation. "I guess your terms ain't reasonable. I vermoose the ranch! When I'm thinking of filming a freak show, Doc, I'll come back and see you again!"

With that parting shot, Flicker Y. Reeler jammed his billycock on his napper and buzzed off, leaving Dr. Birchmall nashing his teeth at the thought that all his study and practiss had come to nought—that he wasn't going to be a film star after all!

Jack Jolly & Co. disconsolately followed the Film King back to his car and said good-bye to him.

"Don't despere yet, sir," said Jack Jolly, as they parted. "We're pretty braney chaps, you know. Perhaps if you'll allow us to think it over, we may get a branewave in the next cupple of days."

"Get bizzzy, then, boys!" grinned Flicker Y. Reeler as he settled back in the cushions of his limosine. "And if you can find a way out, then yours trooly will see that you get all that will be coming to you, beleove me, kids!"

With that the sellybrated picture producer left St. Sam's, and Jack Jolly & Co. returned to the study to discuss the grate problem: How to get Dr. Birchmall's permission to make a film at St. Sam's—without the Head himself in the leading roll!

THE END.

Next Week's Special  
St. Sam's story:—

"Dr. BIRCHEMALL  
—FILM STAR!"

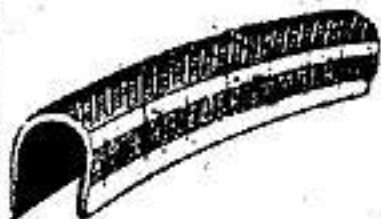
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Dicky Nugent

STIR UP THE

"HALLO! What the thump—"  
"Look what's coming!"  
"Oh, crickey!"  
Jack Jolly and his pals, Merry and Bright, who were down at the school gates spending an odd five minutes pulling Fossil's leg, gazed in surprise at the gate limousine which had just pulled up outside. Not that expensive cars were unusual at St. Sam's; quite the reverse in fact for many of the boys were sons of wealthy recoverers, cat burglars, and nobility. But the car that had just made its appearance was certainly the most magnificent Jack Jolly & Co. had ever seen.

From its gold-crowned bonnet to its diamond-studded jagged grille, it was beautiful in the eggtone. And to add to its lavish appearance, a uniformed hunchy car was a gentleman wearing a billycock hat, a forrin-jocking suit, and enormous horn-rimmed glasses.

"Grate pip! What a car!" murmured Jack Jolly. "That chap must be as rich as Croesus, you fellows!"  
"He's waving to us!" egged loudly Bright, as the car began to roll slowly through the open gates. "Let's see what he wants."

The three cheery chums of the Fourth seeped over to the car, and the strange-looking jant leaped out.  
"Howdy, kids!" he cried, speaking with a strong American accent. "I kinder guess this hyer shebang is Saint Samwell's, hey?"

"Right on the wicket, sir!" answered Jack Jolly. "Can we help you?"  
"Yep, bo! I got a date with the boss of the outfit. Jump right in, boys!"  
Jack Jolly & Co. willingly jumped in, and the magnificent car moved forward towards the Skool House.

The American gentleman eyed our heroes with evident approval.  
"Say, I'll tell the world you kiddos look mighty bright and snappy!" he remarked. "I kinder guess I'll fetter you in my big collidge picture."

"Picture?" gasped Jack Jolly. "Are you a film-producer then, sir?"  
"You've said it!" said the American. "Ever heard of Flicker Y. Reeler?"  
"What, the grate producer who made that wonderful, flashing picture called 'Burning Soles'?" I should think we have!"

"Waal, that's me!" grinned Flicker Y. Reeler. "Say, I figger on making a big collidge picture in this little old skool." "Hep at St. Sam's?" yelled Jack Jolly & Co. "Hoorny!"

"But what about the Head?" asked Merry. "I guess that's why I'm hyer—to get the old glad hand from the boss of the ranch! Say, is this whar we step out?"  
Got going then, and lead the way, boys!" Jack Jolly & Co. conducted their visitor up to Dr. Birchmell's study, leaving the grate car waiting at the bottom of the Skool House steps.

Jack Jolly wrapped on the study door. "Trickle in, fatted!" came the Head's deep, skoolerly voice from within, and they entered.

Dr. Birchmell rose and boughed, as he recognised the newcomers.  
"Mr. Reeler?"  
"Flicker Y. Reeler of Noo York City!" grinned the Film King. "Say, I'm right glad to meet you, buddy!"  
"Buddy?" repeated the Head, wondering what the dickens that meant for a minute. "Oh, I understand! An American greeting! In England, Mr. Reeler, gentlemen usually say 'How are you, old covey?'"

"Say, we won't argue over that!" said the American. "Time's money! Have a seegar!"  
(Continued on page 28.)  
THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 1,111.

BANG, creak, wullop!  
Mr. Lickham, master of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, stood outside Dr. Birchmell's study, timidly wrapping on the door. Five long minutes had he been there, and he was beginning to wonder what the merry dickens was the matter, for although the Head was undoubtedly in, his usual deep "Trot in, fatted!" had not yet reverberated from within.

Mr. Lickham's timid wraps grew louder, and more insistent. Still there was no response.  
"Bless my sole!" muttered Mr. Lickham, inspecting his boot, and then shoving a final savidge kick at the door. "He must have been struck as deaf as the proverbial bat. I'll chance it, and look in."

Of course, it was awful nerve of a near junior master to enter the sanctum of Dr. Birchmell without an invitation, and Mr. Lickham's heart pounded against his ribs as he opened the door.

It pounded a good deal more rapidly at what he saw. The majestic figure of the headmaster of St. Sam's was standing before a mirror, regarding his own reflection with a kind of hypnotic stare. As Mr. Lickham equined round the door, the hypnotic stare suddenly changed into an expression of savage rage; and then, in less than half-a-minute, it changed again into a beaming smile egging him from here to here.

"M-m-my giddy aunt!" murmured Mr. Lickham through teeth that chattered with fear. "So it's come at last! In spite of the fact that nobody is near him, he's touched!"  
And so it seemed. Not content with pulling the most awful faces, the Head suddenly picked up a walking-stick, and started duelling with his reflection in the mirror. Mr. Lickham thought it was time to stop in.

"Doctor Birchmell—sir!" he cried. "Whatever are you doing of?"  
The Head looked round with a start. "Hallo, Lickham!" he exclaimed. "You here? You're just in time."

"In time for what, sir?" gasped the master of the Fourth.  
"For the grate strangling scene! I need someone to strangle and you'll do as well as anyone else, I suppose!"  
"What?" yelled Mr. Lickham, going almost green with terror.

"Just come over here, Licky, and tell me what you think of my eggpression while I strangle you!"  
"Yaroooo!" roared Mr. Lickham, as the Head took a step towards him. "Lemme alone!"

"Surely you don't mind rendering me this small service?" asked Dr. Birchmell, looking quite surprised.  
"Oh, crickey!" belowed Mr. Lickham, dodging out of reach of the Head's outstretched arm. "Help! Murder! Perils!"

"I shan't take more than a couple of minutes over it—" began the Head.  
Before Dr. Birchmell could carry out his intentions the master of the Fourth had jumped for the safety of the passidge outside, and was bolting away for dear life.

Mr. Lickham did not paws until he reached the Masters' Common-room. He burst into that sally-brated apartment like a cyclone.  
"Quick!" he gasped. "It's come! It's come at last!"

"You mean it's gone, don't you?" enquired Mr. Chas. Tyezer, looking up from his comic paper.  
"What's gone?"  
"Why, Christians, of course," eggsplained Mr. Tyezer in surprise. "Isn't that what you're talking about?"  
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Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Ronald Colman and the other stars of the film firmament, are, in the opinion of Dr. Birchmell, simply not in it when he "pulls faces" for the camera.

"You silly ass!" roared Mr. Lickham, eggsplained. "I'm referring to Dr. Birchmell. He's as mad as a March hare—completely off his rocker!"  
"Tell us something fresh. That's ancient history!" yawned Mr. Justice.

"But this is serious, I tell you!" yelled the master of the Fourth. "He's dangerous, now. A padded sell is the only fit posee for him."  
And Mr. Lickham went on to tell the masters what he had just witnessed. They listened sceptically at first, but the grin soon vanished from their skoolerly dices as they heard Mr. Lickham's graphic account of his escape from strangulation.

"Donner und blitzen!" remarked Herr Guggenheimer. "Der Head has gone rot you call potty in der top-not!"  
"Eggsactly! We must overpower him immediately before he runs amuck," said Mr. Lickham. "Who will volunteer to help me in the task?"

The masters didn't seem to relish the job, for Mr. Lickham's story soon proved a source of jeneral fear. However, in the end they mustard a band of volunteers, and armed with pokers and bludjans, set out for the Head's study.

Dr. Birchmell was going it hot and strong by the time the masters arrived at his study. He was practising about all over the room, brandishing his walking-stick, and shouting for all he was worth.

"Stand back, variet!" he was yelling. "Move but an inch, and by my halldom, I'll strike thee three and three!"  
"Worse than ever!" whispered Mr. Lickham. "Better take him by surprise, jentlemen. We'll all rush in together, and give him the coop de grace before he knows we're here."

"Good egg!"  
"Der egg vos goot!" nodded Herr Guggenheimer. "Hock, hock!"  
At a given signal from Mr. Lickham, the masters sprang into the study, and fell upon Dr. Birchmell, suiting him hip and tity.

The Head was taken by surprise. He went down under the furious onslaught, yelling feendishly, and the whole crowd piled on top of him.

"Keep him under!" gasped Mr. Lickham. "Don't let him escape, for goodness' sake!"  
"No fear!"  
"Grooooo! Wooooooo!" Grottoff his chest!" gurgled the Head, from beneath

When Dr. Birchmell ploked up a walking-stick and started duelling with his reflection in the mirror, Mr. Lickham thought it was time to step in. "Dr. Birchmell—sir!" he cried. "What ever are you doing of?"

