

THE "FAMOUS FIVE" ARE JUST THE PALS YOU ARE LOOKING FOR!
(Meet them inside.)

The

No. 1,113. Vol. XXIV. Week Ending June 15th, 1929.

Magnet

LIBRARY

2^D

EVERY SATURDAY.



DROPPING ON LODER!

Gerald Loder takes a delight in looking for trouble, but he didn't think of looking into the tree where four "packets" of trouble were only too happy to oblige him! (See the remarkable Greyfriars school story inside.)



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.).

Hallo, chums, we'll kick off with the following clever Greyfriars limerick:

"I guess I'd knock spots off you, Fry!"
Said Fish, his pluck running high.
"You're a swanking galoot,
Who could do with a boot!"
But the "Fish," like the "Worm,"
didn't try!

A useful pocket wallet has been forwarded to R. Taylor, 58, Richmond Buildings, Brighton, Sussex, for the above winning effort.

Now, you sporting fellows, there's an anniversary this week which deserves a special note in your diaries! Exactly one hundred years ago this Monday the very first boat-race was held! I think I told you in my chat at the time of the last boat-race that it wasn't an annual event when it was first instituted, and, as you can see, the day upon which it takes place has been altered. I wonder if the fellows who first suggested a race one hundred years ago, ever imagined that the interest of the public in the race would become so great as it is nowadays?

You remember me mentioning last week about a woman novelist who made a ridiculous statement about the Derby? Well, the same lady got into hot water over her description of the boat-race! After describing how fast everyone of a certain crew rowed, she went on to say: "But none rowed so fast as our hero!" I think the spectacle of one man of a crew rowing faster than the others must have been a sight worth seeing!

There's one thing—you don't find MAGNET authors making silly mistakes like that! That's because our authors know their jobs—hence the enthusiastic letters I get from my readers about our yarns!

VERY INKY!

No, I am not referring to our esteemed and ludicrous friend, the nabob of Bhanipur! I am dealing with a question from John Tannent, of Wembley, who wants to know how ink is made. Ordinary ink is an infusion of nut-galls, copperas, and gum arabic. For blue-black ink a small quantity of solution of indigo is used for colouring. Glycerine and sugar is added to copying ink to keep it moist. Printer's ink is largely formed of lampblack, while marking ink is made from a solution of nitrate of silver, gum, ammonia, and carbonate of soda. Next, please!

THE LONGEST CANAL

in the world—this is in reply to Bert Warren, of Devonport—is the Suez Canal which is 100 miles in length, and cost nearly 30 million pounds to build. It is owned by a company, of which the British Government is a large shareholder. The Panama Canal—owned by the Americans—is not nearly so long—only 50½ miles. But the Panama Canal cost a great deal more to build! Roughly it cost 75 million pounds! That is because the Suez Canal is cut through

flat country, whereas the Panama Canal goes through mountains. The Kiel Canal in Germany, is longer than the Panama Canal by 10½ miles.

ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

Yes! Here's Ernest Mappin, of Mansfield, asking if it is true that the English language is spoken more than any other throughout the world. It is! Over 160 million people speak English, while German and Russian tie for second place with 100 million people speaking each. But those figures don't take into account the tremendous number of foreigners who speak English, and if statistics could be secured showing the number of these English-speaking foreigners, the total figures would be staggering. English is well on the way to becoming the international language of the world!

STAND BY FOR A LAUGH

with E. R. Doley, of 72, Henstock Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, who earns a penknife for this funny yarn:

Father and son were enjoying an afternoon's ramble in the country. "Just fancy, Norman," said the fond parent, pointing around him, "at one time these fields were covered by the sea, and fish were swimming about on the very spot we are now standing." "Yes, papa," said little Norman, suddenly stooping. "Why, look here, dad, here's an empty salmon tin!"

ONE OF MY GIRL READERS

asks me if I know anything about mermaids! A friend of hers told her that she once saw a "real mermaid" advertised at an exhibition, and my reader wants to know whether this can be true, or whether she is having her leg pulled. The object advertised as a "mermaid" was probably a manatee, which is an aquatic animal which grows to a length of ten to twelve feet, and has a shovel-shaped tail as well as limbs and nails which almost give the appearance of arms and legs. These animals were sometimes seen by sailors, and there is no doubt that in the old days people believed them to be mermaids.

Let me put you wise at this juncture to the fact that this week's dandy picture card in the novel series of Free Gifts depicting

MARVELS OF THE FUTURE

presented with our companion paper, The "Gem Library," is a real winner. It shows

A GYROSCOPIC MONO-RAILWAY.

Added to your collection this makes number nine in the series.

ABOUT "TALKIES."

When the Greyfriars fellows were in Hollywood, William George Bunter didn't get an opportunity of appearing on the

"talkies." But he was very interested in them and so is Harold Gibson, of Armagh. Up to the time of writing the "talkies," which are a general feature of London's entertainments, have not managed to get to Armagh. But, Harry says, several older people tell him that "talkies" are "as old as the hills," and could be seen even in the earliest days of the cinema. So they could—but those old-fashioned "speaking and singing pictures" were not in the same street as the modern ones.

In the old days they used to show a picture of a man singing, while a gramophone played behind the scenes. After the war Edison's talking pictures were

seen in this country, but these, again, were based upon a gramophone system, which did not prove very successful. Some of the methods of "talkie" production nowadays are still based on the gramophone, but electrical recording has advanced so far that many of the previous objections to "talkies" are now surmounted.

Gosh! The questions you fellows ask! If it wasn't for a staff of jolly good sub-editors, I am afraid I would very often be stumped! Here's one reader asking me

WHAT IS XANTHAMIDE?

I passed this on to one of my sub-editors—a fellow with a large dome of a forehead and big horn-rimmed spectacles—to answer. Do you think he was baffled? Not a bit of it! He just answered calmly: "Xanthamide is a crystalline substance produced by passing ammoniacal gas into an alcoholic solution of xanthic ether!" So now you know!

MONKEY TRICKS!

Just a minute! Here's a query which I shall have to put up to one of the sub-editors. Jack Carter, of Hythe, wants to know what a marmoset monkey would cost, and where he can get one. I expect one of the subs will know. (No offence intended!)

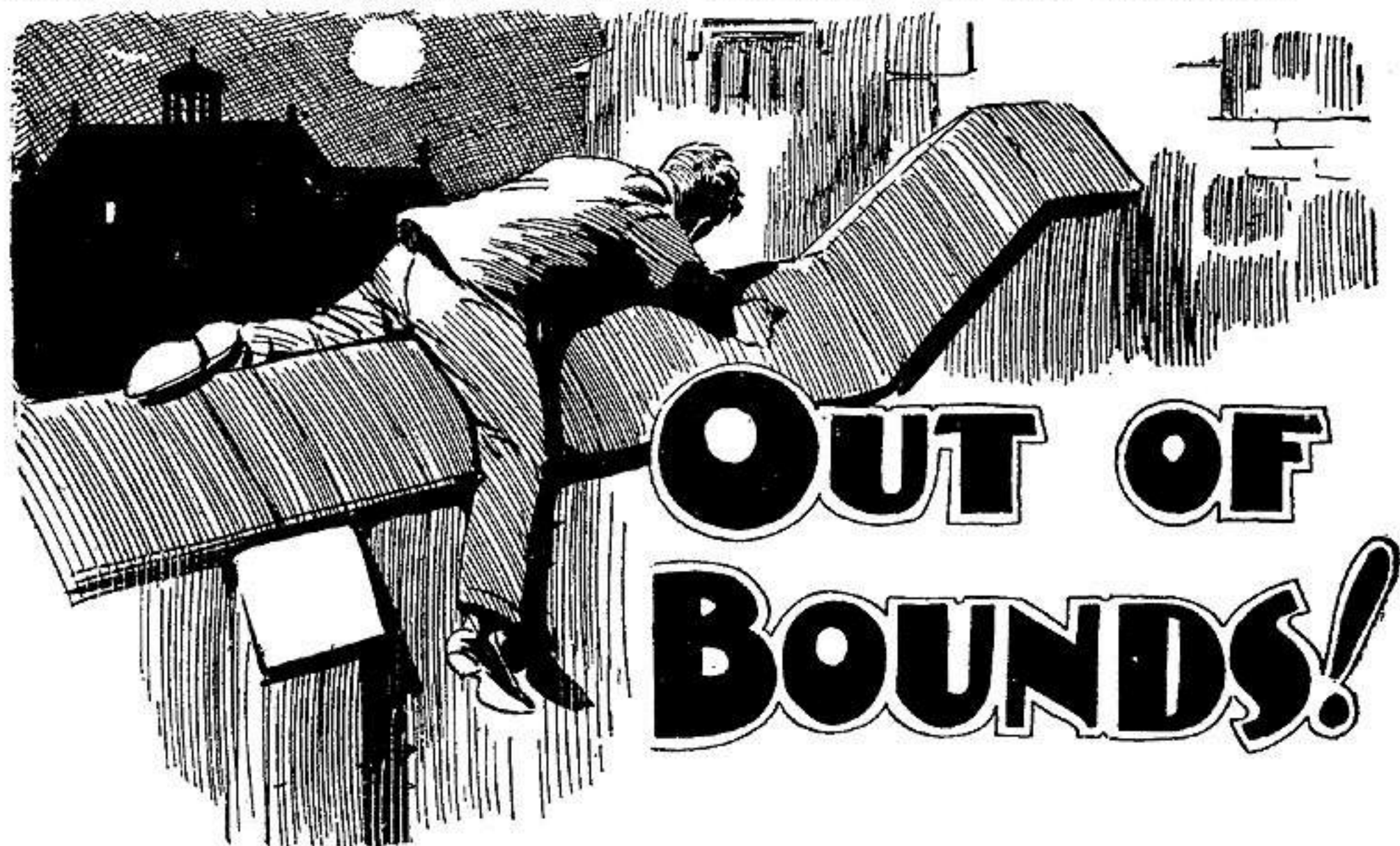
Those dots above denote passage of time! I've just come back from the subs' room. Phew! The first fellow I asked about monkeys went off the deep end. He says he once bought a monkey on the West Coast of Africa (he used to be at sea). Apparently that monkey bit everyone who went near him, slipped the chain with which he was fastened, and led the whole crew a dance trying to recapture him. One of his favourite tricks was to steal anything he could lay his hands on, run up the rigging, and pelt everyone who passed underneath! He got hold of a hose which was being used to wash down the deck one day, and had a happy time of it, turning it down the engine-room, and washing out the engineers who were working below!

They caught him at last when, after making a hash of the captain's cabin, he went to the chart-room and commenced to make a meal off the log-book! That settled things. Jacko was taken ashore and set free again in his native forests, and the sub. never likes anyone to mention "monkeys" to him nowadays!

However, another fellow tells me that Jack Carter can buy a marmoset, a very tiny monkey which can be carried in one's pocket, for about fifteen shillings. Any of the big London stores which have a pets' department can supply him, and the marmoset should be fed on ripe fruit and all kinds of insects. Occasionally bread and milk can be given.

Time's up again now, you fellows, so here's a list of the tit bits in store for you

(Continued on page 28.)



—featuring your old favourites—Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Chancing It!

TO be, or not to be," said Bob Cherry. "As jolly old Shakespeare remarked, that is the jolly old question."

It was quite an awkward question for the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove.

It wanted twenty minutes to calling-over, and that day Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was taking the roll. When Henry Samuel Quelch took the roll, it behoved all members of his Form to be promptly in their places. There was no chance of sneaking in at the last second, shuffling into one's place a fraction of time before one's name was called, under the gimlet eye of Quelch.

And the chums of the Remove were far from school.

They were, to be exact, on the towpath on the bank of the Sark, on their homeward way after a ramble. They were late—that is, they were booked to be late, for even by keeping on the trot all the way, they were not likely to reach Greyfriars under half an hour. Unless—

And that, as Bob Cherry remarked, was the question!

From where they stood now, near the bridge, there was a short cut through to Friardale Lane, which would save half the distance.

But that short cut was not a public footpath. It was a path that ran through the gardens of the Cross Keys.

Many villagers and other people used that path; Mr. Cobb, of the Cross Keys, allowed anybody to use it that liked. But to all Greyfriars fellows the precincts of the Cross Keys were strictly out of bounds.

There was no harm, certainly, in taking a short cut through Mr. Cobb's unkempt, untidy grounds. But any Greyfriars man who was seen in those grounds was open to suspicion.

So the chums of the Remove paused to debate the question. To arrive at school in time for calling-over was, of course, a fellow's duty, which Mr. Quelch would be sure to approve. But to break school bounds in order to arrive in time for calling-over was another matter.

"Oh, chance it!" said Harry Wharton, at last. "We can sprint through, and it's ten to one nobody will be any the wiser."

"It's that or getting in late!" said Frank Nugent, "and if we're late, it's lines."

"It would be a licking if Quelch knew we'd taken that short cut!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"But the knowfulness will not be terrific," observed Hurree Jamset Ram

It means certain expulsion for a prefect to be caught out of bounds by anyone in authority. Yet this doesn't seem to cure Gerald Loder, the unpopular prefect of the Sixth, of his shady habits; for he's a born black sheep!

Singh, "and what the esteemed eye does not see, grieves not the absurd heart."

"Oh, let's chance it!" said Harry again. "Even if we should be seen, I suppose nobody will think that we've been mooching round to the back door of Cobb's place after cigarettes, like Skinner and Snoop."

"Can't be too careful," said Johnny Bull, in his slow, thoughtful way. "A fellow ought not to butt into things when he might be misunderstood."

"Put it to the vote!" said Bob.

"Right," said the captain of the Remove. "Who's for chancing it?"

Four members of the Co. were for chancing it. Only Johnny Bull shook his head.

"You're in a giddy minority, old bean," said Bob. "Come on."

And the Famous Five went on.

Having made up their minds on the

subject, they lost no time. Quickly they hurried to the gate that gave on the towpath, clambered over it, and started along the path that ran under the trees.

They proceeded at a rapid pace. The most reckless member of the famous Co. realised that the sooner they were out of those questionable precincts the better.

But it proved to be a case of more haste and less speed.

The footpath through the trees had several sharp turns, and the five juniors, swinging round a corner at a racing speed, crashed into somebody whom they did not see till they crashed.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

There was a roar as that somebody went spinning over, with five breathless juniors sprawling over and round him.

"Oh! Ow! Great gad! Ow!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The juniors scrambled up.

"Blundell!" ejaculated Harry Wharton, in amazement.

It was George Blundell, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, who lay sprawling in the path before them.

Blundell sprawled and spluttered.

Most of the wind seemed to have been knocked out of Blundell by the shock, which was not surprising. Blundell was a big and hefty fellow, but the bunch of juniors had rushed into him like a battering-ram. He spluttered and gasped.

"Groooh! Ow! Ooooooh! You young sweeps! Oh crumbs! Wow!" gasped the Fifth-Former.

"Sorry!" gasped Wharton. "Didn't see you, Blundell—"

"Ooooooooh!"

"We are in a terrific hurry, my esteemed Blundell, but the sorrowfulness is preposterous!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Blundell sat up in the grass.

"Ow! Ow!" he gasped. "You young rascals! What—oooh—are you doing here? You're out of bounds! Groooh!"

"So are you, old bean," answered Bob

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Cherry. "What are you doing here, Blundell, if you come to that?"

"You cheeky young sweep! Oooch!" "We're taking a short cut," said Bob. "But you jolly well weren't! Come on, you men!"

Blundell staggered to his feet. He had had a light walking-cane under his arm when the Removites rushed him over. It had fallen into the grass, and now Blundell swooped on it and caught it up. What he intended to do with that cane the juniors could guess easily enough, from the expression on his face. They did not linger. True, the juniors had no doubt that they could have handled the big Fifth-Form man, cane and all. But there was no time for a shindy with Blundell. They had already lost valuable minutes.

The five juniors sprinted away along the path, and Blundell, making a swipe with the cane, just missed the last of them.

He made a stride or two in pursuit, and then stopped. Harry Wharton & Co. sprinted on their way unpursued.

"What on earth was Blundell doing there, you men?" said Bob Cherry, as the juniors ran on. "He's as much out of bounds as we are, and he wasn't taking a short cut—just loafing about."

"Goodness knows," said Harry.

"I dare say his Form master would like to know!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, there's nothing shady about Blundell," said Harry. "There are some bounders in the Fifth—Hilton and Price, and that set—but Blundell's as straight as a die."

"Proust wouldn't think so if he saw him here."

"Well, our Form master might misunderstand if he saw us here," said Harry, laughing. "Anyhow, it's no bizney of ours. Come on!"

And the juniors ran on, and were glad to see, at last, Friardale Lane before them.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Dropping on Loder!

"**H**OLD on!" breathed Bob Cherry. "What—?" "Ware prefects!"

"Oh, my hat!" "What rotten luck!"

Really, the luck of the Famous Five seemed to be out that afternoon. The short cut was proving, after all, to be the longest way round. Where the foot-path through the inn grounds joined Friardale Lane there was a gate, under spreading trees. And as the juniors came in sight of that gate they came in sight of a Sixth-Form man in cricket blazer and cap. It was Loder of the Sixth, the most unpopular prefect at Greyfriars—a prefect with whom the Famous Five were on the very worst of terms. Running into Blundell of the Fifth had only been a waste of minutes, but running into a Sixth-Form prefect, especially Gerald Loder, was a much more serious matter. Fortunately, they sighted him in time to hold on and dodge back among the trees.

"What putrid luck!" breathed Nugent. "First Blundell, and now Loder! What is that brute doing here?"

"He's not seen us," whispered Bob.

They peered cautiously round the trees.

Loder was standing at the gate, looking across it into the shady path under the oaks and beeches. Whether he had seen them or not, it was difficult to say, but they had no doubt that he had heard them. He was staring intently and suspiciously up the path.

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He opened the gate at last and came through.

The juniors exchanged glances. Loder certainly had heard them coming, and from the fact that they did not come on to the gate no doubt he guessed that they were persons who had no right to use the path—Greyfriars fellows, in fact. Obviously, he was coming to investigate. Loder was not a particularly dutiful prefect; he attached more importance to the privileges of his position than to his duties. But when it was a matter of catching a fellow out, duty became a pleasure with the bully of the Sixth. And certainly it would have been "pie" to him to catch his old enemies of the Remove out of bounds, especially in such suspicious precincts.

Wharton made a sign to his comrades and climbed swiftly into the nearest tree. The juniors followed his example promptly.

It was about a minute before Loder of the Sixth arrived on the spot. By that time the five juniors had vanished into thick foliage.

There they waited breathlessly.

They hoped to hear Loder's footsteps passing on.

But the footsteps came to a halt.

Loder, looking upward, grinned.

From the foliage above his head a foot was visible—one of the juniors, at least, had not had time to get into deep cover.

The foot vanished the next moment, but Loder had seen it.

"You may as well come down!" he called out.

No answer.

"Come down, Bob Cherry!"

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Bob.

"I think it's you, Cherry," continued Loder genially. "I fancy no other junior in the school has a foot that size."

Bob Cherry breathed hard. It was true that his foot was not a small one, but he had never expected to be identified by the size thereof.

"Out of bounds! You young sweep!" said Loder. "Pub-haunting, by gad! I've had my suspicions of you before this, and now I know! This will mean the sack for you. Come down at once!"

There was no reply from above.

"You hear me?" shouted Loder.

"I've got you, and you may as well come down. I'll take you straight to your Form master, with your pockets full of cigarettes, you shady young rascal!"

"You silly owl!" retorted Bob Cherry involuntarily. "We don't smoke in the Remove, like some Sixth-Form prefects in their studies."

"Come down, you young rascal!"

Bob Cherry made a sign to his comrades, farther up the branches of the tree. Loder evidently did not know that the rest of the Co. were there, and it was useless for five to be "run in" when the prefect was looking for only one.

"Keep doggo, you men!" breathed Bob, in the faintest of whispers.

And he swung himself down the tree.

Loder grinned as he appeared in sight on a lower branch. Bob dropped to the ground.

"So I've landed you at last, you young scoundrel!" he said genially. "Pub-haunting, what?"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" exclaimed Bob. "I was taking a short cut to get in for call-over."

"You can tell Quelch that," grinned Loder. "Perhaps he may believe you more than I do."

"I've no doubt that he will believe me," snapped Bob. "So would you if you were as decent as Quelch."

Loder scowled.

"Is that the way to talk to a prefect?" he demanded.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bob. "If

you're going to take me to Quelch, get on with it. You're wasting time wagging your chin."

Bob was anxious to get the bully of the Sixth off the spot, to give his comrades a chance to get clear. He expected Loder to take him by the collar and march him off. Loder did take him by the collar, but instead of marching him off, he began to box his ears right and left.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bob. "Ow! Oh, my hat! Leggo, you bully! Whoop!" Smack! Smack! Smack!

Bob Cherry struggled and roared. What happened next was a surprise to Gerald Loder. The branches of the tree above him suddenly disgorged unexpected contents.

Four juniors came hurtling recklessly down.

Crash!

"Yooooop!" roared Loder, as a figure, dropping from a branch, landed fairly and squarely on his head.

Loder shrieked wildly.

"Yooooop!"

He went crashing to the ground, with the nabob of Bhanipur sprawling breathlessly over him.

"Oh, my esteemed hat!" gasped Hurree Singh.

"Yaroooooh! Yooooop! Ooooooop! Moooch!" came spluttering from Loder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hook it!" gasped Bob Cherry.

The juniors hooked it promptly. Loder was busy, for the moment, recovering his breath and his scattered senses, and the opportunity was too good to be lost.

They rushed from the spot, leaped the gate into the lane, and sprinted away for Greyfriars, the howls of Loder still following them.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bob. "There will be a terrific row about this."

"The rowfulness will be terrific."

"Put it on!" gasped Wharton.

The Famous Five fairly flew along the lane. They reached the school gates just as Gosling came down to close them. The gate was swinging shut when five breathless juniors bumped on it, and it flew back, and the ancient porter of Greyfriars almost sat down.

"Look 'ere!" roared Gosling indignantly. "Wot I says is, is this 'ere—?"

But the Famous Five did not wait to hear what Gosling had to say. They flew in, and flew for the House.

Just in time, they joined the crowd of fellows streaming into Hall for calling-over.

"On time, anyhow!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Just!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"And very lucky at that!"

"Rather!"

The Famous Five were on time, at least. Breathless and ruddy, they stood in their places in the ranks of the Remove and answered to their names when Mr. Quelch called. That, at least, was so much to the good. But what was going to happen when Loder came in was another matter. There was going to be a row, and, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remarked, it was probable that the rowfulness would be terrific.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

In Haste!

I SAY, you fellows!"

"Oh, run away and play, Bunter!" said two or three voices together.

The Famous Five were in Study No. 1, in the Remove. They were not feeling disposed to settle down to prep, though time for prep was near. They expected,



Realising that the sooner they were out of the precincts of the Cross Keys the better, the Famous Five were swinging through the trees at a racing speed when they crashed into somebody. "Oh! Ow! Great gad! Ow!" There was a roar as that somebody went spinning, with the breathless juniors sprawling over him. "Oh, my bat!" ejaculated Wharton suddenly. "It's Blundell!" (See Chapter 1.)

every minute, a summons to their Form master's study, and that expectation had a rather perturbing effect on them.

Johnny Bull, who had been against taking that short cut through the grounds of the Cross Keys, had the undoubted right to say to his comrades "I told you so!" Unfortunately, Johnny availed himself of that right.

It was undoubtedly true that had Johnny's opinion been followed, the chums would have taken the longer way round. They would have got lines for being late at call-over. But that would have been all. Now they were going to get something more severe than lines: that was a certainty. Going out of bounds was a more serious matter than coming in a few minutes after their names had been called. Over and above, they had dropped on Loder of the Sixth—hard!

Loder was the fellow to make out that that was an assault upon a prefect. He would represent it in the worst possible light—as insubordination, mutiny—in fact, Bolshevism—if he could. And in fact, though the chums had not exactly intended to assault Loder, they certainly had intended to stop him from "pitching into" Bob Cherry—so the distinction was not very marked. Worst of all, they had been in the strictly forbidden precincts of the Cross Keys, and that would have to be explained very thoroughly.

Altogether, it was a chapter of disasters—which never would have happened had Johnny Bull's opinion been followed. All these troubles and tribulations, instead of fifty lines each, which would have been a mere nothing in comparison!

Still, it was rather unfortunate that

Johnny mentioned that he had told his friends so. Certainly he had! But it would have been more tactful not to stress the point.

"Fathead!" was the unanimous reply of his friends, when Johnny told them that he had told them so.

"Well, I did!" said Johnny Bull.

"Ass!"

"If you fellows had taken my advice——" said Johnny Bull argumentatively.

"Gentlemen, I vote that the speech be taken as read!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hear, hear!"

"Passed unanimously."

"Shut up, Johnny!"

Johnny Bull grunted. Johnny Bull was a practical, sensible youth, with an unusual allowance of strong, solid common sense. But his friends had to admit that he did not always shine in tact.

"That's all very well," he said; "but the actual fact is, that I told you so."

"Slaughter him!" said Nugent.

"You can't get out of it that I did, you know," said Johnny.

"Johnny was in the right," said Harry Wharton, "and he's in the right now. There are times when a chap's too much in the right. Let's bump him for being in the right."

"Good egg!"

It was just then that Billy Bunter appeared in the offing, rather fortunately for Johnny Bull. But for the interruption, Johnny certainly would have suffered at the hands of his friends for being so very much in the right.

"I say, you fellows, you rowing in this study?" asked Bunter, blinking into No. 1 through his big spectacles. "You

fellows are always rowing, ain't you? I say, what have you been up to?"

"Go and eat coke!" answered Bob Cherry politely.

"Is that what you call civil?" asked Bunter. "You've been up to something, I know that. Been upsetting Loder?"

"Blow Loder!"

"Well, he came in like a raging lion," said Bunter, "and I know it was you, because——"

"Run away and play!"

"Kick him, somebody!" said Bob Cherry. "There's enough trouble on hand, without Bunter butting in."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Buzz off!" roared Harry Wharton.

Really, the Famous Five had enough on hand without William George Bunter.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter warmly. "I was going to offer to lend you some old exercise books. Now I won't."

"You frabjous porpoise!" said Frank Nugent. "What the thump do you think we want your mouldy old exercise-books for?"

"To shove in your bags!" explained Bunter. "It's safer, you know, when you're going to see Quelch."

"Oh! And how do you know we're going to see Quelch, fathead?"

"He's sent me to tell you to come to his study at once," explained Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you'll very likely get it harder for keeping him waiting. It's rather risky keeping old Quelch waiting, you know."

"You fat idiot!" roared Bob Cherry. "Why didn't you tell us at once that Quelch had sent for us?"

"Well, I like that!" said Bunter.

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"Did you give a fellow a chance to speak? Interrupting a chap all the time! Yaroooooh!"

Bunter wound up with a roar, as he was shoved aside, and the five juniors streamed out of the study.

If Mr. Quelch had sent for them, it behoved them to repair to the presence of their Form master without the waste of a moment. It was not judicious to keep Quelch waiting.

"Ow!" roared Bunter, as he sat down in Study No. 1. "Beasts! I jolly well won't lend you those exercise-books now! Yarooooh!"

Heedless of the Owl of the Remove, the Famous Five hurried down the stairs. Any fellow but Bunter would have told them at once that Quelch had sent for them; but Bunter, of course, had wasted minutes. Minutes were precious in dealing with Quelch. Mr. Quelch's wrath, like wine, was apt to improve with keeping. If he was waiting in his study for the delinquents, with Loder pitching a tale of woe in his ear, it was likely that his temper was growing sharper and sharper while he waited. And in its very best and most palmy state it was sharp enough.

"I say, you chaps!" Squiff met the chums on the Remove landing. "There's a row on! Loder's just come in. Oh, my hat!"

Squiff staggered against the banisters as the five rushed by. He stared blankly after them, as they negotiated the lower stairs three at a time. There they ran into Peter Todd.

"Something's up, you men!" said Toddy. "Loder's gone into Quelch's study, and— Whooooop!"

Leaving Toddy staggering against the wall, the five sped on their way.

At the corner of Masters' passage they encountered Coker of the Fifth. Coming away from Prout's study, Coker of the Fifth met the Famous Five in full career. They would have waltzed round Coker. But Coker of the Fifth was not to be waltzed round. Coker did not approve of juniors rushing about the House. He disapproved of it strongly. True, it was not Coker's affair; he was not a prefect. But attending solely to his own affairs had never been one of Coker's weaknesses.

"Look here, this won't do!" said Coker, deliberately blocking the way of the hurrying juniors. "Think you're in a bear-garden? Just stop this racing about the corridors! It's against the House rules, as you jolly well know! I— Yaroooooooooop!"

How long Coker would have gone on never transpired. Probably for a long time; for Coker prided himself on being one of those strong, silent characters; and it is well-known that such characters give their chins a lot of exercise. But Coker was interrupted. He was not merely interrupted; he was seized on all sides, and before he knew what was happening, he was upended and strewn along the floor. The roar that Horace Coker gave roused numberless echoes.

The Famous Five trod over Coker and raced on into Masters' passage. They did not stop to ask Coker whether he was hurt. No doubt they knew he was.

Leaving Coker for dead, as it were, they rushed on to Mr. Quelch's study.

When Coker of the Fifth gained his second wind, and his feet, they had vanished. Coker glared round for them, and tramped away in great wrath, to tell Potter and Greene, in the games study, that he really did not know what Greyfriars was coming to. When Remove fags rushed into a Fifth-Form man and upended him, it was time for the skies to fall. But the skies remained where they were, as if indifferent to what happened even to Horace Coker.

Forgetful of the existence of the great Coker, Harry Wharton & Co. presented themselves, in a rather breathless state, in their Form master's study. There they stood in a panting row before Henry Samuel Quelch; while Loder, standing by the Remove master's desk, eyed them sourly.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Before the Beak!

MR. QUELCH fixed his eyes on the breathless five.

"You—you sent for us, sir!" gasped Wharton.

Mr. Quelch glanced at the clock. "I sent for you more than five minutes ago, Wharton."

"We—we hurried, sir—"

"Some fellow got in the way, sir," murmured Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch let that point drop. It was obvious, from the looks of the Famous Five, that they had hurried; and Mr. Quelch had heard a crash in the passage, and a roar, which indicated that some fellow had got in the way. So he let it pass.

"I have received a very surprising and very serious report from Loder," he said. "It appears that Loder found you five juniors within the precincts of a disreputable public-house. The matter is so very serious that I shall have to take you before your headmaster, unless you can furnish me with an adequate explanation. What have you to say?"

There was a gleam in Loder's eyes as he watched the chums of the Remove. He had a happy feeling that he had them now.

"We were taking a short cut, sir!" said Harry. "We cut across the Cross Keys grounds, to get into the lane from the towpath, to save time."

"You are well aware, Wharton, that the Cross Keys is strictly out of bounds for all Greyfriars boys, seniors and juniors."

"Yes, sir."

"You are aware that it is strictly forbidden to step within those precincts for any reason whatsoever."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"You are aware that any boy found haunting those disreputable precincts might state that he was simply taking a short cut, and that if such excuses were allowed it would be futile to place the resort out of school bounds at all."

Wharton was silent.

"Loder further states that when he found you, you were in hiding, and you attacked him on being discovered," said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"We deny that, sir," said Harry. "He collared Cherry, and we dropped on him from the tree. It's against the rules for a prefect to box a fellow's ears. We had a right to stop him."

"The rightfulness was terrific, sir!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Mr. Quelch glanced at Loder, who coloured uncomfortably. He rather wished that he had left the "attack" out of the story.

"You should not have boxed a junior's ears, Loder," said Mr. Quelch. "Such a practice is forbidden, as it's dangerous to health."

"I may have given him a smack, sir. He cheeked me—"

"You should have done nothing of the sort. In the circumstances, it is very difficult for me to condemn the boy's friends for intervening," said Mr. Quelch.

Loder bit his lip; but judiciously said nothing. The incident of the attack was tacitly allowed to drop.

"But on your own admission, Wharton, you were hiding in a tree when Loder found you," said Mr. Quelch. "That does not consort with your explanation that you were taking a short cut to save time."

"We dodged into the trees when we saw Loder ahead of us, sir," said Harry.

"To avoid discovery, I presume?"

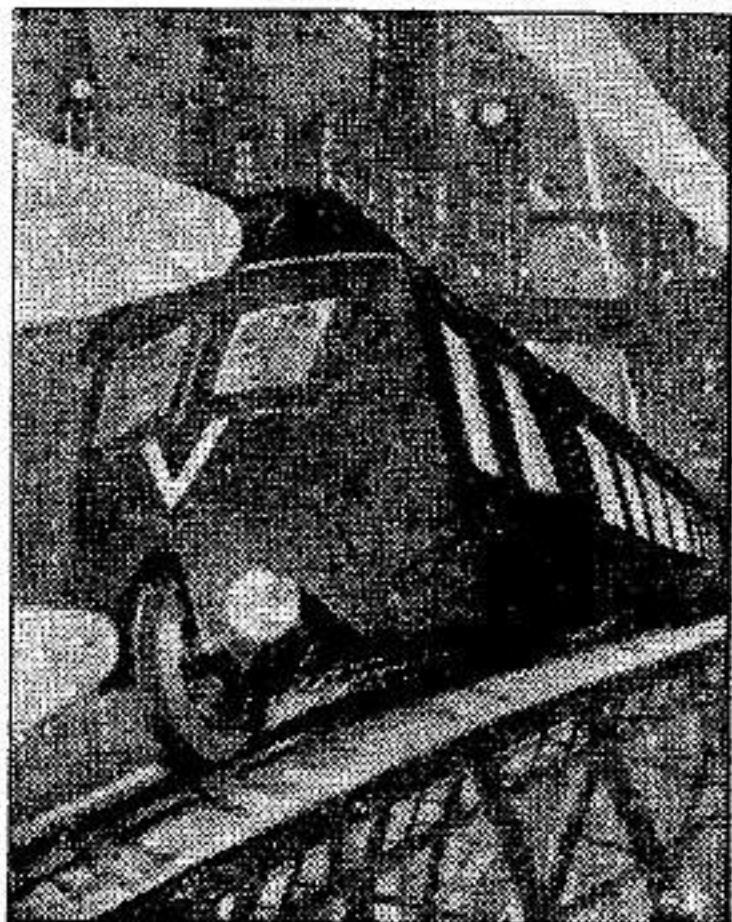
"Yee-es, sir."

"The fact remains that Loder found you in hiding, within the precincts of the Cross Keys?"

"Well, yes, sir."

"If I were convinced that you were merely taking a short cut, I should punish you for an action so foolish and liable to misconception," said Mr. Quelch. "That, however, would be a comparatively light matter. The fact remains that you were discovered in hiding in a disreputable resort. What

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proof have you to offer that you were hurrying through those grounds? You were not hurrying when Loder found you—you were in hiding."

The juniors were silent.

Undoubtedly Johnny Bull had been right. The longest way round would have been a shorter cut in the circumstances.

"Personally, I am disposed to take your bare word!" said the Remove master, more kindly.

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Nugent.

"But in the circumstances, it is impossible."

"Oh!"

"If I accept your bare word, I am bound, in common justice, to accept the bare word of any other boy in my Form found in similar suspicious circumstances," said Mr. Quelch. "You see that, I presume?"

The chums of the Remove had to admit that they saw it.

"That," continued Mr. Quelch, "would make all the rules regarding school bounds a nullity. It would put a premium upon prevarication. If, therefore, you are now misunderstood, you have only yourselves to thank, for having foolishly and thoughtlessly placed yourselves in a false position."

The juniors were silent.

"I am sorry," said Mr. Quelch, "but I must be just! If anything should transpire to substantiate your statements, I shall take it into consideration. Loder!"

"Yes, sir!" said Loder.

"Was it your impression at the time that these juniors were hurrying through that place as a short cut?"

"Not in the least, sir," said Loder coolly. "On the other hand, I am certain that they were doing nothing of the kind."

"Look here——" burst out Bob Cherry.

"Silence, Cherry!"

"But, sir——"

"Silence! Proceed, Loder."

Loder proceeded.

"I saw somebody in the trees there," said Loder. "I thought I knew them to be Greyfriars fellows, and stepped in to investigate. They climbed the trees to get out of sight. But my impression was that they were hanging about the place when I first saw one of them. I do not believe for one moment that they were taking a short cut."

"Were they, for instance, running when you first saw them or one of them?"

"I certainly did not notice that they were running."

"You are sure of that, Loder?"

"Quite, sir! My impression was that they were loafing about the place, and then they suddenly saw me and bolted into the branches."

Mr. Quelch's brow grew sterner and sterner.

"I may add, sir, that I have had my eye on these juniors," went on Loder smoothly. "There has been talk in the prefects' room of fags going to that place to get cigarettes. I cannot say definitely that these are the boys concerned; but I can say that I was not at all surprised to find them there."

"That's not true!" broke out Harry Wharton savagely. "You know jolly well that we've never done anything of the kind."

"Silence!" boomed Mr. Quelch.

His gimlet eyes gleamed at the juniors.

"Turn out your pockets on my table," he rapped.

The juniors obeyed. All sorts of things came to light—the strange and mysterious odds and ends that accumulate in the pockets of schoolboys. But

certainly there was nothing in the nature of a cigarette.

"They've had plenty of time to get rid of the things, of course, sir," said Loder. "It was my intention to bring them back to the school in my own custody. After knocking me over they bolted, and I had no doubt that they had something they wanted to get out of sight."

"You know that's not true," said Wharton disdainfully.

"How dare you, Wharton?" thundered Mr. Quelch. "If you are indeed guiltless of wrongdoing, you have placed yourself in such a position that it is impossible to avoid distrusting you. I shall consider this matter; but I can hold out no hope that you will not be taken before your headmaster in the morning, and I have little doubt that Dr. Locke will administer a flogging. You may go."

The juniors went; and did not fail to catch the gleam of triumph in Loder's eyes as they left the study. Loder had got them where he wanted them, at last; that was a certainty.

In the Remove passage, the Famous

This week's MAGNET pocket knife goes to: S. Thorne, Church Street, Speights town, St. Peters, B/dos, B.W.I., who sent in the following amusing joke:

Bobby Jones was one of the few boys who said he didn't want to be an engine-driver, a pirate, a fireman, or a dirt-track rider. "What are you going to be, then," asked his aunt, "a policeman?" "No, I'm not," answered Bobby. "I don't want to tell you what I am going to be!" "Well, will you tell me if I give you some more pudding?" asked his aunt. Bobby gave in, and announced that he was going to be an after-dinner speaker. "What ever for?" "Why, auntie," said the youngster, with a laugh, "just think of the dinners!"

Get busy now, chums, and see if you can win one of these useful prizes.

Five looked at one another grimly before they separated to go to their studies for prep.

"This is a go!" grunted Bob.

"The go-fulness is terrific!" groaned Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh.

Wharton set his lips.

"Loder knows perfectly well that we've told the truth," he said. "He's given Quelch a false impression on purpose. He's taking this chance of paying off old scores."

"No good telling Quelch that!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I'm not thinking of telling Quelch that, ass! But we'll make Loder sit up for this, somehow."

"Only, we're going to be made to sit up first!" said Frank Nugent, with a grimace. "It looks like a flogging for five."

"It do—it does!" growled Bob Cherry. "I wish you'd fallen a bit harder on the brute's head, Inky."

"Well, we've got ourselves to blame, just as Quelch said," remarked Johnny Bull. "If we'd kept clear of the place we——"

"Well, we didn't!" said Harry tartly.

"That's what I'm saying. If we had——"

"Give us a rest," grunted Bob.

"The still tongue, my esteemed

Johnny, is the cracked pitcher that goes longest to the well," murmured the nabob.

"That's all very well," said Johnny Bull stolidly. "But we can't expect anything else, after playing the giddy ox. We've asked for this and we've got it—— Yaroooooh!"

It was too much! Johnny Bull had told them so, and he had told them that he had told them so. Now he told them once too often.

Four pairs of hands were laid on Johnny Bull at the same moment, as if moved by the same spring.

Bump!

Johnny Bull sat down in the Remove passage.

"Yooop!" roared Johnny, in great wrath and indignation.

And his chums, feeling a little solaced, went to their studies for prep and left him to roar.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Cackle!

SKINNER of the Remove smiled. It was "pie" to Skinner.

Skinner had one of those happy natures which can always derive a little harmless and necessary amusement from the contemplation of a fellow down on his luck. Had the fellows who were now landed in trouble been Skinner's friends the amiable Skinner would not have been entertained. But they were far from being his friends—they did not like Skinner, and made no secret of the fact. So Harold Skinner rejoiced.

All the more, as he explained to Snoop and Stott, because it showed the humbugs up! Humbug, Skinner regarded with contempt. Any fellow who was more decent than Skinner was, in Skinner's opinion, a humbug. He could imagine no higher state of morality than his own; so it followed, to Skinner's mind, that any fellow who seemed better than he was was only spoofing.

"This is what I call a show-up!" said Skinner, in the Rag after prep. "I must say I'm glad! I never could stand humbug. A fellow isn't really expected to be pi. Well, he shouldn't make out that he's pi. Why can't a fellow own up that he's just the same as another fellow? What's the good of humbugging? It always comes out, in the long run."

"Bound to!" agreed Snoop.

"You think——" asked Stott, staring at Skinner.

"I don't think—I know! They're shown up," said Skinner. "It's exactly what I thought of them all along. I'm not surprised. I admit they've been deep. But it was bound to come out sooner or later. Now a prefect's dropped on them and caught them fairly in the act."

"But they say——" began Stott.

"A fellow will say anything when he's spotted," said Skinner, with a cheery wink. "I know I would."

"Yes, I know you would," assented Stott. "But perhaps they wouldn't, you know. They might draw a line at telling lies."

"Don't be a silly ass, Stott!" grunted Skinner.

Most of the fellows in the Rag were discussing the matter. It was all over the Remove now, and discussed in other Forms, as well.

Harry Wharton & Co. had not expected that. Mr. Quelch, of course, could have said nothing about it. The Famous Five had wisely kept their own counsel; it was not a matter they wanted

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talked up and down the school. So it was certain that Loder of the Sixth must have talked—which was an unusual and undignified proceeding on the part of a Sixth-Form prefect, but very like Gerald Loder.

Mr. Quelch was taking time to consider the matter before he made a report to the headmaster. The circumstances of the case were very deeply suspicious, but the Remove master was well acquainted with the character of the five juniors concerned, and so he was in a doubtful frame of mind. He could not possibly let the matter pass, but he was troubled and doubtful, and perhaps it had occurred to him that Loder was not wholly unprejudiced in the matter. Loder was well aware of that state of uncertainty in the Form master's mind, and he told himself savagely that Quelch would let off his favourites if he could. And, at any rate, Loder meant that the affair should be known, and that if Quelch wanted to suppress it and give the juniors the benefit of the doubt he should find it as difficult as possible to do so.

Now the whole Lower School knew that Harry Wharton & Co. were charged with "pub-haunting," and that a prefect had caught them practically in the act. So Quelch could hardly let the matter drop without rousing suspicions on all sides of rank favouritism.

During prep there had been several callers in Study No. 1—fellows who wanted to know. Finding that the affair was now common talk, the chums of the Remove had given their version, which was accepted without doubt by almost all the Form. But Skinner took the liberty of doubting it, and some fellows followed Skinner's lead.

There were disgruntled fellows in the Remove who were "up against" the Famous Five on principle, as it were, and they were disposed to make the most of the story.

"All very well!" said Bolsover major, "but any fellow caught out of bounds could say he was only taking a short cut."

"Of course he could!" said Hazeldene. "I was spotted at the Cross Keys once, and I jolly well know that Quelch wouldn't have taken it in if I'd told a fairy tale about short cuts."

"Of course, there is a short cut there!" said Skinner. "I've taken it myself more than once—and never stopped at the back door of the place to buy fags. I hope, my dear friends, that I am incapable of such an action."

At which there was a laugh.

"But when a fellow's caught it's up to him to trot out proofs," said Skinner. "A fellow might say anything. For instance, some of us know that fellows in the Sixth—Loder and Carne, to be exact—go out of school bounds after lights out."

"Better not let them hear you say so!" grinned Bolsover major.

"Well, we know it," said Skinner. "Now, suppose the beaks dropped on Loder of the Sixth, say, at eleven at night, rolling round the town. Would it be any use for Loder to say that he was admiring the scenery by moonlight?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A man's got to give something more than his word in a case like that," said Skinner. "Of course, these chaps may be telling the truth. I'm sure I hope so. But—"

"But they ain't!" said Snoop.

"I fear," said Skinner gravely, "that there is an element of doubt in the matter, my young friends."

At which the fellows chuckled again. When Harry Wharton & Co. came THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,113.

into the Rag after prep they found all eyes turned upon them, and themselves and their affairs the one topic. The Famous Five filled rather a large space on the horizon in the Greyfriars Remove. They were leaders of the Form, and had many followers. Anything that happened to the famous Co. was sure to excite interest and discussion. They were generally in the limelight. Now they were getting limelight in a far from pleasant way. Harry Wharton was supposed, by some fellows, to carry his head rather unduly high, and the open contempt with which he looked on the ways of Skinner and his set did not gratify those youths. So it was "pie" to Skinner & Co to see that haughty head brought a little lower.

"They've got you at last, old beans!" remarked Skinner pleasantly, when the chums of the Remove came in.

"The gotfulness is terrific, my esteemed and rascally Skinner," answered Hurree Jamset Ram Singh amiably.

"Did they find any smokes on you?" asked Snoop.

Harry Wharton gave him a look.

"No, they didn't find any smokes on us!" he answered quietly.

"Some fellows have all the luck!" said Hazeldene. "They found some on me, the time I was nabbed."

"There were none to find," said Harry, still quietly.

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.

HONYRRTRAAHW

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

Last week's solution was—
George Wingate.

"You got shut of them in time?" asked Skinner, with an air of friendly interest.

"There was none to get shut of."

"That what you told Quelch?" smiled Skinner.

"Yes, that's what we told Quelch."

"I hope he believed it," said Skinner, heartily. "Best of luck, old bean. But Quelch is rather a downy bird, isn't he?"

"Not easy to stuff Quelch!" said Snoop, shaking his head solemnly.

"Still, you never know your luck!" remarked Bolsover major. "Fellow might get away with it."

"Well, a fellow's bound to say something, when he's nabbed," agreed Skinner, "and the facts would hardly do."

Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"I expect a fellow to take my word, Skinner," he said.

"Has Quelch taken it?" asked Skinner, blandly.

"He's taking time to consider the matter, he told us."

"Well, I'll take time to consider the matter, too, if you don't mind," said Skinner, with a grin.

"You're asking for a thick ear, Skinner," said Bob Cherry, with a glare at the cad of the Remove.

"Dear me," said Skinner, "are you going to give Quelch a thick ear?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If not, why poor little me?" asked Skinner. "I'm only following my dear Form master's example, in taking time to consider the matter. Can a

fellow do better than follow the example of his kind teachers?"

"The fact is," said Bolsover major, "that you men can't expect to get away with it. You're caught hanging round a pub. You can say what you like—but there it is. A fellow was flogged last term for playing a game of billiards at that place. He wouldn't have got off by saying he was taking a short cut through the billiard-room—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bob, and the Famous Five turned away from the group, leaving Skinner & Co. chortling.

Billy Bunter came into the Rag a few minutes later. He blinked round through his big spectacles, and rolled up to the captain of the Remove.

"Got any left, old chap?" asked Bunter.

"Any what, fathead?"

"Smokes."

"Smokes!" repeated Wharton, blankly.

Bunter favoured him with a fat wink.

"You might let a fellow have a few, old chap," he said. "You can't have smoked the lot yet. From what I hear you were nabbed before you'd smoked them. Well, you might hand them out, among your friends."

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Kill him, somebody!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Roll away, you benighted clump!" snapped the captain of the Remove.

"Well, I think you might let a pal have one, at least," said Bunter, in an injured tone. "I'd always whack anything out with a pal."

Harry Wharton made a movement with his foot, and the Owl of the Remove hastily backed away.

Vernon-Smith strolled across the Rag, with a rather sardonic grin on his face.

"There's a lot of talk goin' on about you men," the Bouncer remarked.

"Geese will cackle about anything or nothing," answered Wharton.

The Bouncer laughed.

"Then there's nothin' in it, what?" he inquired.

Wharton looked at him steadily.

"You know there's nothing in it, Smithy," he answered. "You're not a fool like Bunter, or a worm like Skinner. You know perfectly well that there's nothing in it."

The Bouncer shrugged his shoulders.

"How should I know?" he answered.

"You know now I've told you, at all events," said Harry, with a gleam in his eyes, "and that's enough."

"Mustn't a man have an opinion of his own?" asked the Bouncer mockingly.

"You can have any rotten opinion you like, so long as you keep it to yourself," snapped the captain of the Remove. "That's what you'd better do, unless you're looking for trouble."

The Bouncer opened his lips for a sneering answer, but Tom Redwing slipped an arm through his, and drew him away. Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. His temper was growing hot, and he was greatly inclined to follow Smithy and call him to account. Frank Nugent touched his arm lightly.

"No good rowing about it, old bean," murmured Frank.

Wharton nodded. He realised that a "scrap" on such a subject would be rather ridiculous.

"I think I'll go up to the study," he said. "I shall punch Skinner's head soon, if I stay here."

"Let's!" assented Frank.

"I'm not going," grunted Johnny Bull. "I've done nothing to be ashamed of, and I'll jolly well punch any fellow who makes out I have. I'm staying here."

"Please yourself," said Wharton, shortly.

And he left the Rag with Nugent. They passed Hobson of the Shell on their way to the stairs. Hobson of the Shell gave them a grin.

"You men seem to have come rather a mucker," he remarked. "I hear that you've been caught smoking cigars at a pub. Is that correct?"

"You haven't heard it all," said Wharton, with savage sarcasm. "We were caught mopping up whisky and soda, and had to be brought back to the school on a gate."

But sarcasm was wasted on James Hobson, whose brain was of a slow and stolid variety, and not quick on the uptake. He stared blankly at the captain of the Remove.

"Oh, I say," he ejaculated. "Not so bad as that, was it? Do you fellows really drink whisky? What's it like?"

Wharton made no attempt to give Hobson that information. He glared at him instead.

"But I say, it's rather thick, ain't it?" said Hobson. "There's a limit, you know. After all, you're Greyfriars men. Don't you think that sort of thing rather disgraceful?"

James Hobson suddenly found himself strewn along the passage. His head was banged on the floor, and Wharton and Nugent went up the staircase, leaving Hobson of the Shell in quite a dazed and dizzy state.

"It's all Loder!" said Wharton, in Study No. 1, between his teeth. "He's been down on us for whole terms, and now he's got his chance, and he's making the most of it. He knows perfectly well that we're not the kind of fellows he's making out—he's practically lied to Quelch—"

"Well, I daresay he believes—"

"Rot!" said Wharton savagely. "He believes nothing of the kind. If he does, it only shows that he's a cad with a rotten mind."

"He's that, right enough," agreed Frank.

"This is going all round Greyfriars," said Wharton, bitterly. "Every cad in the school will be making the most of it. It all comes from Loder—and who is Loder? Lots of fellows know that he smokes in his study—plays cards, too—and it's pretty well known that he breaks bounds after lights out, and goes to that very pub where he pretends to have caught us. If the Head knew that—"

"Easy does it, old chap," said Nugent, soothingly. "Lots of fellows suspect all that, but proving it is quite a different matter, and anyhow, it's no business of ours."

Wharton set his lips.

"What was Loder doing there himself, when he spotted us?" he snapped, savagely. "As likely as not going there to meet some of his sporting friends. I've a jolly good mind to tell the Head so, when we come up before him to-morrow."

"That's all rot, old fellow. A man might be sacked for saying such a thing about a Sixth-Form prefect."

"It's true."

"Do you think the Head would believe it was true?"

"Oh, rats!"

And it was then that Coker called.



Harry Wharton & Co., hidden in the thick foliage of the tree, waited breathlessly, hoping to hear Loder's footsteps passing on. But the footsteps came to a halt, and Loder looked up, grinning, for from the foliage above his head a foot was visible. "You may as well come down," he said. "I've caught you this time!" (See Chapter 2.)

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Coker Begs for It!

HORACE COKER stepped into Study No. 1, with a stern and frowning brow.

Coker was angry and indignant.

Possibly his encounter with the Famous Five, when they had been rather pressed for time on their way to Quelch's study, had added to his anger and indignation.

Still, Coker was righteously angry and righteously indignant.

It was, as he told Potter and Greene, too thick.

Checky fags in the Remove had no respect for a Fifth Form man. They did not seem to care whether a man was a senior or not. That was bad enough. But, as Shakespeare has said, thus bad begins, but worse remains behind. The disgraceful young scoundrels, Coker told his friends, were not satisfied with checking their betters. They went in for pub-haunting, disgracing themselves and their school—and Coker's school. Greyfriars, of course, derived most of its importance from the circumstance that it was Coker's school.

And these degrading rotters were bent on disgracing it. Might have been

taken up by a bobby for smoking. Coker told Potter and Greene, and he asked them to fancy that! Nice for Greyfriars! Nice for Coker! These things would not have happened if the Head had had the common sense, the ordinary gumption, to appoint prefects from the Fifth Form. As a prefect, Coker would have kept these young scoundrels in order. But the Head could not see it—he would not make Coker a prefect. He preferred to leave matters in the futile, incapable hands of the Sixth. And this was what came of it, Coker told Potter and Greene—this sort of thing!

The very least Coker could do was to give the young rascals a good talking to—point out the error of their ways, with perhaps a few sound cuffs to drive home the lesson. Potter and Greene raised no objection. In fact, they approved. Anything that relieved them from the conversation of Horace Coker seemed good in the eyes of Potter and Greene.

So Coker arrived in Study No. 1 full of righteous wrath and indignation. He found at least one of the juniors there in a mood far from amenable to his homilies.

"Oh, here you are!" said Coker. "Keeping out of sight for a bit—what?"

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"I'm not surprised at that. I dare say even you young rotters have the grace to be ashamed of yourselves now you're found out!"

"Oh, buzz off, you silly idiot!" said Wharton.

"I've come here to tell you——"

"Shut up!"

"What?" roared Coker belligerently.

"Shut up! Get out!"

Coker breathed hard.

"Disgracing the school!" he snorted.

"Hanging round pubs! My hat, what is Greyfriars coming to? I hear that you kids were run in by a prefect in the bar of a pub! Do you deny it?"

"Fathead!"

"Do you deny it?" boomed Coker.

"Ass!"

"Well, it won't do!" roared Coker. "You hear me? It won't do! Haven't you any sense of shame? Haven't you any decency? Don't you care two straws about your school? Do you want to get Greyfriars into the newspapers—what?"

Wharton looked at him.

"What about a muzzle?" he asked.

"A—a—a what?" stuttered Coker, taken aback by the unexpected question.

"A muzzle," said Wharton.

"What do you mean—a muzzle?"

"I mean, to keep your jaw from wagging like that. A muzzle would do it. I think any fellow in the Fifth would stand you one to shut you up! Don't you think so?"

Coker spluttered with wrath. He had come there to give the juniors a good talking to, and all he got in return was a cheeky suggestion that he ought to be muzzled. Forgetting the homily he had intended to deliver, Coker went into action.

The captain of the Remove was in a mood for action. He had left the Rag to keep out of a row. Now Coker of the Fifth had butted in and begged for one, and Wharton was in a mood to give him what he begged for. The next moment there was a wild and whirling scene in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Coker grasped Wharton, and Wharton gave grasp for grasp. The next moment Nugent was grasping Coker, too. Rather to his surprise, Coker came down with a heavy bump in the hands of the two juniors.

The three of them rolled over on the floor, considerably mixed.

Before the struggle had lasted a minute several Remove men who were in their studies had heard the din and come along. Peter Todd and Squiff, Tom Brown and Mark Linley, joined in at once as soon as they saw what was happening.

Coker—as was customary with Coker—had bitten off more than he could masticate—much more.

He was a hefty fellow, and might have held his own against two Removites. But six of them were much too much for him.

Coker was rolled over, hustled and bumped and banged, till he was quite ignorant whether he was on his head or his heels. He roared and gasped and yelled. Furniture flew to right and left as the Homeric combat proceeded. Coker put up a great fight. But at long last he lay gasping feebly on the floor of Study No. 1, with six Remove men sitting on him to keep him there, and one of them pouring an inkpot over his upturned crimson countenance. That crimson countenance was barred with black, giving Horace a weird, zebra-like appearance.

"Now we'll take him home!" said Harry Wharton breathlessly. "The Fifth can have him back now!"

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"Hear, hear!"

"Goooooch!" came from Coker.

"Oooch! Mooch! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Take his feet!" said Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Brown and Peter Todd collected Coker's feet. Wharton and Squiff took his wrists. Nugent got a good grip on his tousled hair. Mark Linley was accommodated with a grasp on his prominent nose.

Thus held, Coker was conducted from the study.

He travelled on his back, roaring.

Across the Remove landing he went and down the passage that led to the Fifth Form quarters.

In the games study, at the end of the Fifth Form passage, a crowd of the Fifth were gathered, as was usual in the evening. Blundell, the captain of the Form, was there with a dozen more.

They were quite startled, and conversation ceased suddenly, when the door flew open, and Coker and his conductors appeared in the offing. George Blundell jumped up.

"What the jolly old dickens——" he ejaculated.

"What the thump——" gasped Hilton.

"It's Coker!" stuttered Potter and Greene together.

It was Coker, or what was left of him.

What was left of Coker rolled breathlessly into the games study and collapsed there, spluttering.

"Look here, you fags——" roared Blundell.

"We've brought your prize idiot home!" explained Harry Wharton politely. "This is the home for idiots, isn't it?"

"Why, you—you—you——" gasped the captain of the Fifth.

"Keep him out of the Remove passage, or he will get hurt next time!" said Wharton.

And he banged the door, and the Removites retreated to their own quarters.

Coker sat up.

"You howling ass!" said Blundell witheringly. "Have you been kicking up a shindy with the fags again?"

"Gooooooch!"

"Can't you keep out of these rows with juniors, you fathead?" roared the captain of the Fifth.

"Oooooooch!"

Coker staggered to his feet. He expected sympathy from his own Form, but he did not receive any.

"Look here," gasped Coker, "come on! I've been handled by a mob of fags! You saw that! Come on! Back me up, and we'll make an example of the whole crew! Come on!"

"You silly ass!" was Blundell's reply. "What the thump did you butt into the Remove for this time?"

"If you think I'm going to let those young scoundrels disgrace the school without saying a word——" hooted Coker.

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped Blundell. "What bee have you got in your bonnet now, you fathead?"

"Look here!" roared Coker.

"Oh, cheese it!"

"I tell you——"

"Dry up!"

There was no backing for Coker in the Fifth. Nobody in that great and stately Form seemed to want to join in a shindy with the Remove. Coker used up what little breath he had left in telling Blundell what he thought of him, and then shook the dust of the games study from his feet, more angry and indignant than ever.

"What was that howling ass getting

at?" asked Blundell, when he was gone. "What does he fancy the fags have been up to?"

"Some of them have been spotted pub-haunting!" yawned Potter. "Young Wharton and his set. Loder of the Sixth got them at the Cross Keys."

Blundell started a little.

"Eh! When?" he asked.

"Just before call-over to-day."

"Oh, my hat!" said Blundell.

"They said they were taking a short cut, to get in for the call-over," said Potter. "I dare say they were, too—they're decent kids enough. But old Coker can't mind his own business. He was bound to butt in. It's one of his jolly little ways."

Blundell opened his lips to speak; but closed them again. For some minutes the captain of the Fifth remained thoughtful; then he rose and left the games study. And his footsteps took him in the direction of the study of Henry Samuel Quelch, the master of the Remove.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Awkward for Blundell!

"COME in, Blundell!"

Mr. Quelch addressed the captain of the Fifth cordially enough.

The Lower Fourth master had little to do with the Fifth—Prout's—Form; there were Fifth-Form men whom he hardly knew by sight. But everybody knew Blundell, and he was generally liked. Although not in the Sixth, or a prefect, Blundell was a great man in the senior world, a member of the first eleven, and a tremendous "Blood." Sixth-Form men treated Blundell with great respect. Juniors regarded him with awed admiration, as second in glorious greatness only to Wingate of the Sixth. With all his greatness, Blundell was a good-natured, unaffected fellow, though he had a due sense of his importance in the Greyfriars scheme of things. Prout affected the manner rather of a friend than a master towards Blundell; and it was generally considered good-natured in Blundell to let him do it.

As he came into Mr. Quelch's study, Blundell, for once, seemed to lack some of the assurance that was usually his. It was related that Blundell, if he tea'd with the Head, would ask that august gentleman to pass the sugar, just as if he were an ordinary human being. So the smaller fry on the staff were trifles light as air to Blundell. But on the present occasion Mr. Quelch, cordial as he was, seemed to disconcert the captain of the Fifth.

Blundell coloured uncomfortably, and did not even seem to hear the Form master's invitation to take a chair. He stood hesitating, and Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows a little. No doubt he wondered what the captain of the Fifth had called on him for; and wondered still more to see him confused and hesitating.

"I've something to tell you—something I think I ought to tell you, sir," said Blundell awkwardly.

"Pray proceed!" said the Remove master politely.

"I understand that some kids in your Form, sir, are in trouble for going out of bounds."

Mr. Quelch's cordial face froze a little. Matters of discipline in his Form he had to discuss with the Head. He declined to discuss them with any other master. Least of all was he likely to discuss them with a Greyfriars

boy—even a great and glorious senior Blood.

"That is the case, Blundell; but I hardly see—"

"I know something about the matter, sir," said the Fifth-Form man. "I felt bound to tell you."

Mr. Quelch unknitted his brows.

"Indeed, Blundell! If you are aware of any circumstance pertaining to this very disagreeable matter, I shall be much obliged if you will impart it to me."

"As I understand it, sir, some boys—Wharton and his friends—were caught out of bounds, at the Cross Keys, by a prefect."

"Precisely."

"They seem to have explained that they were taking a short cut through the place, from the towpath."

"That is their explanation, Blundell."

"Well, sir, it's true."

"If that is the case, Blundell, I am delighted to hear it!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, visibly relieved. "I thank you very much for coming to me. But how do you know this?"

Blundell's colour deepened more than before.

"Well, I do know it, sir," he said. "Of course, the young asses should never have placed themselves in such a position. But I happen to know for a fact that they were racing through the place at top speed, from the direction of the river, which I suppose makes the matter clear."

"Quite!" said Mr. Quelch. "But you will, of course, explain how you came to be aware of this."

Blundell shifted from one leg to the other.

"I suppose that's necessary," he said. "The fact is, sir, that—that I was there."

"You do not mean that you were at the Cross Keys, Blundell!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in great astonishment.

The captain of the Fifth was crimson now.

"I was on the path leading through the place," he said. "I know quite well that it's out of bounds, sir, and that I ought not to have been there; and it's doocid uncomfortable to have to tell you. But as it seems to be a question of those silly kids getting into trouble I felt bound to tell you what I knew."

"I am not your Form master, Blundell, or your headmaster," said Mr. Quelch. "You are not bound to explain your conduct to me. But since you have told me of this very serious infraction of the rules of the school, you place me in an awkward position. I trust that you intend to mention the matter to your own Form master."

"I—I hadn't thought of doing so, sir!" stammered Blundell.

"Your motive for being in such a place I cannot imagine, and it is not my duty to inquire," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "But unless you inform Mr. Prout of the matter you place me in the very unpleasant position of keeping a secret for you—an intolerable position, Blundell."

"I—I didn't think you'd look at it like that, sir!" said the Fifth-Form man, in distress. "I—I came to set matters right about those juniors. I thought I ought to do that."

"Perfectly correct; it was your duty," said Mr. Quelch. "Nevertheless, I leave it to your sense of honour to acquaint Mr. Prout with as much as you have told me of your own actions."

"Very well, sir," said Blundell, after a pause. "I—I'll speak to Mr. Prout. I hope I needn't say that I had no bad motive in being there, sir."

"I am sure of that, Blundell; though

you appear to have acted with less discretion than is expected in a Greyfriars boy in your position. I will say no more on that subject. To revert to the question of the juniors—you are assured of the correctness of what you say?"

"Oh, quite, sir!" said Blundell, with a faint smile.

"They rushed into me and bowled me over, running like a mob of young lunatics. One of them told me they were taking a short cut; and, anyhow, it was plain enough they came from the towpath and were making for Friardale lane at top speed; they were nowhere near the public-house itself."

"That makes the matter perfectly clear," said Mr. Quelch. "It is plain that Loder had a wrong impression. I thank you most sincerely for coming here and telling me this, Blundell—you have prevented what might have been a very serious injustice."

"Not at all, sir," said Blundell.

And he left the study.

He left Mr. Quelch greatly relieved in his mind. His own opinion of those juniors had been justified, after all; their statements had been borne out by unquestionable evidence. That disagreeable report to the Head need not be made; the disgrace of a flogging in his Form need not be incurred. A light punishment to the five juniors for their thoughtlessness would meet the case, and the whole unpleasant affair would be at an end. The master of the Remove was feeling very much obliged indeed to Blundell of the Fifth.

But George Blundell was feeling far from comfortable as he stepped out into Masters passage.

He had engaged to tell his Form master that he, George Blundell, head boy of the Fifth Form, had been out of bounds, and in a most questionable

purlieu, which was not an agreeable confession for any fellow to make.

He went slowly along the passage to Mr. Prout's study.

He stopped at the door, raised his hand to tap, and lowered it again. For several moments Blundell stood there, hesitating.

Finally he made up his mind; but not to speak to Mr. Prout. He walked away out of the passage.

He had to tell Prout. He had told Quelch that he would tell Prout, and his word, of course, was his bond. Quelch, of course, would never speak to Prout about it, and would never know, if Blundell failed to keep his word. That made it all the more impossible for Blundell to fail to keep it. He had to tell Prout.

But it was a delicate matter—a very delicate matter. Prout would certainly want to know a lot of things that Blundell did not feel disposed to tell him. Prout would not suspect him of shady conduct—Blundell was almost as Olympian in Prout's eyes as in those of the Fifth. But he would be surprised, shocked, hurt, inquisitive. Blundell decided to put it off—anyhow, it could wait.

He realised himself that that was an act of weakness, and once he turned back at the corner of the passage. But he did not go to Prout's room. He turned once more, and continued on his way, with a clouded brow, to the games study.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

All Clear!

"If you have tears," said Skinner cheerily, "prepare to shed them now, my beloved 'earers.'"

The Remove were in their Form-room for first school in the
(Continued on next page.)

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morning. All the Form were in their places, and Mr. Quelch was at his desk.

Skinner spoke in a whisper, and some of the Removites grinned.

It was generally understood in the Remove that something was to happen that morning.

The Famous Five were going before the Head. The Famous Five had been "up before the Beak" before, and more than once. But this time they were "going up" on a disgraceful charge, which was quite unusual. That they felt it was evident from their looks. Had they been going up on account of some ordinary schoolboy escapade they would have gone cheerily enough; it was not the licking that worried them. But to be charged with questionable conduct was a new experience for the cheery five, and distinctly unpleasant.

Mr. Quelch was arranging some papers at his desk. The Remove waited. They had no doubt that when Quelch spoke it would be to order five members of his Form to follow him to the Head's study. Skinner looked forward to it with glee.

"I say, you fellows, he looks rather waxy!" whispered Billy Bunter in a less cautious whisper than Skinner's.

Mr. Quelch looked up.

"Someone spoke, I think," he remarked. It was astonishing how keen Quelch's hearing was sometimes.

Dead silence.

"Did you speak, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir!" answered Bunter at once. "I never opened my lips, sir. I only said—I—I mean—"

"What did you say, Bunter?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Bunter!"

"These fellows will bear me out, sir," said Bunter in a great hurry. "They know I never opened my lips, sir. They heard me."

"They heard you?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir—I mean, no, sir! I never said a word, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I don't think you look waxy this morning, sir, and if I did, I shouldn't say so, sir—I'm too respectful."

"You will take fifty lines, Bunter. Now be silent."

"Oh dear! I mean, yes, sir."

"My boys," said Mr. Quelch, addressing the Form and taking no further notice of the fat Owl, "I believe it is known to all of you that certain members of this Form were reported to me yesterday as having broken school bounds in very questionable precincts. For that reason, I am referring to the matter before the whole class. It has happily been proved that these boys were guilty of nothing worse than thoughtlessness."

"Oh!" murmured Skinner. Skinner did not seem pleased at hearing what had been happily proved.

"Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"You stated to me that you and your friends had taken a short cut through the grounds of a public-house. That statement I should have been glad to believe, as I place every reliance on your character. I have now fortunately received information that confirms it."

"Oh, sir!" ejaculated Harry.

Five faces in the Remove brightened up considerably.

"It appears," said Mr. Quelch, "that a senior boy saw you there in circumstances which proved beyond doubt that you and your companions were crossing the grounds at a great speed."

"Oh!" repeated Harry. He remembered the rather startling encounter with Blundell of the Fifth, and had no doubt who was the "senior boy" whose name Mr. Quelch did not mention.

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"The evidence of this senior," pursued Mr. Quelch, "places the matter beyond doubt. You are, therefore, exonerated from anything but very foolish and thoughtless conduct."

"Thank you, sir," said Harry.

"I trust," continued the Remove master, "that this will be a warning to you not to place yourself in a false position again, by acting thoughtlessly and heedlessly. Each of you will take a hundred lines, and the matter closes here."

"Thank you, sir!" said the Co. cheerily.

"The thankfulness is terrific, honoured sahib," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The dispersiveness of the execrable cloud of absurd suspicion is a boonful blessing, sir."

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"We will now proceed!" he said.

And the Remove proceeded.

"Rotten!" Skinner whispered to Snoop in great disgust. And Sidney James Snoop nodded, equally disgusted.

But most of the Remove had been glad to hear the good news. Many of them wondered who the senior was whose timely evidence had saved the Famous Five from that painful interview with their headmaster. It was agreed that it was frightfully decent of him to have spoken out. Harry Wharton & Co., of course, knew who it must have been, and they were feeling very grateful and amicable towards Blundell of the Fifth.

Anyone who had looked into the Remove room that morning would have supposed that five members of the Form, at least, thoroughly enjoyed receiving instruction from Henry Samuel Quelch.

The Famous Five were all merry and bright.

The shadow of disgrace had rolled away, and the threatened flogging was off. They thought less of the flogging than of the disgrace. Still, it would have been a very unpleasant experience, and they were glad that it was off. They had come into the Form-room that morning with clouded faces. Now the clouds had rolled by.

When the Form was dismissed for break, the five juniors rolled down the passage arm-in-arm, in great spirits.

"Gratters, old beans!" said Peter Todd cheerily.

"Some fellows are deep!" said Skinner. "I say, how the thump did you square it with a senior to pitch that yarn to Quelch?"

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

"Well, I'd like to know how they did it," said Skinner.

The Famous Five did not gratify Skinner's desire for information. Instead of that, they rolled into Skinner, up-ended him, wiped their boots on him as they passed, and left him yelling. And Snoop and one or two other fellows, who had been going to make some remarks, thought better of it, and did not make any.

In the quadrangle Harry Wharton & Co. looked out for Blundell of the Fifth. They felt that it was up to them to testify their gratitude for services rendered. The Fifth were not out of their Form-room; but when they came out the Famous Five singled out Blundell and bore down on him. The great man stared at them, apparently not enormously gratified by being singled out by a mob of fags.

"Well, what's this?" asked the captain of the Fifth.

"Just a word, Blundell," said Harry Wharton. "We've got out of a thumping row through you speaking to our Form master—"

"Oh!" said Blundell.

"It was you, of course?" said Harry. Blundell nodded, without speaking.

"It was awfully decent of you," said Harry. "We wanted to mention that we're a lot obliged, that's all."

"The obligefulness is terrific and absurd," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gravely.

Blundell grinned.

"We should have been up for a flogging," said Bob Cherry. "It was jolly decent of you, Blundell, especially as—"

Bob broke off.

It was specially decent of Blundell, he thought, because the Fifth Form man couldn't have liked mentioning to a master that he had been within the borders of the Cross Keys, and he must have mentioned that in clearing the juniors. But it occurred to Bob that that was rather a delicate subject, and he did not finish his remark.

Probably Blundell understood, for he coloured a little.

"It's all right," he said gruffly.

"You can cut off."

"My esteemed Blundell—"

"That's enough! Cut!"

But as the juniors were retreating Blundell spoke again.

"You needn't jaw this all over the school," he said.

"We shouldn't, of course," said Harry.

"I—I mean—well, you know what I mean," said the Fifth Form man uncomfortably. "I've got you out of a row, as you say. Keep your mouths shut, if you know how, and don't talk about what doesn't concern you."

With that Blundell walked away.

The Famous Five looked at one another.

"Ain't we high and mighty in the Fifth?" said Bob Cherry, with a grin. "Never mind. Blundell's a good man, and he did get us out of a fearful row, and it must have bothered him a bit."

"He wants us to keep it dark about seeing him yesterday where we saw him," said Johnny Bull slowly.

"Naturally, he doesn't want it talked all over Greyfriars," said Harry. "Fellows would say a lot of things."

"He oughtn't to have been there," said Johnny.

"Jolly lucky for us that he was, as it turns out," said Nugent.

"I know that; but, all the same, he oughtn't to have been there. He's a First Eleven man and a Form captain. He ought to know better."

"Oh, rot!" said Wharton uneasily. "He's all right. He must have told Quelch he was there; that shows he was up to no harm."

"Quelch isn't his Form master, or the Head! I fancy he wouldn't be in a hurry to tell Prout."

"Look here, you ass, he's got us out of a row, and he's a jolly good sort!" said Wharton warmly. "I can't imagine why he was hanging round that rotten show, but I'm quite sure he was up to no harm. He's not a rotter like Loder, or shady like Price of the Fifth. Anyhow, I suppose you agree that it's not our bizney, and that we'd better keep mum."

"Of course," said Johnny. "He's done us a good turn, and if he hadn't I shouldn't think of giving a man away. All the same, I think—"

"The thankfulness of the esteemed Johnny is too terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh. "As the proverb remarks, the jawfulness is silver, but the esteemed silence is the refined gold and gilded lily."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's old Coker!" said Bob. "Let's go and give him a yell."



"I say, you chaps"—Squiff met the Famous Five on the Remove landing—"there's a row on! Loder's just come in—Oh, my hat!" Squiff was sent staggering against the banisters as the Famous Five rushed. Next they encountered Peter Todd. But they heeded him not. (See Chapter 3.)

And the subject dropped, while the chums of the Remove devoted the last few minutes of break to Coker of the Fifth, with the result of throwing the great Horace once more into a breathless state of wrath and indignation.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Loder is Not Satisfied!

GERALD LODER gritted his teeth.

Loder was not a good-tempered fellow, and it was not uncommon for him to give way to rages. But he had seldom been so savagely enraged as at the present moment.

He was not going to stand it. He resolved on that. He had taken the trouble to run down a gang of young rascals; he had caught them in the very act, and, after all, they had been let off by their Form master. Loder could scarcely believe it at first. But it was only too true. He had not been called upon to repeat his report before the Head and testify against five delinquents. The Famous Five had not been flogged—they had not been taken to Dr. Locke at all; they were walking about cheerily as if nothing had happened—and it was only too plain to Loder that a case of rank favouritism had occurred, that Quelch had deliberately let off these fellows because they were in his Form.

Of course, he did not want Masters Common-room to comment on the state of affairs in the Remove, as certainly they would have done without stint had the affair come before the Head. So far as Loder could make out, Quelch had not even administered a caning; the Famous Five certainly did not look as if the vials of wrath had been poured

upon their heads. And Loder told himself that he was not going to stand it.

He was tempted to go direct to the Head and lay the matter before him. But the Head was certain to refer him to the Form master concerned, so that was no use. But Loder was not going to take this injustice, this rank favouritism, lying down. After tea he went to Mr. Quelch's study to put the matter plainly to the Remove master.

The sullen expression on Loder's face when he arrived did not escape Mr. Quelch, and he smiled faintly.

"I have been intending to speak to you, Loder," he said. "The matter you reported to me yesterday has now been satisfactorily explained, as I am sure you will be glad to hear."

"I should certainly be glad to hear the satisfactory explanation, sir," said Loder, without troubling to repress a sneer.

"I have received information which completely clears the boys concerned of suspicion," said Mr. Quelch.

"Indeed, sir!"

"Yes; and the matter is now closed."

"These juniors are not to be reported to the Head, sir?" asked Loder, his voice trembling with rage.

"No. The matter is, as I said, closed."

"It does not seem much use for a prefect to take the trouble to do his duty, sir, if the offenders are to be let off unpunished," said Loder.

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"Are you implying, Loder, that I am letting off, as you term it, offenders who are guilty?" he asked freezingly.

"They certainly are guilty, sir," said Loder. "I don't think anything could be clearer when I caught them in a public-house."

"In the grounds, you mean, Loder."

"It comes to the same thing."

"Not at all. The juniors declared that they were taking a short cut across those grounds. Their statement has been borne out by a senior boy who saw them shortly before you did."

"Oh!" ejaculated Loder. "Who was that, sir?"

"I prefer not to mention his name," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "But he is a senior of high standing in the school, whose word is unquestionable."

This was an entirely unexpected development. But the bully of the Sixth was not willing to admit defeat.

"Has this senior explained what he was doing there himself, sir?" he asked bitterly. "He cannot have seen the juniors before they met me, unless he was himself out of bounds in a disreputable resort."

"His explanation is not due to me, Loder, as I am not his Form master. It will be made to his own master."

"I am not satisfied, sir."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, staring.

"Yes, sir, indeed! I do not think the word of this fellow ought to be taken, as he was plainly out of bounds himself, and is therefore open to suspicion."

"I am the best judge of that, Loder," said Mr. Quelch. "If you are not satisfied that justice has been done, it can only imply a want of faith in my judgment or in my impartiality. You can scarcely expect me to listen to anything of the sort. You had better leave my study!"

Loder looked at him, but he dared not utter what was in his mind. Mr. Quelch was looking very grim, and he was not a man to whom even a Sixth Form prefect could venture to be impertinent. Loder swallowed his rage and quitted the study.

He would have been glad to know who

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(Continued from page 13.)

was the senior, to whose unexpected testimony the juniors owed their escape. But he could not even begin to guess. He would have liked to make matters hot for that obnoxious senior, as he could easily have done by reporting him to the Head had he known who he was. The fellow, whoever he was, must have been within the purlieus of the Cross Keys; which, for a senior, might mean the "sack." Not a Sixth Form man, Loder was sure—he knew all the members of the Sixth who were likely to be found in such a quarter, and not one of them was the man to risk getting himself into trouble for the sake of a gang of junior kids.

Some Fifth Form man—but who? Hilton and Price were a rather shady pair; likely enough to have been hanging about the Cross Keys. But neither of them would have spoken out on the subject to save the whole Lower School from floggings.

Loder was quite puzzled, to think of a fellow who was shady enough to have been hanging about a low resort, and yet decent enough to butt in and run risks for the sake of a set of fags. Certainly the thought of Blundell of the Fifth did not cross his mind for a moment.

When he came on the Famous Five in the quad a little later, Loder's eyes gleamed at them. He bore down on the quintette of juniors, and they smiled as he came up. They could easily imagine with what feelings their old enemy in the Sixth regarded the happy termination of their trouble.

"You kids seem to have got off after all!" said Loder.

"Yes. Jolly, ain't it?" said Bob Cherry affably.

"I hear that a senior spoke up for you," said Loder.

"Did you?" said Wharton politely. He gave his chums a swift look of warning. Loder was in quest of information, which he was not likely to get from Harry Wharton & Co.

"Of course," said Loder, speaking as blandly as he could—"of course, if a Fifth Form man spoke up for you, I dare say it's all right. Who was he, by the way?"

"Hasn't Quelch told you?" asked Wharton, with equal blandness.

"I think he mentioned the name, but I've forgotten."

"Better ask him again, then, hadn't you?"

"I'm asking you, Wharton."

"My memory's as bad as yours, Loder," answered the captain of the Remove demurely. "I've forgotten—as much as you have."

And the Co. smiled.

"You mean that you are not going to tell me?" said Loder, breathing hard.

"Right on the wicket!" said Wharton coolly. "If Quelch thinks you ought to know, he will tell you. Ask him."

"You young sweep!" Loder made no further effort to control his rage. "You shady young rascal! You've got off this time, but next time I land you I'll see that you don't get off by rotten

favouritism! I'll take you straight to the Head next time!"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry.

"What?" roared Loder.

"Rats!" retorted Bob undauntedly.

Loder had his ashplant under his arm, and he slipped it down into his hand. He was longing to inflict it on the Famous Five, and Bob, at least, had given him a pretext.

"Bend over, Cherry!" he snapped.

"Rats!" repeated Bob.

"You refuse?" Loder's eyes gleamed. "Very well! I'll take you to the Head for refusing to obey a prefect!"

"Do," said Bob; "and I'll ask him what he thinks of your accusing our Form master of rotten favouritism."

Loder looked at him. Then he slipped the ashplant under his arm again and walked away. And the Famous Five smiled after him cheerily.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Rorty Dog!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Oh, buzz off, Bunter!" said

Wharton irritably.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Dry up!"

"If you call that civil, you beast—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I say, Nugent, old chap, you're not such a grumpy beast as that beast—"

"Yes, I am," answered Frank.

"Worse, in fact. I'm going to shy this Latin die at you if you don't clear."

"Yah!"

Instead of clearing, Billy Bunter stood in the doorway of Study No. 1 and blinked at the two juniors therein.

Harry Wharton was not in a good temper, that was obvious. Generally he was very patient with Billy Bunter. Now his patience failed him. As a matter of fact, the patience of Job would hardly have lasted so long as it did had he had to deal with the Owl of the Remove.

Prep was supposed to be going on in Study No. 1, but while Frank was working, Wharton was only staring gloomily at his books. He was sore and savage.

After the clearing up of that disagreeable affair, the chums of the Remove had naturally expected it to die a natural death. But it proved to be rather like the man in the story, who was dead but would not lie down.

Skinner & Co. were by no means disposed to part with so agreeable a titbit. They kept the topic alive. Certainly, Skinner & Co. were always saying something unpleasant about somebody, and nobody minded very much what they said. More annoying was the attitude taken up by Loder of the Sixth. Loder made it a point to make it quite clear to all whom it might concern, and all whom it might not concern, that he regarded the chums of the Remove with deep suspicion. He let it be known that, in his view, these juniors had been guilty of shady conduct, for which a flogging was the proper punishment, and that they had got off by a stroke of luck.

Loder did not dare to accuse their Form master of favouritism openly, but he hinted as much in that direction as he dared, with added hints that Quelch's confidence had been taken advantage of by unscrupulous young rascals. He paid an official visit to Study No. 1 to look for hidden cigarettes. He made no secret of the fact that he had his official eye on these particular juniors, and expected to catch them out before long.

That attitude of a Sixth Form prefect could not fail to produce its effect. It was "pie" to Skinner & Co. It made fellows in other Forms take unusual notice of the Famous Five, and started all sorts of rumours about them.

Fellows began to speak of them as they were accustomed to speak of the Bounder, or Angel of the Fourth. It was gall and wormwood to the chums of the Remove. It was intolerable that a mere act of thoughtlessness should produce all this effect. Johnny Bull, fortunately, had ceased to mention to his friends that he had told them so. Still, it was Johnny's opinion that they had asked for this, and Johnny never made a secret of his opinions. Which did not add to the harmony in the Co.

Loder was at the bottom of the whole disagreeable state of affairs, which would have been bad enough had Loder been a decent prefect like Wingate, or Gwynne, or North. But the chums of the Remove knew many things about Loder; among others, that he was often guilty of the very "pub-haunting" of which he accused them. That was the most irritating part of it.

Wharton, instead of thinking of prep, was thinking of Loder of the Sixth, with an intense desire to make his old enemy "sit up." He was in no mood for the cackle of William George Bunter.

"What's the row, old chap?" asked Bunter amicably. "Somebody been bagging your smokes?"

"What?" roared Wharton.

"It wasn't me," said Bunter hurriedly. "If you've missed cigarettes from your study, I know nothing about it."

"You fat idiot!"

"Well, I don't think you ought to call a fellow names when he's done nothing," said Bunter. "Most likely it was Skinner. He's greedy after smokes, as you know."

"Oh, get out, you fat duffer!" growled Wharton.

Bunter did not get out. He had come there to talk, and when there was nothing to eat, Bunter liked to talk. He had already looked into several studies, and books had been shied at him by fellows busy at prep.

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter, leaning on the door, with a watchful eye open for missiles, "I came in for a chat—"

"What about prep?" said Nugent.

"Oh, blow prep!" said Bunter. "I'm sick of prep! A fellow gets no encouragement in the Remove. Quelch always finds fault with my con, so he may as well have something to find fault with—what?"

"Fathead!"

"The fact is," said Bunter, "I've got something on. It's a real lark, if you fellows are game."

"Oh, rot!" said Harry.

"Of course, if you're afraid of the prefects—"

"Fathead! What's the lark, anyhow?"

Bunter gave the captain of the Remove a fat wink.

"What about a bit of a plunge?" he asked.

"A what?"

"Mind, I'm not the fellow for pub-haunting and that sort of thing, as a rule," said Bunter. "But, dash it all, why shouldn't a fellow take the bit in his teeth every now and then? What? I'm rather a rorty dog, you know, when I get going!"

Wharton and Nugent stared at him.

"A rorty dog?" repeated Harry.

"Yes—goey and all that," said Bunter complacently. "Now, my idea is to get out of the dorm to-morrow night—"

"Out of the dorm—"

"That's it! To-night wouldn't do." Bunter winked again. "Might run into somebody if we went to night. He, he, he! But to-morrow night will be safe. Loder won't be going out two nights running."

"Loder?" said Wharton blankly.

"Yes. After going to-night, Loder will stay in to-morrow night; that stands to reason. He has to be careful, you know. Well, to-morrow night we get out after lights-out and go on the spree, what?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Nugent.

"I've often thought of it," said Bunter. "But I know nobody at the Cross Keys. Skinner's refused to take me there—in fact, he denies knowing anything about the place himself. Smithy kicked me when I asked him to introduce me to Cobb." Bunter gave a reminiscent wriggle. Apparently, the Bounder had kicked hard. "Now, you fellows, as it turns out, are friendly with that lot at the pub. You were there the other day when Loder spotted you. I'll go with you. See?"

They gazed at him.

Bunter blinked at them, evidently very much taken with this great idea. Obviously the belief was fixed in his fat mind that he was dealing with "rorty dogs." The revelation of their supposed delinquency had come, in Bunter's opinion, at a timely moment. It gave him the long-desired opportunity for displaying his rorty doggishness.

"What do you think?" asked Bunter cheerfully. "Paint the town red, you know, just once in a way. I shall be in funds. I'm expecting a postal-order to-morrow. If it happens to be delayed, you fellows could lend me some money—temporarily. What?"

"You little fat beast——"

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"How do you know that Loder is going out of bounds to-night, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton quietly.

Bunter grinned.

"Oh, I know a lot of things!" he answered. "Mind, not a word! Loder would make me sit up. I ain't saying anything about a prefect—not me! He, he, he!"

"How do you know?"

"I happened to hear him speaking to Carne," said Bunter. "Of course, I wasn't listening. That's a kind of thing I scorn, as you fellows know. He said, 'Eleven to-night,' and Carne said it was too risky, and he was lying low for a time. Loder said it would be all right, and Cobb was expecting him. Carne said it would be safer to chuck it; and Loder said— Well, I'd better not tell you what Loder said," added Bunter thoughtfully. "We ain't supposed to use those words in the Remove—though Smithy does sometimes."

"I wish Loder had caught you listening and kicked you!" said Frank Nugent, in disgust.

"I've told you I wasn't listening," said Bunter indignantly. "I simply got out of sight when they came along. You know what beasts they are. Loder would kick a chap as soon as look at him. But, look here, you men—what about it? As Loder's going to-night, of course, we can't. But to-morrow night, we——"

Harry Wharton rose from the table.

He looked round the study in search of something.

"Looking for your smokes, old man?" asked Bunter. "I'll have one, if you've got 'em handy."

"I'm looking for a fives bat," answered Wharton grimly.

"Eh? What for?"

"For you!"

Bunter opened the study door hastily. Wharton found the fives bat at the same moment.

Whack!

The fives bat came into contact with a pair of tight trousers as Bunter jumped for the passage.

"Yoooop!" roared Bunter.

The door slammed after him. For

reasons unknown to Bunter, his proposal of a "night out" had been rejected. But he was left in no doubt as to the rejection. The fives bat made that quite clear.

Wharton and Nugent sat down to prep again, undisturbed further by the rorty dog of the Remove. But Wharton was not giving much attention to prep that evening. He was thinking—and his thoughts still ran on Loder of the Sixth—and there was a gleam in his eyes.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Sees it All!

BUNTER saw it all!

At all events, he was satisfied that he did.

Bunter prided himself upon being a fellow who knew things, and could see things. Bunter could, he flattered himself, see as far into a millstone as the next fellow.

Now he saw it all!

Those beasts, after affecting to turn down Bunter's proposal of a rorty night out of bounds, were going out all the same—only leaving Bunter out in the cold.

It was all clear to Bunter.

He saw it all.

His suspicions were first awakened when, after prep, the whole Co. gathered in Study No. 1 for consultation. Nugent had gone along the passage to call Johnny Bull, Bob Cherry, and Hurree Singh. Bunter had rolled along to hear what was said; and the beasts were so suspicious that one of them had opened the study door suddenly, causing Bunter to fall headlong into the study. The vigorous application of a boot was the next item on the programme—after which Bunter kept at a respectful distance from the keyhole of Study No. 1.

Whatever the consultation was about, it was carried on without Bunter's fat ears drinking it in.

That alone was annoying enough to a fellow who wanted to know things and prided himself on knowing things.

It was annoying, and it excited Bunter's suspicions. Those suspicions were soon confirmed.

"Don't let that fat pig get on to it!" he distinctly heard Bob Cherry remark, as the Famous Five went down the Remove staircase a little later.

Bunter could not have any doubt as to who was the "fat pig" to whom Bob alluded.

He could not fail to recognise that description as his own.

So there was something he was not to get on to—something that the beasts were keeping dark!

Later, in the Rag, when Wharton was looking out of the window into the

shadowed quadrangle, he remarked that there would be no moon that night, to which Nugent rejoined that that was all the better.

Then it flashed on Bunter's powerful brain.

Whatever was "on," was on that night. So much was clear. Fellows who were going to be fast asleep in the dormitory would not bother about whether there was a moon or not. A moonless

night suited their purpose—whatever it was. Bunter had no doubt what it was. Of course, they were going out of bounds after lights-out—only for that reason could they care whether the night was dark or light. After pretending to view with scorn his proposal of a night out, after batting him with a fives bat for making the suggestion, they were going out of bounds—playing the giddy ox after lights-out. Stuffing a fellow that they never did anything of the sort, merely for the purpose of leaving him out in the cold!

Bunter could not help feeling disgusted.

Now he saw it all. It was as clear as daylight to him. These young rotters, who had been caught pub-haunting once, were going to be rorty again, and leaving out an old pal.

Bunter saw the cunning of it. He had proposed the morrow night, when it would be safer, and he would naturally have expected the outbreak to take place on a safe night. That was why they had fixed it for to-night, so that he would not get on to it. They were taking the risk of running into Loder of the Sixth just to keep Bunter out of the excursion. Bunter was to sleep—and to snore—in the Remove dormitory while those five fellows were out on the tiles, and in the morning they were going to play the innocent, as usual, and make out that they were shocked at fellows who took a plunge now and then. Bunter saw it all!

He saw it all, and chuckled a fat chuckle.

Now that he saw it all it was easy enough for a fellow of Bunter's bright intellect to circumvent these beasts.

They thought they were going to leave him out, did they? Well, they would jolly well see when the time came. They would find that William George Bunter, like a weasel, could sleep with one eye open.

Sleep, says the poet, is a gentle thing, beloved from pole to pole. Certainly, it was dearly beloved by Billy Bunter. Eating was his seventh heaven, talking his sixth, but sleeping was his fifth. But to circumvent the knavish tricks of these beasts he was prepared to give up his sleep. He was going to remain awake—on the watch. When they started on their shady excursion he was going to join them. They could hardly argue the point outside the dormitory in the middle of the night, when it meant a flogging all round if their voices were heard and they were spotted. Bunter thought that big idea over, and was pleased with it.

Wingate of the Sixth saw lights out for the Remove that night. When the juniors were shepherded off to their dormitory Bunter went with a fat grin on his face. Wingate left the juniors

(Continued on next page.)



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to turn in, evidently quite unsuspecting of any escapade planned for the night. But Bunter had an eye wide open—in fact, two eyes, not to mention a large pair of spectacles. He was not surprised to see Bob Cherry tuck a pair of rubber shoes away under his bed. He was not surprised to see that one or two of the Co. turned in without completely undressing. That was to save time when they turned out and dressed again in the dark, of course. That would have been proof to Bunter, had he needed any proof. But he needed none. He saw it all!

Wingate bade the Removites good-night, turned out the lights, and departed.

There was the usual talk from bed to bed; but the Famous Five did not, as usual, join it. Bunter understood why. The beasts wanted the fellows to settle down to sleep as soon as possible, of course.

Skinner talked of pub-haunting and the luck some fellows had of squeezing out of it when they were spotted. This was one of Skinner's favourite topics these days.

But he failed to draw any member of the Co.

The Remove slept at last.

There were exceptions. Five fellows, as Bunter jolly well knew, had no intention of going to sleep. Neither had Billy Bunter any intention of doing so.

But towards ten o'clock Bunter experienced an unexpected difficulty in carrying out his big idea.

It had been quite easy to decide to remain awake that night and watch those surreptitious beasts who were leaving him out of a good thing. But it was not so easy to stay awake as to decide to do so.

Bunter yawned more and more, and in spite of himself his little round eyes closed again and again, and each time he reopened them they reopened more unwillingly.

Finally, Bunter made up his fat mind to listen intently with his eyes shut. A fellow could listen just as well with his eyes shut—in fact, better.

So Bunter listened with his eyes shut.

About a minute later any other fellow who had been listening, with his eyes shut or open, would have heard a deep and rumbling snore.

The Owl of the Remove was asleep.

He slept and snored.

Probably some fellows, who were awake, had wondered why they had not hitherto heard that accustomed snore. Now they heard it.

The half-hour chimed from the clock tower without awakening William George Bunter. Eleven o'clock sounded in the night, and still William George slept the sleep of the just.

But he was not sleeping so soundly as usual.

Even in slumber there lingered in his fat mind some consciousness of an intention to keep awake sufficient to make his repose less reposeful than usual.

Several times he stirred in his sleep; once his Gargantuan snore ceased for several moments as he half awoke.

Finally he did awake.

He lay blinking in the darkness of the dormitory, wondering dimly what had awakened him. Then he remembered. He had not been going to sleep at all. He had only been going to listen with his eyes shut. But apparently he had nodded off for a few minutes. Perhaps more than a few minutes.

He sat up in bed.

It was warm and cosy in bed, and Bunter was disinclined to turn out. But

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he was not going to be done. Not if Bunter knew it.

With an effort he rolled out of bed.

He groped for his spectacles, jammed them on his fat little nose, and blinked round in the gloom.

Had the beasts gone during those few minutes while he had nodded off? He was not aware that he had slept and snored for a solid hour and a half.

He could see nothing in the gloom but the dim outlines of beds, and he crept along to the nearest one occupied by a member of the Co. It was no longer occupied. Bunter's fat paw passed over an empty bed.

They were gone! He did not need to examine the other beds. If one was gone, all the other beasts were gone.

Bunter breathed deep with wrath.

It was just like the beasts to take advantage of his nodding off for a minute or two to sneak quietly out of the dorm and leave him in the lurch.

But Bunter was not beaten so easily as all that. He dressed himself hurriedly in the dark and rolled to the door. They could not be many minutes ahead of him, he considered. He was sure that he had only napped for a very brief space. He knew the way they would go, and he would jolly well get after them before they could get clear. If they thought they were going out on the tiles without Bunter they were jolly well mistaken, and Bunter was the fellow to show them.

Softly he let himself out of the dormitory. Softly he stole along to the box-room. That was the way the beasts would go. But for the knowledge that five other fellows were out of the dormitory Bunter would scarcely have ventured to negotiate that dark passage in the middle of the night. Bunter was not afraid of the dark—in the daytime. At night he did not like it. But the feeling that other fellows were up and at hand reassured him.

He crept into the box-room. There he blinked round in the dim light from the window.

"I say, you fellows!" he whispered.

No reply.

"I say, you beasts! I know you're here."

Deep silence, save for an echo, faintly, of his own voice. Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. If they had gone already—

He crept to the window. It was closed—and fastened! He felt over the fastening and gasped with amazement. If the beasts had gone out they could not have fastened the window behind them. Evidently they had not gone out by way of the box-room window.

Bunter breathed hard.

He saw it all, of course. The beasts had suspected him, and gone out some other way—some unusual way—to diddle him. That was the way they treated an old pal—after all he had done for them!

"Beasts!" hissed Bunter.

He crept out of the box-room again. If they were already out of the House he was done. But were they? Which way had the unspeakable beasts gone after leaving the dormitory? There was that little window in the lobby near the Sixth-Form passage downstairs. But that was pretty certain to be Loder's way out, and they knew he was going that night, because Bunter had told them so. They would not be fools enough to risk that. Yet—Bunter had a flash of insight—perhaps they would use that way out, because Loder, if he used that window, would have left it unfastened; and they could carefully time their going and returning to keep clear of Loder, if he was out.

Yes, as likely as not they would use that very window, taking advantage of Bunter having told them about Loder.

Bunter crept down the stairs.

The House was dark, silent, wrapped in slumber. It was borne in upon Bunter's fat mind that it was later than he had supposed. Downstairs looked like a black gulf to him.

Thoughts of burglars came uncomfortably into his fat mind. Suppose a burglar had chosen that very night to crack the crib? Suppose a dark, desperate figure leaped on him, all of a sudden, from the shadows? Bunter felt cold shivers running down his spine. But he remembered that at least five fellows were up; and took his courage in both hands, as it were, and kept on. In the Sixth-Form passage, as he groped his way, he felt more at ease; the Sixth slept in their own rooms, so there were plenty of fellows near at hand now, though they were asleep. He groped to the lobby at the end of the passage. The door of it was half open; and it should have been closed at night. Bunter knew that he was on the right track.

He paused in the doorway, and blinked in. And from the darkness of the little room came a cautious whisper:

"Hush!"

Bunter grinned.

He had run the beasts down—he knew Bob Cherry's whisper. They had fancied that they had fooled him, and that they were going out of bounds for a night out, without Bunter. Not likely, when Bunter had seen it all!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Only Bunter!

"HUSH!"

Bob Cherry whispered the word faintly, as a faint sound reached his ear.

His comrades promptly hushed.

Five juniors were in the little lobby; they had been there some time. Not, as the fat and fatuous Owl supposed, with the intention of breaking bounds at night, having a night out, painting the town red, and being rorty dogs generally. They were there because they, like Bunter, guessed accurately that that would be Gerald Loder's way out; and it was wholly and solely upon Loder's account that they were there, though that explanation of their mysterious proceedings never occurred to Bunter's powerful brain.

That Bunter's information had been well-founded—that Loder actually had gone out of bounds that night—the Famous Five had soon assured themselves. For the lobby window, though closed, was unfastened when they reached it, and had obviously been left unfastened by some fellow who had gone out, intending to return the same way.

That the fellow was Loder they could hardly doubt. Bunter had heard him tell Carne that he was going to see Cobb at eleven. He might have changed his mind, of course; Carne had refused to go with him, on the ground that it was risky; and that might have altered Loder's plans. But the unfastened window left no doubt in their minds. It would have been too much of a coincidence had Loder changed his plans for that night, and had some other black sheep chosen that very night for a surreptitious excursion.

Satisfied that the fellow who had



In the grasp of many pairs of hands Coker, struggling and roaring, was half carried to the games study at the end of the Fifth Form passage. "What the jolly old dickens!" ejaculated Blundell. "We've brought your prize idiot home!" explained Wharton. "Keep him out of the Remove passage, or he will get hurt!" (See Chapter 8.)

gone out was Loder, the chums of the Remove had only to wait for his return. Loder would come back, never dreaming that anybody was in the lobby waiting for him. It would have served him right to fasten the window and leave him out for the night; but such a drastic step as that the juniors did not think of taking. Loder was their enemy, and an unfair enemy; but they were not the fellows to betray any man to the "sack." They were going to give Loder the scare of his life, as a punishment for his persecution; and they were going to let him know that they knew of his misdeeds, as a warning for the future. If, after that, Loder did not let the subject of pub-haunting drop, the Famous Five would have something to say on that subject themselves—and Loder would doubtless realise that the least said, the soonest mended.

But while they waited, listening for a sound at the little window, which was darkly shadowed by a tree growing close to the wall outside, the chums of the Remove were startled by a sound behind them; and Bob involuntarily whispered "Hush!"

For some seconds the hearts of the juniors stood still.

They had been awfully cautious; they had made no sound. But someone was coming!

As they listened, their hearts beating fast and almost painfully, they could hear the sound of breathing from the direction of the doorway.

They did not think of burglars; their imaginations were rather less lurid than Bunter's, and they were not nervy. What they thought of was a Sixth-Form prefect on the rampage. Wingate or Gwynne, or some other over-dutiful prefect, might have heard something and come out of his room. Carne or Walker might have come out to see Loder when he came back. To be caught out of their dormitory at midnight by a prefect was rather an

unnerving prospect. The Famous Five could almost hear their own hearts beating as they waited and listened—and several seconds, as long as centuries, dragged by.

Then a familiar voice came from the darkness.

"I say, you fellows!"

There was a gasp from five.

"Bunter!" stuttered Wharton.

"Bunter!" hissed Johnny Bull.

"The esteemed and idiotic Bunter!"

"You fat idiot!"

"You burbling chump!"

"He, he, he!" came unmusically from the darkness. "Did I frighten you chaps? He, he, he!"

Bunter groped into the lobby.

"You fat chump!" hissed Wharton.

"You burbling bandersnatch!"

"Oh, really, Wharton!"

"Quiet, you howling ass!" breathed Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"Do you want to wake all the Sixth?" hissed Nugent.

"Oh, really, Franky, old chap!"

Wharton hastily, but quietly, shut the door of the lobby. The awakening of any member of the Sixth, in the rooms near at hand, spelled disaster for the chums of the Remove.

"Now, what are you doing here, you born idiot?" demanded the captain of the Remove, in a fierce whisper.

"I'm coming!" chuckled Bunter.

"Coming!" repeated Wharton.

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter emphatically.

"Do you mean you've come, you burbling porpoise?"

"I mean I'm coming," said Bunter. "If you'd left it till to-morrow night, my postal-order would have come. As it stands, you'll have to lend me some money."

"Is he raving potty?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull!"

"What do you mean, you pilfering,

pie-faced porker, if you mean anything?" hissed Bob Cherry.

"I mean what I say!" answered Bunter firmly. "If you think you're leaving me out, you're jolly well mistaken. I suppose you're not going to the Cross Keys, as Loder will be there. Wherever you're going, I'm coming! It's all right! I'm game, you know! You fellows may think yourselves rorty, but I can jolly well tell you that I'm some lad when I get going. I'll show you round the town! Leave it to me."

The Famous Five understood at last.

"You burbling, bungling, benighted, blackguardly bloater!" hissed Bob Cherry. "Do you think we're going out of bounds? You piffling, pop-eyed, pie-faced porpoise, don't you know it's just on midnight? You sneaking, slinking, slacking, slovenly bunny-rabbit!"

"Oh, really, you know!"

"You benighted idiot!" said Harry. "We're waiting here for Loder, to rag him when he comes in. Can't you understand, you fat frump? And he may be here any minute now—even Loder can't keep it up much after midnight."

Bunter jumped.

"You ain't going out?"

"No, ass."

"You—you ain't going on the randan?"

"No, idiot!"

"Is—is—it it only a jape—only a rag on Loder?"

"Yes, chump."

"Well, you silly idiots!" said Bunter, breathing wrath and indignation. "You howling asses! You burbling cuckoos! You've got me out of bed in the middle of the night, and you tell me it's only a fatheaded jape on a fatheaded prefect! Think I'd have got up if I'd known that! You—you—you—" Words failed Bunter. He spluttered with wrath.

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There was a faint chuckle in the lobby.

The juniors realised what an effort it must have cost Bunter to drag himself out of bed before rising-bell. They could imagine his feelings when he found that he had made that effort for nothing!

"You potty chumps!" hissed Bunter. "I hope Loder will catch you. I hope Wingate will wake up and nab you! I hope—"

"What a hopeful nature!" murmured Bob. And there was another chuckle.

"Beasts! Dragging a fellow out of bed for nothing—"

"Who asked you to get out of bed, you meddling dummy?" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"Go back to bed and shut up!" said Nugent.

"Yah!"

"Quiet, fathead!" said Harry. "Do you want to wake the Sixth? It's a flogging all round if we're spotted here."

"Serve you jolly well right! You silly owl—"

"Hark!"

"Hush!"

It was a sound at the window.

Against the darkness of the panes appeared something darker.

The breaker of bounds had returned.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Startling Discovery!

BILLY BUNTER hushed. The Famous Five were as quiet as mice. Even Bunter, bursting with indignant disappointment as he was, realised the necessity for caution. A shadowy figure outside darkened the window, and a hand was fumbling over the sash. Loder—if it was Loder—was not likely to make a fuss and cause an alarm, in the circumstances; he had too much to lose in the event of discovery.

But the Sixth Form passage was close at hand; one of the lobby doors opened on it. Any disturbance meant that a prefect might come butting in; and for juniors to be caught out of their dormitory at midnight's witching hour, was a very serious matter. And Bunter, having joined up with the Famous Five, was as deep in the mud as they were in the mire, so to speak. His wrath was deep and intense. He was running all this risk for nothing—to join in a rag on Loder of the Sixth, about whom he did not care two straws. But he suppressed his righteous wrath, and was silent.

Slowly, cautiously, the lower sash of the little window was raised from without.

The juniors kept still and silent, watching.

All they could see was a dim, black shadow at the window; the vague outline of a form.

It was, of course, the breaker of bounds for whom they had been waiting; and they had no doubt at all that it was Gerald Loder. But recognition was out of the question.

Wharton stood at one side of the little window, Bob Cherry at the other. Close against the wall, hidden in the gloom, they waited for the black sheep of Greyfriars to push in.

The night-prowler was very cautious. Inch by inch he raised the lower sash. The window was small, but when the sash was up there was room for even a fellow to crawl in. The sash went up inch by inch, noiselessly.

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It was up at last, and a head was thrust in, and a pair of shoulders followed it.

The juniors heard a quick breathing in the gloom. The half-seen figure was climbing in.

Head and shoulders were inside, and two arms. At that juncture Wharton and Bob Cherry intervened effectively.

On either side of the little window a hand grasped the sash, and it was shoved down.

It came down across the back of the fellow who was pushing in.

There was a startled, horrified gasp.

The descending sash pinned the intruder down, with his chest on the window-frame, head and shoulders and arms inside the room, body and legs still outside.

"Ooooooh!"

It was a horrified gasp.

The dark figure made a tremendous heave to push the sash up and get loose.

The two juniors held it down hard.

Nugent and Johnny Bull stepped forward quietly, and grasped the wrists of the extended groping arms.

"Got our jolly old bird!" murmured Bob Cherry.

There was a suppressed chortle.

"You needn't wriggle, old bean," said Harry Wharton. "We've got you tight, and we jolly well know who you are! If you want to be caught in that fix you've only got to make a row."

THIS CLEVER LIMERICK WINS A USEFUL LEATHER POCKET WALLET.

Old Gosling, the Greyfriars porter,
Doesn't work so hard as he
oughter";
When his throat feels dry
He'll not stand and sigh,
But will take something stronger
than water!

Sent in by: Arthur Rogers,
4, Coronation Villas, Gander
Green Lane, Sutton, Surrey.

"Shout, old scout!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "The Head would be no end interested to find you fixed up like this."

The juniors spoke in whispers. They were as interested as the breaker of bounds could be in avoiding an alarm. From Loder they had nothing to fear—in the circumstances. He was not in a position to "come the prefect." But any other prefect who might have been awakened would have given them short shrift.

The startled culprit wriggling in the window uttered no word. Undoubtedly he recognised the voices of the juniors, and knew with whom he had to deal. But doubtless he still hoped to keep his own identity a secret, and he did not betray himself by speaking. Also, whatever the raggers might do, he dared not risk an alarm. For the juniors this midnight jape meant a flogging if they were caught. For the senior who had gone out on the "razzle" it meant expulsion. The fate of the blackguard of Greyfriars was trembling in the balance.

"Speak up, old bean!" murmured Bob. "We know you're Loder! We've been waiting here for you."

"The waitfulness was terrific, my esteemed Loder."

No word from the figure in the window.

He was struggling silently, savagely, frantically to release himself.

But his position was hopeless.

Two hands held the sash jammed down across his back, two pairs of hands

held his wrists, and a hand was on his collar.

"The dear man's dumb," said Bob. "He won't even ask us to let him off. Shall I pull his nose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quiet!"

"Got the ink, Franky?"

"Here you are!"

"Good!"

Harry Wharton took the ink-bottle and poured the contents over the head, and down the neck.

There was a horrible gurgle from the victim.

"That's that!" said Wharton. "Now, listen to me, Loder, you rotter. You jolly well deserve to be shown up to all the school. You've made out that we were a set of pub-haunting rotters, and you've been out pub-haunting yourself. This is a warning to you. There's six of us here, witnesses of your filthy blagging. Let us alone after this, and we'll let you alone. Talk any more about us, you cad, and we'll talk, too—and let all the fellows know what's happened in this lobby to-night. Got that?"

"Oh, really, Wharton, there's only five!" came a fat voice in remonstrance. "I've got nothing to do with it."

"Shut up, you fat idiot."

"Don't you let Loder know I'm here, you beast—I don't want the brute after me, you know."

"Dry up, idiot!"

"Beast!"

"Now, have you got it clear, Loder?" asked Wharton. "If you're not satisfied, and if you want to come the prefect, you've only got to shout and bring Wingate here."

"Shout away, old bean!" chuckled Bob.

The struggling figure did not shout. He did not utter a word. Only gasping breaths came from him as he wriggled in the window.

"After this, if you make it pax, we'll do the same," said Harry. "You've got to leave us alone. Do you understand, you rotter? Any more of your talk about pub-haunting and you'll get enough talk on that subject to make you sick of it. You shut your slandering mouth, and we'll keep mum. Not otherwise! Got that?"

Only a furious gasp answered. Evidently the breaker of bounds, infuriated as he was, had not forgotten caution. He would not speak and let his voice be recognised.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter."

"Look here, you beasts, don't mention my name for Loder to hear. I don't want him to know that I'm here."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. I say, I believe I can hear somebody moving—"

"Quiet!"

"Better cut," whispered Bob Cherry. "I fancy we've made it clear to Loder now."

"The clearfulness is terrific."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Quiet, you fat ass!"

"Let us take our esteemed departure, my worthy chums," murmured the nabob of Bhanipur. "The absurd and rascally Loder is probably tired of our company by this time."

"I shouldn't wonder!" grinned Nugent.

"Hold on," said Bob. "He won't speak—but we're going to make sure that it's Loder. We know it is, but we can't be too sure. Loder isn't the only blackguard at Greyfriars, is he? Wait a minute till I get a match."

"I say, you fellows, it's risky—suppose someone saw—"

"Shut up, Bunter."

Bob Cherry groped in his pocket for a match-box.

There was a sudden, terrific effort from the figure jammed in the window. The certainty of recognition, when the match should strike, seemed to inspire him to a herculean effort. He wrenched his wrists loose, and his fists swept round, and there were ejaculations from the juniors as he smote.

"Oh!"

"Ow!"

"Hold him!"

But it was too late! Released, for the moment, the breaker of bounds jammed up the sash, and slipped back into the darkness outside. In a second he had vanished.

"My hat! He's gone!" breathed Nugent.

"I say, you fellows—"

"All serene," panted Wharton. "He can't stay out all night. He's got to get back this way, or not at all."

"We can't wait here, if he comes back with the milk in the morning," murmured Nugent.

"My esteemed chums—" murmured the nabob, who had picked up something from the floor.

"It was Loder all right," growled Johnny Bull. "We know it was Loder! Let's get back to the dorm."

"My esteemed and absurd chums, I

have his excellent hat in my ridiculous hands," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The name of the ludicrous rotter will be insidefully."

"Get that match, Bob."

"Right-ho."

Bob struck a match, and the juniors gathered round to look into the hat that the nabob was still holding. It was an invariable rule at Greyfriars that a fellow's name should be written in his hat. The juniors were quite sure that they had been dealing with Gerald Loder. But the name in the hat would make assurance doubly sure.

The match flickered. The light showed up the name stamped on the lining inside the hat. There was a gasp of utter dismay and amazement from the Removites. For the name they read in the hat, was:

G. BLUNDELL.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Wrong Man!

"BLUNDELL!"
"Great pip!"
"Blundell of the Fifth!"
"Oh, crikey!"

"Well," said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath. "We've done it now, you men. We've abso-bally-lootly been and gone and done it!"

The juniors realised that they had! The match went out.

In the darkness, the chums of the Remove stared at one another's dim faces in blank dismay.

"It—it—it wasn't Loder!" stuttered Nugent, at last.

"Nunno!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Not Loder! Who—who'd have thought it! Of all the rotten frosts—"

"No wonder he didn't speak!" murmured Bunter. "He was letting us think he was Loder, all the time. He, he, he! Jolly deep of Blundell!"

"Blundell!" said Wharton, dazedly. "Who could have thought it? Blundell of the Fifth! I'd have sworn he was a decent chap! I—I can't understand it! Blundell—out of bounds at midnight—it seems impossible. Where on earth can he have been?"

Grunt, from Johnny Bull.

"Where 'id we find him the other day?" he growled. "Hanging about the Cross Keys!"

"But—it seems impossible—with Blundell—"

"It doesn't matter much what it seems—we know it's Blundell, and we know he's been blagging. Loder never went out after all, of course. I suppose he's asleep in his room all the time."

"We've caught the wrong bird!" said Bob, dismally. "Blundell, too—the man who did us a good turn with Quelchy—"

(Continued on next page.)



WONDERS—FAST AND FURIOUS!

The progress of Mechanical Science moves so swiftly that we wonder in awe what the world of to-morrow will be like. Our contributor, in treating this vastly interesting subject, opens wide the door of the future through which we can peep.

"WELL, what ever next!" You don't often hear people exclaim that in these brisk days, do you? It is an old-fashioned phrase, which died out as folks became so surfeited with astonishment at miraculous happenings in their everyday lives that no expression was strong enough to indicate their wonderment.

Way back in the middle of last century, inventions and staggering achievements seemed for a time to have come to a definite end. The slow old railway trains appeared to be the very climax of human ingenuity and effort. You went on a journey then feeling ever so bucked that it was no longer necessary to creep to your destination having your bones shaken up in a lumbering stage coach!

London to New York and back in twenty-four hours!

There came a day when the world began to stir. First one startling invention came, then another. People began to dream of the time when you might get to Africa or India or America in a day or two short of some months. Now two young R.A.F. men have flown to India, without a stop, in forty-eight hours!

That's swift moving, goodness knows; but it's still too slow for the inventor who has just patented a

machine that he says will fly at the rate of 600 miles an hour! He hasn't exactly slaughtered the laws of gravity, but he declares he has done the next best thing—put it in chains! He's going to control it so completely that his machine will climb straight up into the ether, and, when he wants it to, come straight down again, without gasbag, helicopter, or plane to assist it!

He talks about travelling in this uncanny machine from London to New York and back again inside of twenty-four hours! He reckons it will take him a year to complete the building of this wonder—and then we shall see!

Well, that is one year from now. What about a hundred years from now?

Bottled Up Heat!

Coal as a source of heat and power is being looked at askance to-day. Engineers have an eye cocked on a previously unattacked source of ridiculously cheap and inexhaustible heat—the molten mass, the roaring fire, that forms the very centre of the earth! Will they ever "tap" it? There are enormous difficulties in the way, but as the crust of the earth has already been pretty extensively tunnelled, they see no solid reason why men shouldn't burrow down farther still and get at the blistering heat that now is bottled up in the mysterious centre of this amazing planet!

What of the Future?

Engineers are conquering electricity in such a determined manner to-day that artificial lighting of millions of volts can be produced to order—the crackle of it being heard a dozen or more miles away. And a million volt tube is being used to produce X-rays at least five times more powerful than those being used in our hospitals now. That tube is twenty feet high, made of a series of great glass jars, and the men who operate it do their risky job in a concrete tunnel a good way away.

One of these days someone will liberate a power at present only guessed at—such as smashing the atom. And then, if the world isn't shattered to crumbs and all life totally destroyed when the first atoms explode in the laboratory—as many scientists seriously declare it will be—existence on this earth will be so transformed that most of us hesitate to guess what life will be like on earth in the future!

But some idea of what mechanical science holds in store for us is ably depicted in the splendid coloured picture card of a Gyroscopic Mono-Railway given away Free in this week's bumper number of our Companion Paper, the "Gem Library."

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"Oh, rotten!"

"If he'd said who he was, we'd have chucked it up at once," said Harry, in distress. "Why couldn't he speak?"

"Keeping it dark who he was, of course. He knew we never dreamed that he was Blundell, and he wasn't letting on."

"Let's get out of this," muttered Johnny Bull. "We've nothing against Blundell. It's no bizney of ours if he goes out playing the goat. Leave the window open, and bunk."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter. Come on."

There was nothing to linger for. The chums of the Remove were utterly dismayed and disconcerted by that unexpected outcome of the adventure. They had bagged the wrong bird, as it seemed, though they could hardly blame themselves for the mistake, for not one member of the Co. would ever have dreamed of suspecting George Blundell of such conduct. They were not to blame; but it was very unfortunate. Blundell had done them a good turn, he had set them right with Quelch, and saved them from a Head's flogging. And in return they had given him the scare of his life, ragged him and inked him, and found out his shady secret.

The juniors would have given a great deal not to know what they now knew. They had liked and respected Blundell, and it was scarcely possible to respect him after this. In a thoroughly dismayed and miserable mood, the Removites crept out of the lobby and stole away to their dormitory.

Through the still and silent House, they crept softly, and reached the Remove dormitory. All was quiet when they entered it.

"I say, you fellows—" whispered Bunter.

"Shut up!"

"You fat idiot!" breathed Bob Cherry. "It's all your fault."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"With your beastly eavesdropping, and getting it all wrong," said Bob, savagely. "If you must listen to fellows, why can't you keep what you hear to yourself?"

"Well, I like that!" said Bunter indignantly. "I never asked you to go after Loder, did I? I warned you not to get out to-night, because that beast was going. I thought—"

"Oh, cheese it, you fat dummy!"

"We've done it now," muttered Wharton. "I can't understand a man like Blundell playing such rotten games, but—it's no bizney of ours. We've got to keep this awfully dark."

"Yes rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, suddenly. "We're all benighted idiots—if that hat's found in the lobby, what will they think? Blundell mayn't find it in the dark when he gets back—and if it's found to-morrow there, with Blundell's name in it—"

"My esteemed Bob," murmured the nabob, "that absurd consideration occurred to my idiotic brain, and I brought the esteemed hat away."

"Oh, good!" said Bob, in relief.

"Good!" said Wharton. "It would have given Blundell away if it had been found there among the Sixth Form things. The Fifth never use that lobby. You've got it safe, Inky?"

"The safefulness is terrific."

"Shove it in your box till the morning, then. We can chuck it into Blundell's study some time to-morrow when he's out."

Blundell's hat was placed in conceal-

ment. From out of the Remove beds came a sleepy voice:

"Is that somebody up?"

Skinner sat up in bed and peered round him.

"I say, you fellows, Skinner's awake, and—"

"Shut up and go to bed!"

"So it's you lot?" said Skinner, peering into the darkness. "You fellows been out on the tiles? How are they getting on at the Cross Keys? Did you take a short cut this time through the pub parlour?"

The chums of the Remove did not answer Skinner. They went quietly to their beds, wishing from the bottom of their hearts that they had never left them. Two or three drowsy voices spoke:

"What's that?"

"Who's up?"

"What's on?"

"Only our Form captain and his pals just come home!" said Skinner. "I suppose it's near one o'clock! Nice time for nice boys to come home—I don't think!"

"We haven't been out, you rotter!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Only just walking round the House in the dark?" inquired Skinner blandly. "Sounds likely, doesn't it?"

"Where on earth have you men been?" asked Peter Todd.

"It was a jape on Loder, and we came a mucker. Loder never turned up," answered Harry. "That's all."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" hissed Bob Cherry.

"But we found out—"

"If you say another word, you fat idiot, I'll take my bolster to you!" hooted Bob. "Can't you shut up?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"What's the jolly old secret?" asked Skinner, with a yawn. "What is it that Bunter's found out this time?"

"Nothing that concerns him or you!" snapped Wharton. "Mind your own business, Skinner!"

"Hoity-toity!" yawned Skinner. "So you've only been out of the dorm for a jape—what?"

"Yes!" snapped Harry.

"Mind telling that to the Marines?" asked Skinner. "It's no use to me, old bean!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"I've got my bolster ready, Bunter, if you don't shut your silly mouth!" said Bob savagely.

"Yah!"

And the Remove settled down to sleep again, and Billy Bunter's deep snore was soon rumbling through the dormitory.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Secret to Keep!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. looked, and felt, rather seedy the following morning when they turned out at the clang of the rising-bell. They had missed a good deal of sleep, and they felt the effects of it. A good many curious glances were turned on them in the dormitory. All the Remove knew that the Famous Five had been up in the night, and naturally expected to be told why. But they were told nothing, except that a rag on Loder had been planned, and had failed to come off. Had that rag been a success there would have been no secret about it. But, as matters had turned out, the chums were anxious to keep the actual happenings as dark as possible. They had made a disconcert-

ing discovery about a fellow who was universally liked and respected in the school. That knowledge was disagreeable to themselves, and certainly they did not intend to impart it to others. The less said about the matter the better.

Blundell of the Fifth held his head high in the school, as everyone believed that he had a right to do. And even if he was, as it now seemed, a black sheep like Loder of the Sixth, that did not alter the fact that he had done the Famous Five a good turn at some risk to himself. Indeed, if Blundell was a blackguard like Loder, he had taken very considerable risk on himself in speaking out to Mr. Quelch as he had done. That, at least, had been a kind and generous action, and showed that Blundell, into whatever shady ways he might have fallen, was decent at heart.

"Somebody's got him into this," said Bob Cherry, in the quad after breakfast. "We know there are some rank rotters in the Fifth—Hilton and Price and their set. Blundell's a bit of an ass. I dare say he's been drawn into this sort of game."

"Man oughtn't to be drawn into acting rottenly!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I know that, ass! But, take him all in all, Blundell's a good sort."

"The goodfulness of the sort is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "and perhapsfully he is not so black as he has painted his esteemed self. Perhapsfully this is the first time—"

"We saw him the other day—"

"Then perhapsfully it is the second time," said the nabob mildly. "Let us be absurdly charitable in our ridiculous judgments, my worthy chums. It is not for us to cover the esteemed Blundell with disgrace as with a ludicrous garment."

"Not a word, of course," said Wharton—"not a syllable. Blundell knows that we know, of course—he knew who we were last night. But we've nothing against him, and he's a good sort in his way, at least, and he did a jolly decent thing for us. Not a word about him to anyone."

"That's all right, of course," said Johnny Bull. "I've got my own opinion of him now but I'm not going to give a man away. But you seem to have forgotten that Bunter knows. Bunter will jaw."

"The jawfulness of the obnoxious Bunter must be stopped somehowfully!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

In break that morning the Famous Five tackled Bunter on the subject. They impressed upon him the necessity for silence. They explained that it would be a dirty trick to give Blundell away. They added that if Bunter did not restrain his usual propensity for tattling in this instance, they would make his life not worth living in the Remove.

Bunter blinked at them.

"I say, you fellows, I hope I'm not the fellow to tattle," he said. "You know me. Did you ever hear me tattle?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"Some fellows can keep a secret," said Bunter, with dignity. "This will never get out unless you fellows jaw. That's what I'm afraid of."

"You silly ass!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Mind, I'm not specially concerned about Blundell," said Bunter. "He kicked me once."

"Only once?" asked Bob. "Well, you ought to be grateful. Every other fellow at Greyfriars has kicked you more than once."

"Beast! Blow Blundell!" said Bunter. "I don't think much of the



The night-prowler was halfway in the window when Wharton and Bob Cherry grasped the sash and drew it down sharply. "Ooooooh!" There was a startled, horrified gasp as the descending sash plucked the intruder down, with his chest on the window-frame, head and shoulders inside the room, and his body and legs still outside. (See Chapter 13.)

chap, or the Fifth at all! Lot of swank-ing chumps, if you ask me. If I keep this disgraceful secret it will be to oblige my old pals."

"Well, all serene, so long as you keep it," said Harry. "If you don't your old pals will scrag you bald-headed."

"The scragfulness will be terrific and horrible."

"Oh, really, you fellows! As I say, I'm going to keep this shady secret to oblige you," said Bunter. "I'll tell you what, old chaps. Let's go and talk it over in the tuckshop. I had hardly any breakfast—"

"Look here, Bunter—"

"And I'm hungry. My postal-order didn't come this morning," added Bunter sorrowfully. "I think I mentioned to you fellows that I was expecting one. There's been some delay in the post again."

"You fat chump!"

"Well, look here, one good turn deserves another," said Bunter argumentatively. "Mrs. Mimble has got some new tarts in this morning. Those lovely fourpenny ones, you know. Scrumptious!" He blinked anxiously at the Famous Five. "Of course, I don't mean that I want you fellows to stand me tarts because I'm obliging you in this little matter. Still, as I said, one good turn deserves another. You can't get away from that."

There was an adjournment to the school shop.

Six scrumptious tarts, which disappeared down Bunter's fat gullet like so many oysters, were the price of silence.

Bunter, happy, and sticky, and jammy, assured the chums of the Remove that they could rely on him, and that the secret would never get out unless, as Bunter seemed to fear, they "jawed" themselves.

It was not till after dinner that day that the Famous Five saw Blundell of

the Fifth. They rather wanted to avoid a meeting; it was likely to be awkward on both sides. At the same time, they wanted Blundell to understand that he could rely on their silence. They could guess that he would be feeling deeply uneasy, though no doubt he hoped that they were unaware of the identity of the fellow they had jammed in the lobby window at midnight. Possibly it had not occurred to him that they had seen his name in his hat, though surely it was unlikely. The hat had been tossed into Blundell's study in break, and if he had found it there he must surely be very dense if he did not guess that the juniors knew all.

But if Blundell of the Fifth was aware of their knowledge he gave no sign of it. He came rolling along the path to the House, a big and burly figure in flannels, looking healthy and fit, and like anything but a fellow who had had a surreptitious night out. The chums of the Remove looked at him very curiously as they met face to face.

They could hardly imagine that healthy, cheery fellow as the slinking figure that had been jammed in the window in the dark, and who must have crept in at that window again in fear and trembling after they had left.

He gave them a careless glance in passing, and then, as if becoming conscious of their fixed, curious gaze, he stopped and spoke.

"Is there a smut on my nose?" he asked genially.

"Eh? What? No," said Wharton, startled.

"Then what are you fags blinking at me for like a set of owls?" asked the captain of the Fifth.

"Oh, nothing!" stammered Harry.

Blundell stared at him.

"Do you generally stand around blinking at a man as if he'd just got out of the Zoo?" he inquired.

"Oh! No. You see—"

"Well, what?"

"Nothing."

"This may be the Remove brand of humour," said Blundell grimly, "but you fags mustn't be funny with the Fifth! Cut off before I kick you across the quad!"

The chums of the Remove backed away, and Blundell, with a frown, continued on his lofty and majestic way.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked after him and at one another.

"He doesn't know we know!" said Harry at last.

"Must be a fool if he doesn't," said Johnny Bull.

"Still, it's all the better. Least said soonest mended. After all, he knew we took him for Loder; we called him Loder. I suppose he still thinks we think it was Loder we got. Well, all the better."

"The betterfulness is terrific," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Let us dismiss the absurd affair from our idiotic minds, my esteemed chums, and cultivate the still tongue which saves a stitch in time from going longest to the well, as the English proverb says."

And the juniors chuckled over the English proverb, and agreed that it was best all round to dismiss the whole matter from their minds.

But there was one mind—a fat one—from which it was not dismissed.

That was Billy Bunter's.

And the Famous Five were destined to discover that it was uncommonly hard to keep it a secret when they had William George Bunter to help them to keep it.

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss the next story in this magnificent series, entitled: "THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE SIXTH!" which will appear in next week's bumper issue of the MAGNET. It's the real goods!)

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INTRODUCTION.

Mainly owing to an encounter with his cousin Otto, young Jimmy Beresford, a cheery, athletic youngster, is told by his irate father that he will either have to take a position in the Beresford motor works or fend for himself. Jimmy decides to do the latter, and, helped by the expert mechanical knowledge of his pal, Ron Connolly, rapidly makes a name for himself at the Elsenham Park Speedway. The youngster soon realizes that his scoundrelly cousin and "Tornado" Rossiter, the mystery champion of the track, are in league with Volson Motors, Beresford's unscrupulous rivals. Attempts on Jimmy's life and to kidnap his father are followed by the theft of a new motorcycle engine invented by Ron and which the two chums are convinced will establish the supremacy of the Beresford "twins." Meanwhile, Jimmy Beresford, having carried off the Gold Gauntlet, one of the most coveted trophies of the dirt-track, achieves the ambition of his life by being matched against Tornado Rossiter. That evening, when Ron is leaving his workshop on his way to Elsenham Park, a big saloon car with drawn blinds pulls up beside a near-by row of petrol pumps. The youngster recognises the driver as Bernard Volson, head of Volson Motors, and at the sight of a pair of tinted goggles and an aviation mask on the seat he faces the man with glinting eyes. "Rossiter's in your car!" he snaps. "And it was Rossiter who got away with my engine. He's going to answer for it now!" And, brushing past Volson, Ron reaches for the handle of the rear door.

(Now read on.)

The Match Race—Round 1.

RON CONNOLLY was on the point of turning the handle when Volson's big hand fell on his shoulder and wrenched him back.

The youngster went staggering, but he was determined to meet Rossiter face to face, and, recovering, he made for the door again.

Volson stepped into his path and put up one hand to thrust him off.

"Keep away from this car, you young fool," he snarled, "or it'll be the worse for you!"

Ron flung himself forward, heedless of the threat. With a sweep of his left arm he struck Volson's hand aside, and, when Volson attempted to grapple with his other hand, Ron brought his right into action.

There was a sharp thud as the punch connected with Volson's jaw, and the big man blundered backward against the saloon. Next moment Ron was grasping the handle of the door again.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,113.

SPEEDWAY PALS!

A. CARNEY ALLAN

But he now found that it was held from the inside, and, while he struggled in vain to open it, two men came running across the yard at top speed.

They had seen the scuffle, and, reaching the spot, they gripped Ron and dragged him away, in spite of his struggles. One of the men was the sales manager of Glendale Richards, the other was the foreman of the workshop.

"What the deuce do you mean by this, Connolly?" the sales manager demanded. "Insulting one of our clients. Good-evening, Mr. Volson, sir! I hope you will overlook this—this outrage! Connolly must have gone out of his mind—"

"I'll overlook it on condition that he's dismissed immediately," Volson snarled. "The insolent whelp!"

The sales manager turned on Ron with a face that was flushed with anger.

"Get out of this!" he said. "We've no further use for you here!"

So Ron took his departure with one more burden on his mind. He was out of a job.

The future seemed black to him as he made his way to Elsenham Park, to forget his cares under the spell of the dirt track.

Never had the Elsenham Park Speedway known a crowd so huge as to-night's, for the match-race between Jimmy Beresford and "Tornado" Rossiter had proved a tremendous draw.

Speculation was rife as to the probable winner, some holding that Rossiter was unbeatable when in form, others that he had never been tested as he was to be tested this night. But all were

unanimous in hoping that Jimmy would carry off the race, even the most pessimistic.

Rossiter had never been popular, whereas Jimmy had captured the hearts of the fans almost as he had leapt into the limelight, and those who were his special admirers wanted to see him knock the bottom out of "Tornado's" existing record.

Under the blaze of the arc-lights half a dozen events had already been run off, and the blue fumes from the previous race were still hovering over the track when Jimmy and Rossiter wheeled their bikes across the ramp to line up for Round 1 of their contest.

Three heats were to decide which was the better man, the third to be unnecessary if the first two were won outright by either competitor.

A hush fell upon the masses of spectators as the pair of speed demons took up their positions opposite the starter, with the attendants crouching behind them in readiness to push them away. Rossiter was in a red slip, Jimmy Beresford in a white. Rossiter had the advantage of the inside position.

Astride his machine Jimmy stole a glance at the champion, his rival. The man's face, as always, was concealed behind his aviation mask and tinted goggles, and Jimmy could not help wondering afresh why he should want to hide his identity and remain an enigma.

Then the youngster shifted his eyes to the champion's bike. That Volson Twin was the fastest machine on the track. Could his Beresford hold the pace?

The spectators were beginning to fidget restlessly when the attendants pushed the rivals off on the preliminary

circuit. The song of their engines broke out in unison—low-pitched at first, with savage, intermittent outbursts when the throttles were opened.

The deep-throated, healthy note of his Beresford gave Jimmy a feeling of confidence, and from the direction of the pits another youngster marked the power in it. That youngster was Ron Connolly, who listened with a professional ear.

The rivals swung round the second bend into the front straight, and came in sight of the starter. Instantly the two of them twisted the throttle-grips, and, with the roar of their engines rising to deafening pitch, they stormed for the line.

They crossed the line dead-level. The race was on.

With ever-increasing speed they dashed for the first corner, both of them flattened along the tanks and straining to take the lead. Rossiter expected to secure it, but, in spite of his—Volson's—reputation, Jimmy hit the bend abreast of him.

* Simultaneously, the two thumbed the "cut-out" buttons, and the engines blurted with spasmodic viciousness, ripping out jets of flame.

The back wheels slashed to the right in a double broadside, and both bikes swept round the curve, with the cinders streaming across the track. But with the advantage of the inside position Rossiter came on to the back straight with a slight lead.

The champion let in the throttle, and a split second afterwards Jimmy did the same. Crouched over his handlebars, Rossiter flashed on along the straight, intent on holding that lead and increasing it on the second bend. But out of the corner of his eye he saw the white slip of Jimmy Beresford move level with him, and he betrayed his concern by a quick, hurried glance at the youngster.

Exulting, Jimmy humped himself in the saddle. What was all this talk in the trade concerning the Volson's acceleration? What about his Beresford speed-iron?

The Beresford was actually forging ahead when the second bend was reached.

Rossiter dashed into the corner furiously, seeming to realise that the race was already lost for him unless he chanced his arm. He drove his roaring machine for the bend at full speed, regained the lead through the advantage of the inner position, and then, half-way round the curve, he appeared to side-slip into Jimmy's path.

Jimmy wrenched madly on the handlebars and swerved towards the wire fence, his bike heeling over. The crowd gasped, for just for a moment it looked as if he was down. But Jimmy Beresford scrambled with his toe-plate and steadied himself, and he swung safely on to the front straight amidst a storm of cheering.

He had lost ground, however, and Rossiter was three lengths in front of him when he came in with the throttle for the spurt along the stretch. His engine thundering, Jimmy crossed the line for the second lap, and, flat out, he drove his speed-iron into the bend only a length and a half behind the champion.

He used the cut-out again, and, racketing fiercely, the Beresford tore round the corner in a long, controlled broadside. With the back wheel ploughing, and the front wheel slung hard round, Jimmy raked on to the back straight barely a length to the rear of his rival.

He was steadily overhauling Rossiter when the second bend was reached,

but here the champion managed to increase his lead again. It was the opinion of many, however, that he was only holding his own because he was next to the white line.

Before the line was crossed for the third lap Jimmy had reduced the advantage to a length once more.

The third lap provided its full share of the thrills. Hurling into the first curve, Jimmy was fairly smothered by the dirt flung up by Rossiter's bike, but he looked as if he was on the point of forging past to take first place when an ugly swerve almost brought him down.

His gauntleted fists grappling with the handlebars, his knee grazing the cinders, he controlled his speed-iron in masterly style and swung on to the back straight close behind his rival.

Rossiter had opened up for the dash to the next bend, and, following suit, Jimmy chased after him with the crowd yelling encouragement. There were two lengths between the riders when they dashed into the corner, but only one length when they raked out on to the front straight.

The yellow flag signalled the last lap as they stormed forward to cross the line, and expectantly the crowd rose like one man.

There was an unceasing din in Jimmy's ears. He was deafened by the double roar of his own machine and the Volson "Twin," and mingling with the racket came the continuous cheering of the "fans." In front of him Rossiter was doubled over the handlebars, the crown of his helmet barely showing above his arched shoulders.

At full throttle Jimmy raced in pursuit of him to the first bend, and dived into it only an instant after the champion. He fell into an almost uncontrollable skid that threatened to take him towards the fence; but, with a desperate jerk, he swung in to the white line a couple of lengths in arrears, and as he bucked on to the straight, he slammed in the throttle.

The "spouts," blazed forth their challenging roar, and, dashing on, Jimmy gradually cut down Rossiter's advantage to a length. Flat out, he drove his screaming speed-iron into the last corner, and, with a neck-or-nothing broadside, he swept to within half a length.

For the second time in the race Rossiter sideslipped into his path, and this time Jimmy did not stand a chance.

He whipped round his front wheel to swing outward, and on the instant he streaked across the track in an uncontrollable skid, his bike leaning at a crazy angle. No man could have mastered that skid, and suddenly a groan went up as he crashed.

The youngster slithered through the cinders on the point of his shoulder, and his speed-iron ploughed forward on its side amidst a cloud of dirt. Jimmy finished up several yards from the spot where he had fallen, and his bike went grinding on to hit the fence at the top of the curve.

Rossiter, in the meantime, was opening the throttle for the spurt along the home-stretch, and he crossed the line at full speed, the winner of Round 1.

(Continued on next page.)

BRILLIANT NEW DETECTIVE SERIAL

THE MASKED DEATH



By
JOHN SYLVESTER

"It was a pitch black night . . . I woke up . . . and heard a faint sound. It was like someone stealing stealthily along the passage outside . . . I slipped out of bed, seized a revolver, and flung open the door. Something made a rush at me. From the revolver sped a messenger of death. There was a cry of pain . . ."

The torch I carried penetrated the darkness, and what I saw was anything but a human!

There wasn't any face, only a mask. And the next moment it had gone!"

The above extract from the opening chapters of John Sylvester's remarkable story of crime and crime detection will give you an idea of the entrancing hours ahead. Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, old friends of yours, encounter in this, their latest case, one of the most baffling mysteries that the world has ever known!

STARTS NEXT WEEK!

But there was no cheering, and here and there section of the crowd were showing their disapproval. Only when Jimmy rose to his feet and waved away the attendants who were doubling towards him did any applause break forth, and none of it was for Rossiter.

Yet it was impossible for the officials to tell whether Rossiter's sideslip had been accidental or otherwise. It was only certain that Jimmy had had a strong chance of winning until its disastrous intervention.

The young speed merchant was unhurt, scarcely even bruised, and as he picked himself up he tried to picture Rossiter's chagrin, for he was sure of one thing—that the champion had played for a fatal crash when he had wrecked him on the bend. In that he had failed, for Jimmy had learned too well how to fall; and, crossing to where his bike lay, he lifted it and climbed into the saddle.

He discovered that the machine had been as fortunate as himself, for she answered to the throttle unfalteringly as he tried her on the home-stretch.

There were still two rounds to go. The Beresford must carry him to victory in both of them, and Jimmy told himself grimly that she would do so.

The Second Round!

IN the pits Jimmy met Ron Connolly, and Ron, in his enthusiasm, forgot for the time being the cares that had weighed him down.

"Jimmy, you were great," he said breathlessly, "and I never knew the old Beresford had it in her. If it hadn't been for that spill"—and his eyes hardened as he uttered the word—"you'd have licked Rossiter."

"Maybe, Ron," Jimmy muttered. "Anyhow, I've got to lick him in the next two rounds!"

"Is your bus damaged at all?" Ron demanded. "Let's have a look at her."

Jimmy Beresford shook his head positively.

"She's as right as rain!" he declared. "Didn't you see how she came along the home-stretch after I picked her up?"

Another event was on the point of being run, and there were several to go before the time scheduled for the second round of the match race. Jimmy could scarcely stand the strain of waiting, and it seemed to him that an eternity passed.

The second round fell due at last, and once again he wheeled his speed-iron across the ramp.

"Good luck!" Ron called to him as he went, and then Jimmy was alongside Rossiter on the track.

Once more they were pushed off, and once more they made a preliminary circuit, throttling up when they came into the front straight and sighted the starter. Their "get-away" was perfect, and, with engines ripping out a thunderous din, they stormed for the first corner.

The Beresford thrust ahead to take a slight lead, and, flat out, Jimmy dived into the bend, making a determined bid to increase his advantage. He was out to guard against Rossiter's foul riding, and he knew that the best way of guarding against it was to keep ahead.

Rossiter seemed to realise his intention, and he dashed at the curve as recklessly as Jimmy. The sea of faces in the stands craned forward, thrilled at the very outset by a double slashing skid. Jimmy was half a length to the good when he swept on to the back straight, but Rossiter cut in with the throttle only an instant after him, and strained every nerve to pull level.

There was still only half a length between them when they hurtled into the second corner, but the Beresford had scarcely warmed up yet. Again both bikes raked the cinders with tear-

ing skids, Rossiter striving desperately to draw abreast.

He failed, for the Beresford was a clear length ahead when the front straight was reached.

Away went Jimmy, with the powerful bike vibrating beneath him, and as he rushed the first bend of the second lap he heard the fans yelling his name. Behind him came Rossiter, and at fearsome speed the champion drove his machine into the corner.

Rossiter failed to hold the white line, and he ploughed round via the middle of the track. He lost another length through the swerve, and even at this early stage he appeared desperate. He flattened himself along the tank, and kicked at the dirt with his toe when he opened up on the back straight, and his jaw, the only visible part of his features, seemed curiously set and grim.

Two lengths in advance Jimmy hit the second bend; but, by a tremendous effort that would have raised a storm of applause had he been more popular, Rossiter cut down the lead. With a long, raking broadside he ploughed to within a length of Jimmy, and tore after him along the front straight.

But the crowd was yelling encouragement to Jimmy, and not to Rossiter, as they flashed over the track, and crossed the line for the third lap.

Flat out again, Jimmy dived into the first corner, and swept round it in a tear-away broadside. But this time it was he who failed to hold the white line, and the spectators on the bend heaved backward as a stream of cinders from his back wheel raked them.

Rossiter saw his chance, and thrust through on the inside to snatch the lead.

Jimmy was a length to the rear when he swung out of the bend close to the wire fence; but in the burst along the back straight the Beresford forced level. Still on the outer edge, Jimmy hurled his speed-iron at the second bend.

Once again he side-slipped, and a pent-up gasp rose from the crowd as they saw him switch towards the fence. They waited for the shock and the crash, but it did not come, for, with a savage jerk, the youngster dragged round his front wheel and cut across to the inside, wobbling precariously.

He was only half a length behind Rossiter when he turned the corner, and, slamming in the throttle, he straightened up for the dash along the front stretch.

The yellow flag sliced down to signal that they were on their last lap.

Jimmy was "full out," and steadily he drew abreast, but he was keeping well to the side of Rossiter and holding himself in readiness for a treacherous swerve like the one that had crashed him in the first round.

With the throttle-grip twisted hard round, the youngster drove his thundering machine into the corner, and a dare-devil broadside carried him abreast of the champion. For a moment the cinders from Rossiter's back wheel rattled on the gauze shield round the Beresford's engine, and then Jimmy was ahead of the stream of dirt—and ahead of Rossiter.

The back straight was gained once more, and, crouched over the handlebars, Jimmy rushed it at top speed. The Beresford was answering to the throttle as she had never answered before, and Rossiter was losing ground—losing ground rapidly. A gap opened between the two rivals—a gap of a

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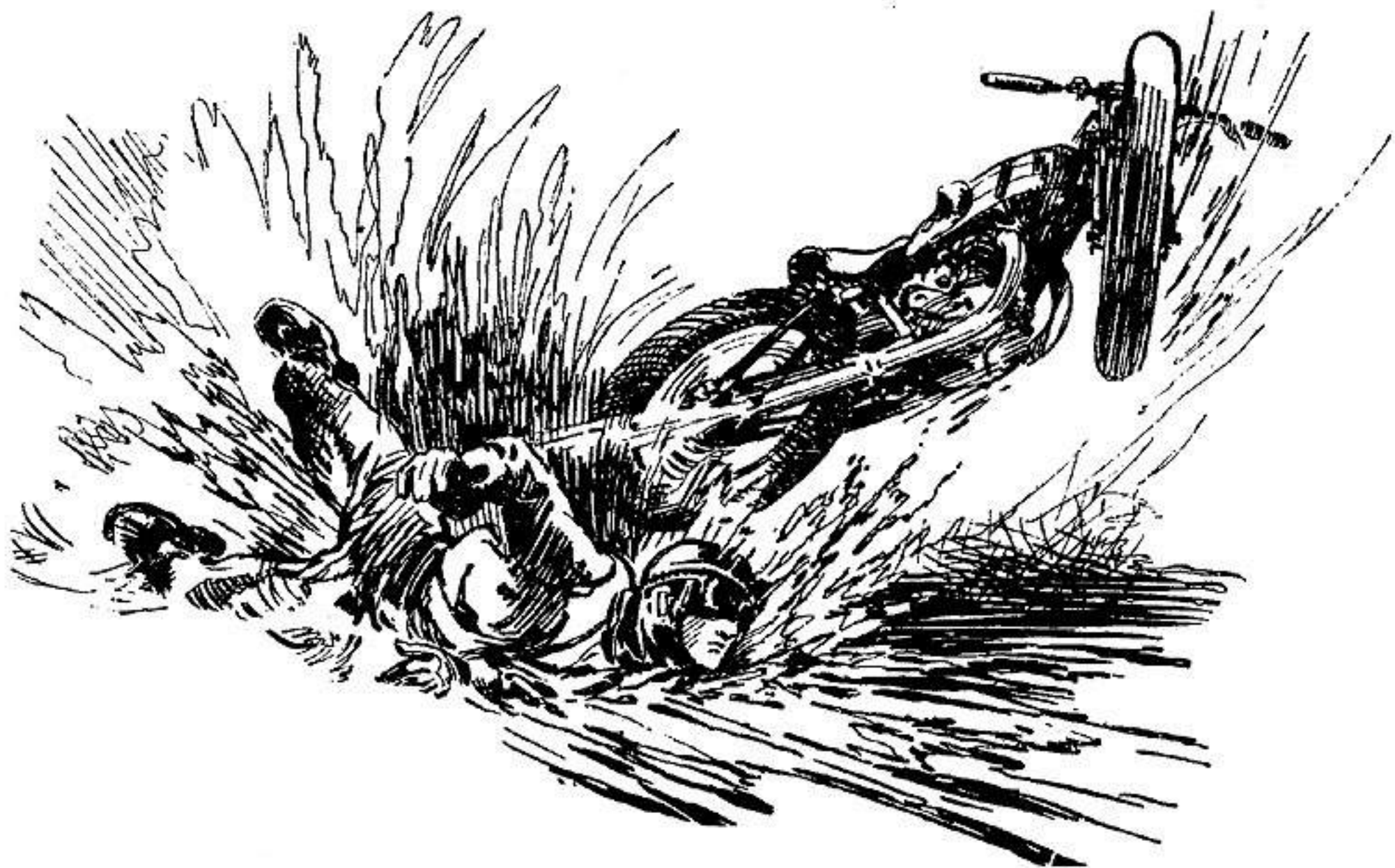
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Leather Pocket Wallet.	Hobby Annual.	Holiday Annual.

The wise reader will join To-day!



Streaking across the track in an uncontrollable skid Jimmy Beresford came to earth with a terrible crash, slithering through the cinders on the point of his shoulder, his speed-iron ploughing forward on its side amidst a cloud of dirt! (See page 25.)

length, two lengths, and then three lengths.

The last bend loomed close. Jimmy hurled his roaring machine into it, hard by the white line, and with his toe-plate scoring through the cinders to steady himself, he won half-way round in safety. But Rossiter had made a final desperate bid, and with a neck-or-nothing broadside he was sweeping to close quarters.

The champion pushed level with the rear of Jimmy's machine, and the shower of cinders from that wheel concealed the jabbing movement of Rossiter's boot as he kicked at the youngster's speed-iron.

The crowd only knew that Jimmy's bike gave a sudden inexplicable jerk, and there was a shout as he was seen to fall. But in the act of falling Jimmy brought his steel toe-plate hard down, and, scrambling frantically, he tried to gain control.

His back wheel had wrenched towards the white line, and, as he dragged at the handlebars and fought to steady himself, it wrenched towards the right. Next instant it had come into sharp collision with Rossiter's front rim.

It was by something approaching a miracle that Jimmy came clear of the bend without crashing, for even as he did come clear he heard Tornado Rossiter hit the cinders with an ugly thud, and in a swift, backward glance he saw the champion sprawled upon the track, his bike somersaulting a-top of him.

The tail of Jimmy's machine was swerving from side to side, but wrestling with the handlebars he managed to straighten himself and drive on for the finishing-line. A storm of cheering went up as the gun signalled the winner, but Jimmy, pulling himself to a standstill, scarcely heeded it.

His interest was centred on a group of attendants who were dragging the wrecked Volson bike off Rossiter's crumpled form, and he was conscious of a quickening of the pulses as he heard the cry of "Doctor!" go up. Jimmy was wheeling his bike off the

track when he became aware of someone calling his name, and next moment he saw Ron. Ron was not alone, for Jimmy's father was with him—and old Gordon Beresford, who up till now had detested dirt-track racing, was flushed with excitement and enthusiasm.

Up on his platform the announcer was giving out the winner's time.

"Seventy-eight seconds dead, which breaks the record established by 'Tornado' Rossiter."

Gordon Beresford gripped his son by the hand.

"Jimmy, my boy," he said, "I never saw anything like it! And to think that we were worrying our heads to find a faster substitute for the Beresford engine—"

But at that juncture the old man was interrupted by an exclamation from Ron, and, turning their heads, both Jimmy and his father saw that Ron was pointing to the machine that had beaten Rossiter's Volson.

"Beresford engine!" Ron stammered. "That's no Beresford! Great Scott! It's my engine—my engine, Jimmy!"

And with that Jimmy Beresford laughed.

"I had to turn thief, Ron," he said, "or you'd have sold the thing to the Volson people. All the same, I'm sorry I had to sling you such a hard one on the jaw that night—only you looked dangerous when you picked up the spanner!"

"You mean that you, and not Rossiter, took the engine!" Ron gasped.

"And fitted it to my speed-iron," Jimmy told him. "That's why I was so anxious for dad to turn up to the meeting—so that he could see for himself whether it was the goods or not."

"Well, I've seen all I want to see," said Gordon Beresford, "and I'm ready to write young Connolly a cheque this minute if he'll name his price."

"Just a minute, dad," said Jimmy seriously. "Do you think you can stand hearing something that may come as a shock to you?"

Gordon Beresford's answer was eloquent.

"I'm as fit as a fiddle now," he declared; and he slapped himself on the chest.

Jimmy began to talk, and he talked of Otto, of "Mr. Brown," and of Bernard Volson, of the schemes and machinations of those three; and while he talked the eyes of Gordon Beresford hardened.

"I see," he said at length, when Jimmy had finished. "I see. By Heaven, we've got a case against those rogues, and we'll have them all in gaol—that young scamp Otto included!"

"I fancy you might find Otto right here!" Jimmy told him. "That's another thing he always did behind your back, dad—went to the dirt-tracks—for once I saw that car he had—"

Then Jimmy's voice trailed away, as a solemn file of men approached—two of them—attendants—carrying a stretcher. On the stretcher was the still figure of "Tornado" Rossiter, with a coat covering his face.

The track medical officer was at the head of the procession, and Jimmy looked at him in horror.

"Dead?" he whispered; and the doctor inclined his head.

"A broken neck," was all he said; and he was passing on when Jimmy turned mechanically towards the stretcher.

"Who was he, anyway?" he murmured, still with a great deal of awe in his voice. "Who was 'Tornado' Rossiter?"

And for answer the doctor drew aside a corner of the coat.

Jimmy stared wide-eyed. His father and Ron Connolly stared wide-eyed, too. And then the three of them wrenched their gaze from that pallid face and looked at one another.

It was the face of Otto, Jimmy Beresford's cousin, who had paid dearly for his treachery.

THE END.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,113.

"THE HEAD'S MOVIE MASTERPIECE!"

(Continued from page 15.)

"Yarooooo!" roared Dr. Birchmell as he bit the dust.

"Ha, ha, ha!" pelted the onlookers, doubled up with mirth.

"Yooooo! What do you think you're doing of, you silly asses?"

"Get up and hit 'em back!" advised Mr. Reeler, and the Head, smarting with injustice as well as fizical pain, seized his birch which was lying near by and waded in, doing grate eggscution, not only on the raskally kidnappers, but also on the innozent Luker he was supposed to be saving.

Jack Jolly, alias Luker, didn't take things lying down, though. Stung into action by the crool weppon, he lowered his head and rushed at Dr. Birchmell like a furious billygoat, butting him right in the middle of the bread-basket.

"Ooooooooooh!" gasped the Head, as he lay back on the ground winded as flat as a pancake. And the skool fairly howled.

Flicker Y. Reeler jewdiciously eggspained that the unforchunit occurrence was quite an axcident, and the Head, a little molly-fied went on acting.

But the same sort of axcident kept on cropping up throughout the afternoon, and Dr. Birchmell's temper began to suffer a little as time went on.

The last two scenes fairly did it. In one, Dr. Manly had to come across Mr. Beastley and the luckless Luker eating custard-pies in the doorway of the tuckshop. Mr. Beastley had to be denounced and Luker warned that his custard-pie was poisoned.

It was a grate and thrilling scene. But the crowd thought that the last part of it was the gratest of all. Having been duly denounced, Mr. Beastley flung his custard-pie with unerring aim right at the Head's prominent nose, and Luker, without the slightest gratitude to his benefactor, followed suit. After which they dashed inside the shop, and returning laden with fresh supplies, pelted the Head until his face was one sticky mess of custard and pastry!

Mr. Reeler called a truce at last, and eggspained that it was yet another misunderstanding. Dr. Birchmell took a lot of molly-fying this time, for he was getting fed-up with mistakes and misunderstandings, but he consented to go on with the last scene for the day, and they all adjourned to the ornamental pond near the gates, where it was to take place.

This time Dr. Manly was supposed to struggle with the villainous Mr. Beastley until perlice officers arrived on the scene and releesed him. The whole scene was a grate suxxess, but somehow or other, before Mr. Beastley was arrested, the Head found himself flung headlong into the pond, while the crowd roared applaws!

Dr. Birchmell was feeling more dead than alive when they dragged him out. He was glad indeed that his first day as a film actor was ended; in fact, he felt almost as though he had ended himself!

A viggerous rub down and a change of clobber soon brought him round again, however, and, looking unusually clean and bright after his dip, he went down to tea in the gayest of moods.

Flicker Y. Reeler bucked him up no end when they met at the tea-table.

"Doe," he said solumnly, "I guess you're grate—you're marvellous, in fact! Better than over I eggspected!"

"Then you think I'm a suxxess as a dramattick actor?" beemed Dr. Birchmell.

"Believe me," said Flicker Y. Reeler, "in the whole of my eggspereience I've never seen anyone like you! And he really and trooly meant it!"

THE END.

(Mind you read the last story in this novel series: "ST. SAM'S ON THE SCREEN!" which will appear in next week's MAGNET, boys!)

ANOTHER READER WINS A "MAGNET" POCKET-KNIFE FOR THE FOLLOWING FUNNY JOKE:—

A GREAT OVATION!

An American and an Irishman were boasting about their own feats of speaking. "Why," said the American, "the first time I spoke in public I was simply showered in flowers. Enough, in fact, to open a florist's." "That's nothing," said Pat. "The first time I spoke in public was at an open-air concert, and the audience were so pleased that they presented me with a house." "A house?" scoffed the American. "Rubbish!" "Faith, and it's true," said Pat. "They actually presented me with a house." But, begorra, it was a brick at a time!

Sent in by Norman Ramsbottom, 1, Tipping Street, Openshaw, Manchester.

HAVE A SHOT AT WINNING ONE OF THESE TOPPING PRIZES, CHUMS!

"COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!"

(Continued from page 2.)

next week. "On the right of the line," as they say in the army, comes the fine, long, complete yarn of your old favourites of Greyfriars. Make a note of the title, chums:

"THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE SIXTH!"

By Frank Richards.

Gerald Loder, the rascally Sixth-Former, has been hunting for trouble for some time now. Well, he gets what he bargains for, and a good bit over, too. You'll enjoy this yarn to the full, believe me, chums.

What's your opinion of the "movie" series of St. Sam's yarns? Aren't they just it? I feel sure you wouldn't like to part with our cheery laughter merchant, Dicky Nugent, for worlds. Well, he's right bang in form again next week in:

"ST. SAM'S ON THE SCREEN!"

the fourth and last yarn in this amazing and amusing series. Dicky'll fairly make your sides split with laughter.

Have you tried to guess what's taking the place of "Speedway Pals!"—our successful dirt-track serial which concludes in this issue? No, I suppose you haven't. You've just taken it for granted that it's a good 'un. Well, you won't be far out, chums. It's a real live detective and adventure yarn, featuring such grand old favourites as Ferrers Locke, the celebrated Baker Street detective, and his clever boy assistant, Jack Drake. So many letters have reached me asking for a serial of this description that I've had no other alternative than to get a story written round these old favourites. The result is:

"THE MASKED DEATH!"

the opening chapters of which will appear in next week's bumper issue of the MAGNET. If I'm any judge of stories, this latest yarn of the world's cleverest investigator will go down as the finest of its kind ever written.

To finish up with, chums, there will be another cheery "Come Into the Office, Boys!" Till next week then,

Cherio.

Your Editor.



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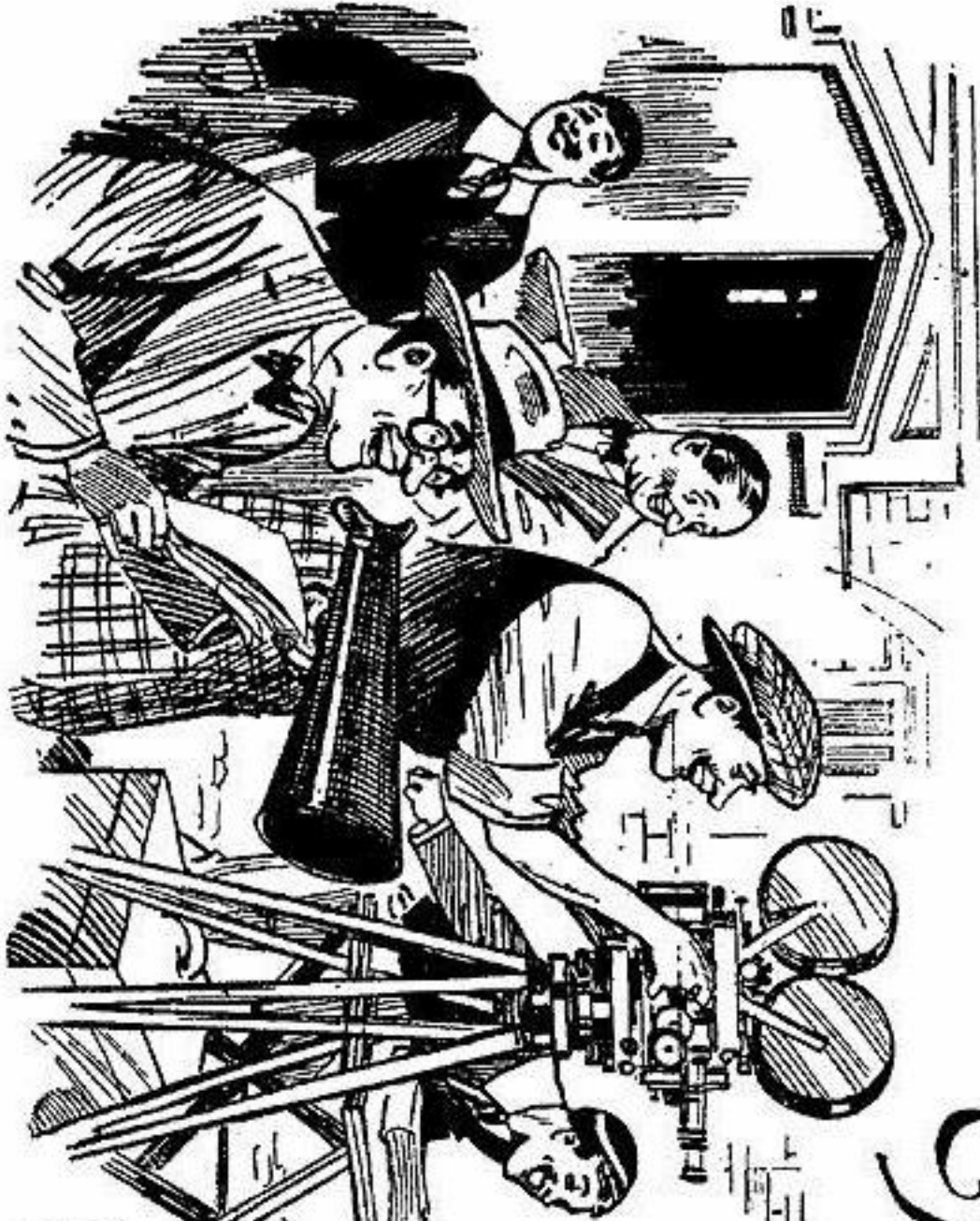
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The HEAD'S MOVIE!

by DICKY NUGENT

Dr. Birchmell's ambition has always been to outshine Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, and Buster Keaton. But in Dr. Birchmell's case, ambition and the fulfillment thereof are poles apart.



"HEY'RE here, sir!"

Jack Jolly, of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, poked his head round the door of the Head's study, and made that announcement.

Dr. Birchmell, the revered and majestic Head of St. Sam's, immediately bounded to his feet, as excited as a Second Form boy. He didn't need telling when Jack Jolly was referring to him. Had he not been counting the minutes to the time of Flicker Y. Reeler's arrival with the rest of his self-proclaimed company of film producers? He had! And was not this the day when he, Alfred Birchmell, was to be the star of a drama of public-school life? It was! He was far from bubbling over with excitement as he scurried out of the House to greet the new arrivals.

The old quad presented a scene of grate animation. The entire school had been given a day's holiday in honor of the unprecedented event, and juniors and seniors alike were crowded round the grate American producer and his assistants, who were already getting busy fixing up movie-cameras, inspecting the assembled juniors, and choosing sights for their film.

Flicker Y. Reeler himself was looking awfully fed-up, in spite of the fact that he had had very little breakfast. It wasn't his wish that Dr. Birchmell was to be the star of the picture. He would have preferred a young and handsome idol of the screen for the part. But circumstances had left him no option in the matter, so, on seeing the Head, he took off his glove and egg-tended a friendly hand, knowing that he had to grin and bear it.

"Is everything ready for this grate drama of school life?" asked Dr. Birchmell eagerly.

"I guess so, doc!" answered Mr. Reeler rather wearily. "You haven't decided by any chance to stand down, I suppose?"

"Not likely!" grinned the Head. "My ambition for years has been to shine as a matinee idol on the pictures, and this is a heaven-sent opportunity. THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 1,113.

to achieve it. I suggest we make a start."

The film magnet shrugged, and started making preparations to "shoot" the first scenes.

Dr. Birchmell, smirking with satisfaction, turned to a group of masters and eggshelled the plot of the film. He had buried the midwife oil study, and he knew it by heart, now. He was to take the part of Dr. Manly, an honest and fearless headmaster who set himself out to protect young Laker, a millionaire schoolboy, against the machinations of a gang of kid-nappers. It was a part after his own heart—far more interesting to him than the part of Flash Harry, which they had previously offered him in the hope that he would turn it down in disgust.

The masters listened with respectful attention.

"And do you think you're capable of acting the part, sir?" asked Mr. Lick-ham, when the Head had finished.

Dr. Birchmell glared.

"Look here, Lickham, if you're going to snipe at me, I'm not going to snipe at you."

"Oh, not at all, sir!" said Mr. Lick-ham hastily. "I'm not doubting your abilities, sir, but I merely thought that film-acting being such a difficult art—"

"To common or garden schoolmasters such as you men, it would be difficult—even impossible," agreed Dr. Birchmell.

"Nothing, however, is either difficult or impossible to a jeenius like myself. I quite eggshelled, when this grate drama is released, to be deluged with tellygrams from producers in all parts of the world offering me fabulous salaries to work for them!"

"Oh, crickey! Do you really, sir?"

"Most decidedly! Just watch my fizzag when I start acting, Lickham! See the eggspression I put into my part as the film works up to its dramatic climax, and you will realise what I mean! Ah! They are ready!"

With a wave of his hand, Dr. Birchmell left the masters and went on to the "set" which the camera-men were now ready to "shoot," to put it in film language.

Dr. Birchmell, now the simonure of all eyes, stalked up and down in front of the cameras, puffed out with pride like some connected old peacock.

The first scene sounded easy enough. It started with Dr. Manly coming down the steps of the Skool House and welcoming the new boy Laker, who was supposed to be arriving with his villainous guardian, Mr. Beasley.

A professional film-actor was taking the part of Mr. Beasley, and Jack Jolly had been chosen to impersonate young Laker. The captain of the Fourth, needless to say, looked quite capable and confident as he waited for instructions.

"Now, doc, I guess you're wise to what you've got to do?" asked Flicker Y. Reeler.

"Yes, rather!" smirked the Head.

"The scene opens with me at the top of the steps. I have to smile jently, and descend in a calm, dignified way, and greet young Laker and Mr. Beasley."

"You've got it!" said Mr. Reeler, picking up his megaphone. "Stand up there, and get ready, then."

Dr. Birchmell stood in the required position, and the camera-men got ready to turn their handles.

"All ready?"

"I, I!" grinned the Head.

"Right, then! Shoot!"

The camera-men started turning, and the crowd watched with eager interest for Dr. Birchmell's first effort in film-work.

But it didn't come off!

Up to the crucial moment the Head of St. Sam's had been as steady as a rock. But as the word "Shoot!" fell on his ears a gusty pallor spread over his face. For an instant he stood still.

Then, with a wild yell of fear, he leaped over the side of the steps and ran for dear life.

The crowd were fairly petrified with astonishment. As for Mr. Reeler, he dropped his megaphone and simply tore his hair with rage.

"Grate Christopher Columbus!" he roared. "What's he going? Hold him!"

Burleigh and Talloy grabbed the flying Head as he raced through the crowd.

"Hold on, sir!" gasped Burleigh. "Mr. Reeler's calling you!"

"Yarooooo! Lemme go!" pleaded Dr. Birchmell. "I don't want to see

him! I refuse to be shot! Get away, you rotters!"

"Oh crumps! He thinks he is going to be shot!" chuckled Talloy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowd shrieked with laughter as they realised why the Head had behaved so strangely. Dr. Birchmell, in his innocence, had imagined that the word "shoot!" was the signal for a reign of bullets to descend upon him.

He wasn't quite used to acting for the films yet!

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" groaned Flicker Y. Reeler, as the trooth dawned on him. "Meantime that whiskery old galoot really thought we were going to shoot him!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Waal, carry me home to die!"

"But I distinctly heard you yell out 'Shoot!' eggshelled Dr. Birchmell indignantly. "If 'shoot' drazzled mean 'shoot!' what the merry dickens does it mean?"

"Oh, help! What were you brought up, doc? 'Shoot' means, 'Turn the handle and take the film!' Savy?"

"Oh, I see!" murmured the Head, with rather a foolish grin. "Then in that case we'll resume. By the way, don't run away with the idea that I was afraid. I wasn't."

"Grate snakes! Weren't you?"

"Certainly not. As a matter of fact, when I jumped from the steps my sole idea was to protect the boys from the shooting!"

Flicker Y. Reeler dried up.

A fresh start was made with the film—and a pretty poor start it proved, too! The Head was simply hopeless in the roll of Dr. Manly. When he was told to look serious, an eggspression of feishish aggrany appeared on his face, and when a gentle smile was required, his face creased up into hundreds of wrinkles, and his false teeth protruded until he looked more like a savadige baboon than the hero of a grate drama.

Flicker Y. Reeler grew more and more fed-up as the morning advanced.

II.

"AN I have a word with you, sir?"

It was just after dinner when Jack Jolly met Mr. Reeler in the quad and asked that question. The grate film producer was

packing up and down beneath the old elms, his brow knitted in thought, and his jaws working methodically on a piece of chewing-gum.

"Sure thing, sonny!" he replied. "Got any more bright ideas? I guess I need a few just now."

Jack Jolly nodded simperthetically. "The Head's a bit of a wash-out as Dr. Manly, isn't he? That's what I've come about, as a matter of fact. I've thought of a way out of the difficulty. I think if you follow my advice we shall be able to make a success of the film after all."

"What! Say, do you mean that?" yelled Flicker Y. Reeler excitedly.

"Say, sonny, if you can turn the film into a success, I'll make you a present of more greenbacks than you ever saw in your life—some I'll give you a whole heap of duxox—just a few!"

"Well, listen to this, then," said Jack Jolly coolly. "We all know the Head's making a muck-up of the drama. But although he's no earthly good in a dramatic roll, you'll agree that he's providing a bit of fun. Everybody has been jarfing fit to bust at his antics!"

"Waal, what of it?"

"My wheeze is to chuck up all ideas of making the film a drama, and to turn it into a screaming farce instead."

Mr. Reeler grinned for a moment. Then he shook his head.

"I guess that won't wash. The old doc fancies himself as a tragic actor. I calculate he won't want to be a comedian."

"But that's just where my wheeze comes in," said Jack Jolly eagerly. "We needn't tell him anything about it. Everybody else can be told, but he can be kept in the dark. And so long as he still thinks he's acting in a drama he'll be as funny as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton rolled into one. Savy?"

Mr. Reeler pawed for just one second. Then he roared with laughter.

"Oh, grate snakes! I guess this beats it!—I guess this is real funny! Ho, ho, ho!"

"Well, what do you think of it?"

grinned the captain of the Fourth.

"I guess it's grate! Say, kid, you've hit it! I calculate we'll make the grate slapstick ever! Rah, rah, rah!"

And Mr. Reeler, in his eggshement, performed a Charleston under the elms. The news of the alteration in the programme soon spread, and in every corner of St. Sam's fellows fairly split their sides with jarfing when they heard about Jack Jolly's grate stunt. Juniors and seniors alike roared over it, and in Masters Common-room the stately and dignified masters simply shrieked.

Dr. Birchmell put his head round the door before they recovered, and inquisitively inquired the cause of the commotion.

Mr. Lickham rose to the occasion. "It's all right, sir!" he gurgled. "Some humorist suggested that I was as good as you at film-acting, and it sounded so absurd that we couldn't help jarfing."

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! No wonder you jarfed!" roared the Head. "Fancy you as good as me! That's the funniest thing I've heard for a long time! Ha, ha, ha!"

And Dr. Birchmell joined in the mirth himself.

All the skool flocked down for the afternoon session, fully antissipating plenty of larr. They were not disappointed!

Having chuckled up the idea of producing a grate sole string drama, Flicker Y. Reeler went all out for a slapstick farce, and before the afternoon was over Dr. Birchmell was surprised at the unexpected turn the film took.

He got his first shock in the grate scene where the kidnappers were supposed to be foiled in their efforts to spirit away the unfortunate Laker. This was one of the most dramatic events in the story, and the Head put on the most tragic eggspression he could manage as he stepped on to do his bit. Imagine his astonishment when the kidnappers, instead of recoiling from him, jatched out huge bludions and brought them down fairly and squarely on his napper.

(Continued on page 28.)
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