

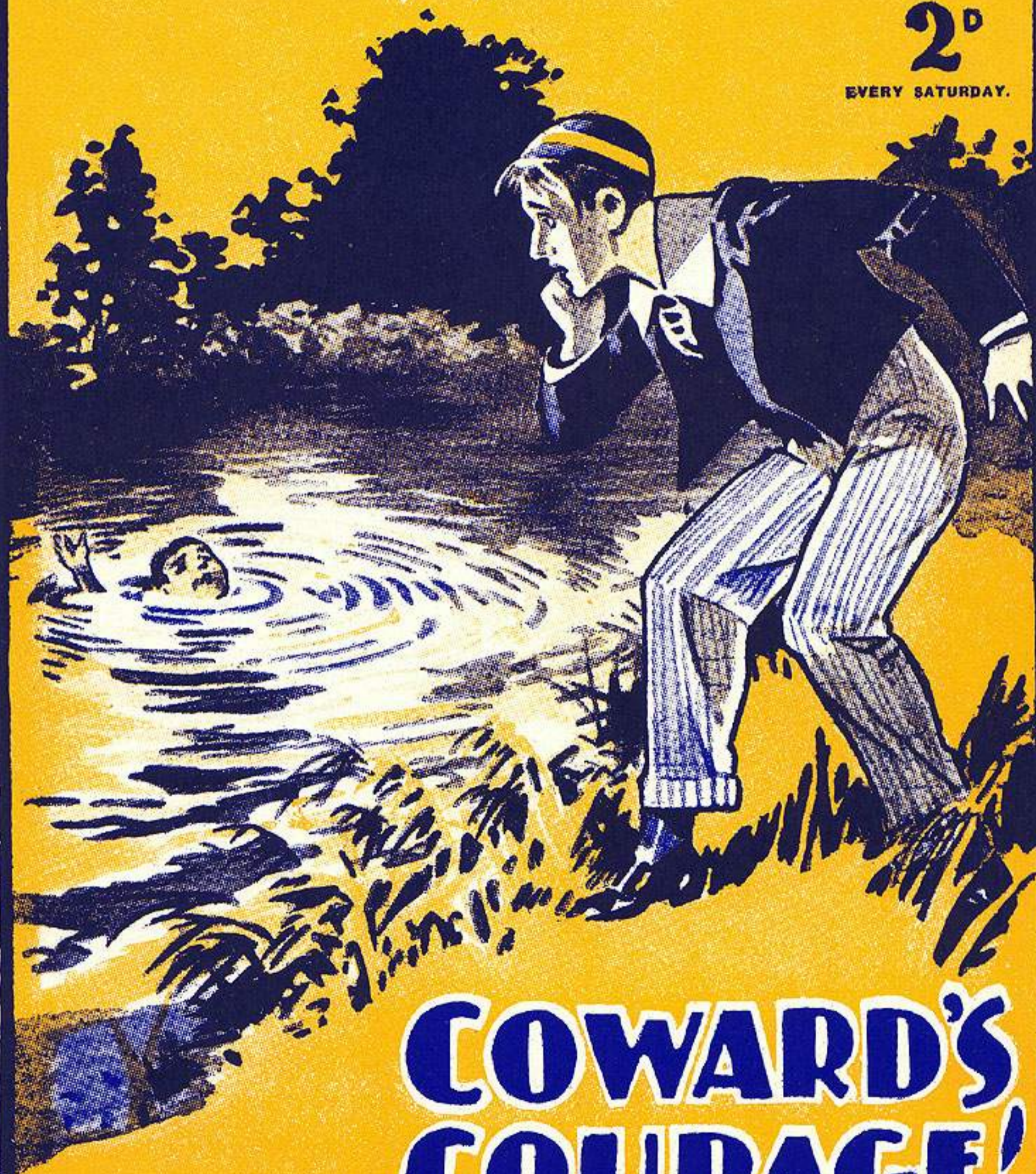
FRANK RICHARDS' LATEST and GREATEST SCHOOL STORY—Inside!

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# The MAGNET

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EVERY SATURDAY.



## COWARD'S COURAGE!

FUNK, OR—?

A pulsating incident taken from this week's powerful school story of Harry Wharton & Co., 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.).

I KNOW you fellows are much too keen on the MAGNET to throw copies away, but there is a fellow I know who is an inveterate newspaper reader. He buys nearly every edition, glances through them, and then throws them away in some quiet spot. Well, he went over to Brussels the other day, bought an evening paper, and was just going to throw it away—having glanced at it, of course—when he was stopped by a friend. "You mustn't throw papers away in Brussels," said his friend. "You'll be prosecuted if you do." And he drew his attention to a notice which forbids any paper being thrown away.

Apparently, you can't even throw away an empty match-box, or a cigarette packet, or a leaflet or handbill, much less a newspaper. And, to add to his passion for newspapers, my friend is also a heavy smoker of cigarettes. The result is that in a very short space of time he found himself with about half a dozen newspapers under his arm, and his pockets full of empty match-boxes, cigarette packets, tramway tickets, used matches, and cigarette ends. He daren't even try to throw them away, for every time he thought of doing so, he caught sight of the eagle eye of a policeman fixed upon him. But there was

## WORSE TO COME!

The enterprising tradesmen of Brussels, realising that people are not allowed to throw away leaflets or advertising handbills, lie in wait for the unwary, and thrust handbills upon them! And, printed on the bottom of the handbill is a warning to the effect that you will be prosecuted if you throw it away! What is a fellow to do? The result was that after an afternoon's walk in that city, my friend found his pockets so stuffed with paper that he could hardly get anything else into them.

The joke was that nearly all the money used over there is paper money—and every time my friend tried to buy anything, and delved into his pocket for his money, he brought out a handful of handbills and tramway tickets! When, eventually, he reached his hotel he threw all the wastepaper into a wastepaper basket and sallied forth again. He went into a cafe and called for some refreshment—only to find that when he came to pay for it, he had thrown away his bundle of paper money with the worthless handbills!

However, all's well that ends well, and he managed to retrieve his money before the wastepaper basket was emptied at the hotel. But can you imagine him scrambling all through a mass of tramway tickets, cigarette packets, cigarette ends, used matches, and the like to retrieve it? He has given up buying newspapers and collecting handbills now!

Even in our own country there are a lot of

## THINGS YOU MUSTN'T DO,

according to laws which were passed years and years ago, and have not yet been repealed.

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There's one thing, however, which you are not prevented from doing—either on a Sunday or any other day—and that is reading the MAGNET. You can read it on any day you like—and the oftener you read it, the more you will be pleased!

## Have you ever heard of THE RIO KID,

that famous boy outlaw who figures so prominently in the long, complete Western stories in the "Popular"? For many months now this amazing hero has entertained readers of our Tuesday companion paper. His breathless exploits on the Texas prairies and the mountains of Mexico have been numerous, as also have been his narrow escapes from death. Although the Rio Kid is little more than a boy, all the sheriffs are out on his trail. But they find it next to impossible to corner him—so elusive is the Kid. And as for handling a gun—gee! The Kid's the quickest, slickest man with a six-shooter in the world of the West. Get acquainted with this great fellow, and follow his daredevil adventures each week in the "Popular."

This question, which a reader asks me this week, sounds like a "leg-pull," but it isn't really. He wants to know

## WHO PUTS THE HOLES IN CHEESE?

He means Gruyere cheese, of course—you know the kind. When you cut it, you find it full of little round holes. My reader can't understand how the holes get there. It's quite simple. When the cheese is made it has certain gases in it, and these gases make a kind of little explosion which blows round holes in the cheese. You've seen aerated water and you've noticed the bubbles in it. Well, the holes in cheese are formed in a similar manner—only the bubbles can't get to the top of the cheese!

I should imagine, however, that Billy Bunter can make a bigger hole in cheese than any bubble can, and in a tenth of the time, too!

Ready for a joke? Right! Here goes:

"How delighted I am to see you again, Mrs. Jones," said an elderly lady to a friend.

"Why, it must be at least ten years since we met. And it's so nice to think that you have remembered me all this time. You have changed, but you know me at once."

"Oh," responded Mrs. Jones, with a sweet smile and an acid tone, "I recognised your bonnet!"

A Cunningham, of 41, Ashton Street, Old Swan, Liverpool, sent the above in to me, and receives a penknife for it. Will your joke be the next to be published?

Next query  
WHAT DOES "G. B." MEAN?

when affixed to the number plate of a motor-car? It means that the man who owns the car has either been travelling abroad in it, or is going to travel abroad. If you want to take a car or a mo-bike abroad with you, you've got to affix a plate showing the initials of the country in which the car is registered. "G. B." stands for "Great Britain," "F" for France, "B." for Belgium, and so on. But the initial "S." doesn't stand for "Spain." On the contrary, Spanish cars abroad bear the initial "E." which stands for "Espana." Don't forget that

other countries don't call themselves by the same name as we do. Germany, for instance, calls itself "Deutschland." You fellows who collect stamps will know the native names of most foreign countries.

Tom Bordon, of Whitby, wants to know how to start

## AN AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY.

It depends to a large extent upon how many of his chums he can get to join him in the venture. But if he wants help in doing this, he should write to the secretary of the British Drama League, 8, Adelphi Terrace, London, W.C.2, who will be pleased to help him, and to give him expert advice.

Can one send letters by railway? asks a Newcastle reader. Yes, although few people seem to know that it can be done. They must not weigh more than two ounces, and should bear the ordinary postage stamps, plus a special label which is obtainable at the railway station and costs threepence. Letters are sent from the station by the first train, and are then delivered by the ordinary postal service.

Is an Earl of higher rank than a Marquess? No. The highest rank (next to royal personages) is a Duke, then come (in the order named) Marquesses, Earls, Viscounts and Barons. There are two other titles of rank—Baronets and Knights—but men possessing these titles do not sit in the House of Lords.

Space is getting short, so I must hold over a number of queries until next week. Here, however, is a clever Greyfriars limerick, for which a pocket wallet has been awarded to Miss Yvonne Olsen, of 8, Bradstock Road, South Hackney, E.

In the Fifth there's a master named Prout.

Of his great deeds he's ready to shout.

Keep away from his "lair,"

For once inside there,

You will find that it's hard to get out!

Look out for next week's bumper issue of the MAGNET, chums. As usual it contains a fine collection of good things, and you'll feel like kicking yourself if you miss it. Here's the programme: First of all there will be a really tip-top yarn of the chums of Greyfriars, entitled:

## "SIX IN THE SOUP!"

By Frank Richards.

The Famous Five and Peter Todd play a big part in this yarn, and, of course, the rest of your favourite characters are well in the running. There will be another first-class instalment of

## "PETER FRAZER—IRONMASTER!"

chock-a-block full of pep and punch. Dicky Nugent's effusion, the second yarn in the "tuck-shop" series, is called:

## "IN THE PROPHETEER'S POWER!"

and it is well up to standard. The second "footer" article by "Old Ref" and the usual chat feature will be as bright as ever, so take my oft-given advice and order your copy WELL IN ADVANCE!

All the best, you fellows,

YOUR EDITOR.



# COWARD'S COURAGE!

**A Powerful New Long Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co., "starring"  
Sidney James Snoop, the cad of the Remove. By FRANK RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Looking for Snoop!

**"WHARTON!"**  
Harry Wharton glanced round.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Greyfriars Remove, was looking from his study window into the quadrangle.

The expression on the speaking countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch was not benevolent. He looked irritated. In fact, he looked decidedly cross. He shot out the name of the captain of the Remove like a bullet.

"Yes, sir!"

Harry approached the Form master's window.

His friends were waiting for him at the school gates, and Wharton was on his way to join them. But he had to let them wait.

The voice of Henry Samuel Quelch was the voice of one having authority, saying, "Do this! And he doeth it!"

It was not a voice to be disregarded, especially when it spoke in that tone.

The captain of the Remove approached the study window rather gingerly. He did not like Quelch's looks at the moment.

"Wharton! Where is Snoop of your Form?"

"Snoop?" repeated Harry.

It was a relief to hear that Mr. Quelch wanted Snoop. Wharton, apparently, had been hailed, because he was the only Remove man in sight from the Form master's window.

"Yes, Snoop!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Where is he?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

Mr. Quelch glared.

Really, it was hardly reasonable to expect Wharton to know where Sidney James Snoop was, after class. He hardly knew Snoop; and what he knew of him he did not like. He never had anything to do with Snoop; their ways were as far as the poles asunder.

But Mr. Quelch seemed to expect Wharton to produce Snoop on the spot, like a conjurer producing a rabbit out of a hat.

"You do not know?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir."

"Upon my word!" said the Remove master.

Wharton waited.

With his friends expecting him to join them at the gates, he hoped that his Form master was not going to give him the task of finding Snoop. Snoop was not always easy to find. As likely as not, he was hidden in some secluded spot, smoking cigarettes with Skinner. Wharton, of course, could not tell the Remove master that.

"I suppose you know where he may be, Wharton?"

**One good deed or noble action to his credit and Sidney James Snoop, the slacker, the funk, the sneak, would be allowed to stay on at Greyfriars. But, alack, Snoop hasn't even that one saving grace until . . .**

Wharton did not know, but he could guess where Snoop might be. He might be in the box-room smoking secret cigarettes. He might be sneaking in at the back door of the Cross Keys for a surreptitious game of billiards. But these were not guesses that could be mentioned to one having authority.

"I—I suppose he's about somewhere, sir," said Harry.

"Please find him as quickly as possible, Wharton."

"Oh!"

Mr. Quelch gave him a sharp look.

"You are not busy at the present moment, Wharton?" he asked, with an inflection of sarcasm.

"N-not very, sir."

"The head boy of a Form, Wharton, cannot expect to call his time entirely his own!" said Mr. Quelch acidly.

"Oh, quite, sir!" agreed Wharton.

"Please find Snoop at once, and send him to my study."

"Very well, sir."

"You will tell him that his uncle, Mr. Huggins, has rung me up on the telephone, and asked to speak to him."

"Yes, sir."

"Tell him to come without loss of time, as Mr. Huggins is holding on, and waiting for him."

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Quelch, still frowning, disappeared from the study window.

Wharton departed in quest of Snoop.

He smiled a little as he went. He understood now the cause of the portentous frown on the brow of Mr. Quelch.

If there was anything the Remove master disliked more than an interview with a parent, it was being rung up on the telephone by a parent. Parents, of course, were necessary evils in the life of a schoolmaster. They were a worry, but a worry that had to be tolerated somehow. Obviously, without parents there would be no pupils; and without pupils a

schoolmaster's occupation, like Othello's, would be gone. So parents had to be borne with as much equanimity as possible.

But Mr. Quelch's considered opinion was that there ought to be a limit. Parents ought to be satisfied with regulation interviews and regular reports. They ought not to ring up a Form master on his telephone. And even if parents did, uncles ought to draw the line. Parents were enough—if not too much. Uncles were entirely superfluous. Mr. Quelch's leisure hours were scanty. He had little time for parents. He had none at all for avuncular relatives.

This particular avuncular relative of Snoop's was a worthy gentleman whom Mr. Quelch respected. Still, he did not want him on the phone. Very much indeed he did not want him.

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Harry Wharton lost no time in looking for Snoop. Possibly he was anxious to oblige his Form master. Certainly he was anxious to join the Co. who were waiting for him at the gates.

But Snoop was not easily found.

Half a dozen fellows whom Wharton met in the quad answered that they hadn't seen Snoop; several of them adding that they didn't want to.

His friends, Skinner and Stott, would doubtless have known where he was; but neither were they to be seen.

Wharton went into the House, and looked in Snoop's study in the Remove. It was vacant.

He went up the stairs to the box-room, a favourite haunt of Snoop and his friends when they had cigarettes. But the box-room was empty.

By that time Wharton had been a quarter of an hour on the quest, and he was getting tired of it. He was quite glad to meet Billy Bunter on the Remove landing. It was unusual for anybody to be glad to meet Billy Bunter. But circumstances alter cases. Bunter knew everything—at least, everything that did not concern him. As it was not Bunter's business to know where Snoop was, it was quite likely that he knew.

"Seen Snoop, fatty?" asked the captain of the Remove.

Bunter grunted.

"Blow Snoop!" was his reply.

"Blow him as hard as you like," agreed Wharton. "You can't blow him too hard! But do you know where he is? Quelch wants him."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter. "I hope it's a licking."

"Fathead! Where is he?"

"Gone out of gates with Skinner and Stott," answered Bunter. "I was going with them, but they dodged me. I mean, I refused to go with that shady lot. They'll get spotted by a prefect one of these days, smoking in the wood."

"Sure they're gone out?" asked Harry.

"Yes. I say, old chap, don't hurry away!" exclaimed Bunter, as the captain of the Remove descended the stairs three at a time. "I say, old fellow, I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"

But Wharton was gone.

A minute later he tapped at Mr. Quelch's door, to report that he had looked everywhere for Snoop, and found that he was out of gates.

"Upon my word!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

Harry Wharton departed, free at last to join his waiting chums.

Mr. Quelch glared at the telephone.

Uncle Huggins, at the other end, had had to ring off, but he had kindly promised to ring up again shortly. Quelch, of course, could not settle down peacefully to his papers while he waited for that expected ring.

He waited, glaring at the telephone, in the meantime, as if he would have liked to bite it.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Black Sheep I

"YOUR deal, Snoopey!"

Sydney James Snoop grunted.

The woodcutter had been at work in Friardale Wood. Beside a secluded footpath a number of logs lay in the grass. On one of the logs four juniors of Greyfriars were seated.

Skinner & Co. of the Remove were

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enjoying themselves in their own peculiar fashion.

The party consisted of Skinner, Snoop, and Stott, of the Remove, and Aubrey Angel, of the Fourth Form. Each of the black sheep of the Lower School had a cigarette in his mouth, and they were playing nap, using the log as a card-table.

Harold Skinner's face expressed considerable satisfaction. So did Aubrey Angel's. Stott looked rather sullen, and Snoop nervous and uneasy. So it would have been easy for an observer to guess which way luck had been running.

Skinner shuffled the cards.

"It's jolly here," he remarked.

"Rather safer than the study, or the box-room. No danger of a Beak or a prefect buttin' in here."

"Somebody might come along the path," grunted Snoop.

"Nobody ever uses this path in the winter, or hardly ever. Getting nervous?" sneered Skinner.

"Oh, rats!"

Snoop evidently was not in a good temper.

As a matter of fact, his allowance of pocket-money was not large, and what he had had been mostly transferred to the pockets of Skinner and Aubrey Angel. Snoop would have been glad to withdraw from the game, but he hesitated to say so.

He took the cards from Skinner and dealt them. Angel of the Fourth, a sneer on his handsome face, watched him, lighting another cigarette the while.

"Man ought to keep his temper when he's losin'," said Aubrey.

"Who's not keeping his temper?" snapped Snoop.

"You're not, dear boy."

"If you're fed-up with my company, I'm jolly well fed-up with yours!" growled Snoop.

Angel laughed.

"Oh, I'll keep on as long as you do," he said. "Judgin' by your cheery looks, you haven't far to go."

"Snoop's got a jolly old uncle he can draw on," said Skinner, with a grin.

"Snoop's Uncle Huggins is fond of him, ain't he, Snoopey?"

"Why shouldn't he be?" snapped Snoop.

"No accountin' for tastes!" remarked Angel.

Sydney James gave him a scowl.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a cheery voice, as there was a trampling of footsteps on the path, and Snoop started so suddenly that the cards dropped from his hand and scattered over the log.

He spun round in alarm, and the other three rose quickly to their feet. Skinner & Co. prided themselves on being what they were pleased to call sportsmen, and jeered at the rules of the school, which they constantly disregarded; but they were very well aware what would happen to them if they were caught smoking and card-playing. And there was terror in the face of each of the young rascals as he jumped up.

"Oh! Only that crew!" said Skinner, in relief, as Harry Wharton & Co. came along the footpath.

And he sat down again and deliberately lighted a fresh cigarette, to show the chums of the Remove how independent he was.

"Oh, that lot!" said Aubrey Angel, shrugging his shoulders; and he followed Skinner's example.

The Famous Five came to a halt.

They looked at the dingy four, at the smokes and cards, and their faces expressed clearly enough what they thought of them.

"Hold on a minute, you men," said Harry.

"Oh, come on!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"We don't want to watch that gang frowsting and blagging."

"No fear!" said Frank Nugent.

"The no-fearfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us proceed on our esteemed way, my ridiculous friends, and leave them to stew in their own juiciness."

"What about giving them a jolly good ragging?" suggested Bob Cherry. "That's what they really want."

"Oh, clear off!" said Skinner. "Don't stop to give us a sermon, Wharton. We've had it all before, you know, and we weren't a bit edified. Leave the sermons to the Head!"

"He's going to sermonise," said Angel. "I can see it in his face. Do you mind if I smoke while you preach, Wharton?"

There was a chuckle from the four.

For a moment they had been alarmed. But there was nothing to be feared from the Famous Five. Whatever Harry Wharton & Co. thought of the party, they were not likely to give them away.

"I've got something to say to Snoop," said the captain of the Remove quietly.

"You needn't trouble," said Snoop, taking his cue from Skinner, as he usually did. "I've no use for sermons, thanks all the same."

"I was going to tell you—"

"My dear man, you're wasting your breath. Keep your moralisin' for somebody who wants to hear it."

"Your uncle—"

"What about my uncle?" exclaimed Snoop, dropping his sneering manner at once and becoming attentive.

"He telephoned to Quelch this afternoon, and wanted you to take the call," said Harry. "Quelch set me looking for you."

"Oh crumbs!" said Snoop, in dismay. "I suppose that means that he's coming to see me. He said he would phone if he came."

"Lucky you were out of gates," remarked Skinner. "He can't blame you for not takin' the call when you were out of gates."

"No; but—but I wish I'd taken the call," mumbled Snoop. "I dare say he will come, all the same. How long ago was it, Wharton?"

"More than an hour."

"Too late now," said Skinner. He was collecting up the scattered cards. "Your deal, Snoopey! You fellows like to take a hand?" he said, with a grinning glance at the Famous Five.

"Go and eat coke!" answered Johnny Bull.

"Afraid of losing your ha'pence?" asked Stott.

"You measly worm!"

"Well, if you're not takin' a hand, take your hook!" suggested Skinner. "You're interruptin' the game, and your features don't improve the landscape. Waitin' for you to deal, Snoopey."

Snoop sat with the cards in his hand, hesitating and troubled. Evidently he was disturbed by the thought of his uncle, Mr. Huggins. All the fellows knew that it was his uncle who paid his fees at the school, and that Snoop had to "keep in" with him. Possibly Snoop liked that kind uncle, but it was certain that he feared him more than he liked him.

"I—I think—" stammered Snoop.

"For goodness' sake, deal, and let's get on with the game!" interrupted Aubrey Angel.

"Look here, Snoop," said Harry Wharton, "you're a silly ass to be playing the goat like this, especially when your uncle may be coming to the school this afternoon. Chuck it, and chuck those frowsty wasters, and come along with us!"

Johnny Bull gave a grunt, but the

other members of the Co. smiled. It really was a kind offer, for Harry Wharton certainly had no liking for Snoop's company.

Snoop seemed to hesitate. "Come on, old bean," said Bob Cherry. "We're going for a ramble along the river, and it will do you lots more good than smoking that muck."

"The goodfulness will be preposterous, my esteemed and execrable Snoop," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "and your esteemed company will be a boonful blessing."

Snoop rose from the log.

"Well—" he began.

"Sit down, fathead!" said Stott.

"Sit down, ass!" said Skinner. "Those fellows won't give you away, if that's what you're afraid of. They're goody-goody, but they're not sneaks."

"I—I think—" stammered Snoop.

"Snoop's losin'," sneered Aubrey Angel. "He wants to back out; and any excuse is better than none."

Snoop flushed crimson, and sat down on the log again. His weak and vacillating nature was not proof against the sneer.

his powerful arm, jerked Skinner across the log. The cards that Snoop was dealing were scattered far and wide as Skinner was dragged over the improvised card-table.

"Leggo!" yelled Skinner.

He struggled furiously, but he had no chance in Bob's powerful grasp. Smoking and card playing had not done for Skinner what football had done for Bob Cherry.

Bob proceeded to tap Skinner's head on the log. Skinner's head was hard, but the log was harder. A series of fiendish yells burst from Skinner.

"Ow, ow! Wow! Leggo! You rotter! I'll lick you! Ow!"

Tap, tap, tap!

"Yarooogh! Help! Lend me a

"Well, if you're sorry, that's all right," said Bob cheerily. "Your apology is accepted, old bean."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Bob dropped the writhing Skinner on the log and walked on with his friends; and the Famous Five disappeared, chuckling, along the footpath.

Skinner sat and rubbed his damaged head, glaring after them furiously. Almost he was tempted to pursue them, and call Bob Cherry to account. But not quite. Only too well was Skinner aware that had he done so his last state would have been worse than his first.

He rubbed his head and snarled, and sat down to his game again with a scowling face. The cards were dealt once more, and "nap" was resumed—



Skinner & Co. were playing cards when suddenly a trampling of footsteps was heard along the path. "Hallo, hallo!" came a cheery voice. Snoop started so suddenly that the cards dropped from his hand and scattered over the log. "Oh, it's all right!" said Skinner, in relief, as Harry Wharton & Co. came into view. "It's only that Remove crew!" (See Chapter 2.)

"I'm goin' on!" he snarled, and he began to deal the cards.

"You won't come?" asked Harry.

"No, I won't."

"Please yourself."

The captain of the Remove walked on, not wholly sorry, perhaps, that Snoop had refused to come.

"Sure you won't take a hand?" called out Skinner banteringly. "You're safe from beaks an' prefects here, you know; so what's the good of keepin' on humbuggin'?"

Bob Cherry turned back.

Really it would have been wiser of Skinner not to have uttered that last jeer. But Harold Skinner sometimes carried his pleasant badinage beyond the limit of safety.

Bob made a stride towards him.

"I suppose you can't see the difference between playing the game and humbugging," he remarked. "I'll try to make it clear to you, Skinner."

"Ow! Leggo!" roared Skinner, as Bob grasped him by the back of the collar. "You rotter! Leggo!"

Bob grinned, and, with a swing of

hand, you cads!" yelled Skinner to his friends, as he struggled frantically but unavailingly.

But there was no help for Skinner from his friends. Bob Cherry's comrades were ready to chip in, if they did; and they decided that it was wiser not.

Tap, tap!

"Wow, wow!"

"Sorry, Skinner?" asked Bob cheerily.

"Say when! I'm going to tap your napper till you're sorry."

"Yarooogh!"

Tap, tap, tap!

"Ow! Sorry!" howled Skinner.

"Now leggo, you beast!"

"Are you awfully sorry?" asked Bob genially.

"Leggo!"

Tap!

"Yes!" shrieked Skinner. "Awfully!"

"Ow, my napper! Ow!"

"Awfully fearfully sorry?" continued Bob.

"Ow! Yes! Anything you like! Leggo!"

Skinner rubbing his head every now and then, and scowling at the grinning faces of his companions.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Snoop's Uncle!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry uttered that exclamation suddenly.

The chums of the Remove had almost reached the end of the footpath which led through the wood to Bridge Lane, which in its turn led in one direction to the village of Friar-dale, and in the other towards the River Sark.

From the lane ahead a rather tall, broad, and athletic figure turned into the footpath, coming towards the juniors.

While he was still at a little distance Bob recognised him and uttered that ejaculation.

"What—" began Harry Wharton.

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"Look at that merchant!" said Bob.

"Oh, my hat! Huggins!"

"Snoop's jolly old uncle!" said Bob.

The chums of the Remove looked with interest at the athletic gentleman who was advancing towards them from the lane. They had seen Snoop's uncle several times before, and spoken to him a few times. Mr. Huggins was a big and breezy man, quite unlike his nephew Sidney James. His business was in Canada, and he was only occasionally in England; for which, no doubt, his nephew was duly thankful. Mr. Huggins had a rugged, bronzed countenance, shaded by a big slouched hat, and a healthy and wholesome look that was strikingly in contrast with the appearance of his weedy nephew.

Frank Nugent gave a low whistle.

"It's the Huggins bird!" he said. "I say, if he follows this path he will drop right on those smoky chumps we left playing nap. He can't help seeing them—and Snoop—"

"A fair catch, and no mistake," said Johnny Bull. "Huggins has come down by train, and he's taking this short cut through. Serve that smoky ass right!"

"The rightfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the waxfulness of the esteemed Huggins will be great if he catches Snoop engaged blagfully."

"No doubt about that," said Harry thoughtfully. "Snoop's for it, I fancy, if his uncle drops on him now."

"Serve him right!" repeated Johnny Bull.

Johnny's uncompromising view of the matter was doubtless well-founded. Snoop was a weedy, smoky, frowsting young rascal, and deserved what was coming to him. But—

"It's rough on the silly ass," said Harry in a low voice. "His uncle pays for him at the school, and last term Snoop was in a row with him because Quelchy dropped on him for blagging. Snoop's a worm; but—"

"But—" said Bob.

"I—I think I'll cut back," said Harry. "I'll give the silly owl the tip that Huggins is coming his way, and he can get clear."

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"My esteemed Johnny," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "the temperfulness of the wind to the shorn lamb is the proper caper."

"Rubbish!" said Johnny.

"Oh, rot!" said Frank. "Cut back and give Snoop the tip, Harry. He's a smoky little beast, but we don't want him to land in a row."

"Silly nonsense!" said Johnny Bull. "We don't want to get mixed up with Snoop and his rotten blagging."

Harry Wharton smiled.

"We're not going to get mixed up in it," he said. "I'll tip Snoop the wink and come after you fellows."

Johnny Bull snorted disapproval, but the captain of the Remove did not heed. Leaving his chums on the footpath, he turned and retraced the way at a swift trot. In a few moments he vanished from sight. By that time Mr. Huggins, who came on with long, rapid strides, had almost reached the spot where the juniors stood.

Bob cast an anxious glance after his chum. Wharton was out of sight on the winding path, and he was running; but he was not likely to keep far ahead of the Canadian gentleman, whose long, vigorous legs covered the ground at a great rate. Bob made a sign to his chums, implying that they were to delay Mr. Huggins a little if they could; and the three nodded assent—Johnny Bull expressing his feelings by another grunt, but loyally playing up.

The big gentleman glanced at the

**ANOTHER TOPPING  
POCKET KNIFE  
AWARDED TO A  
"MAGNET" READER!  
SEE BELOW.**

juniors as he came up with a kindly smile on his bronzed face. He recognised the heroes of the Remove. They raised their caps respectfully.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Huggins!" said Bob.

"Good-afternoon, my boys!" said Mr. Huggins, coming to a halt.

"The goodfulness of the afternoon is terrific, considering the esteemed time of the year, honoured sahib," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Mr. Huggins grinned.

"Quite," he assented. "I am going to the school—to see my nephew. Have you seen him about?"

"Your nephew, sir?" repeated Bob, to gain time.

"Yes; Sidney Snoop. He is in your Form at Greyfriars, I think."

"Oh, yes; Snoopey's in our Form," said Bob. "I—I think he went out of gates after dinner, sir. It's a half-holiday at Greyfriars to-day, and fellows generally get out of gates on a half-holiday if the weather's at all decent."

"I guess so," assented Mr. Huggins. "I phoned to Sidney's Form master, and learned that he had left the school before I rang up. But I suppose he will be back at tea-time?"

"Oh, yes; most likely," said Bob.

"Perhaps you boys can tell me where he is likely to be found," suggested Mr. Huggins.

The juniors were rather uncomfortably silent.

They would have had no difficulty in telling Mr. Huggins where his precious nephew was likely to be found. But that was a piece of information that they desired very much to keep from the Canadian gentleman.

"I—I fancy he's about somewhere, sir," said Frank Nugent lamely.

"No doubt," said Mr. Huggins dryly.

"He—he went out for a walk with some friends," stammered Frank, reddening under the keen eyes of the Canadian gentleman.

"Do you know where he is now?"

Mr. Huggins shot that question at the juniors point-blank.

"Where he is now?" repeated Bob.

"Yes," rapped Mr. Huggins.

"Well, that's hard to say," replied

**CONGRATULATIONS**

to Arthur Holland, of Hill Farm, Toton, Beeston, Notts, who carries off one of this week's useful pocket knives for the following amusing storyette:

**CUP-TIE CONVERSATION!**

Cup-ties bring together footballers and football enthusiasts from all parts of the kingdom. At one of the recent cup-ties a Cockney and a Lancashire lad were trying to make a conversation.

"If yer asks me," said the Cockney, "I think we're goin' ter 'ave a dahnfail."

"Dost?" replied the Lancashire lad.

"No, yer ally," said the Cockney. "Ryne!"

Pile in with your efforts, chums, you never know your luck!

Bob, with an air of reflection. "We passed him some time back, but, of course, he mayn't have remained where we saw him."

"Might be anywhere," said Johnny Bull.

"The anywherefulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

The keen, searching glance of the Canadian gentleman made the juniors feel uncomfortable. Mr. Huggins was a very observant man, and he had noted Harry Wharton detach himself from the group and dart away down the footpath as he came up. He had wondered why, and now, perhaps, he was guessing why.

"Is my nephew in this wood?" asked Mr. Huggins, very quietly.

"Well, a fellow can't say for certain, sir," answered Bob. "But if you go to the school you're practically certain to catch him at tea-time. Snoopey's bound to be in for tea."

"Did you see him in the wood?"

"Well, yes; we saw him in the wood," admitted Bob. "But he may have walked off anywhere—"

"How long ago?"

"How long ago was it, you fellows?" asked Bob, consulting his comrades. Not that he was in doubt.

"Ten minutes," said Johnny Bull.

"A bit more than that," said Frank Nugent, shaking his head.

"Hardly as much as that, I think," said Bob. "What do you think, Inky?"

Hurree Singh seemed to reflect deeply before answering.

"Less than a quarter of an hour, I am sure," he said. "The lessfulness is probably more than the morefulness."

Mr. Huggins' face was growing a little grim.

"You young gentlemen are very ingenious," he remarked. "Why did Wharton leave you and run back along the path as I came up?"

"Oh!" gasped Bob. "D-d-d-did he?"

"He did. Was it for the same reason that you are seeking to delay me here?" asked Mr. Huggins.

"Oh!" Bob gasped again. "Wh-a-at put that into your head, sir?"

"I am not exactly a fool," said Mr. Huggins.

And with that, and a frown, he passed the juniors and strode on along the footpath more swiftly than before.

The juniors looked at one another.

"Awfully keen bird," said Johnny Bull.

"The keenfulness is terrific."

Bob made a grimace.

"He tumbled to it," he said. "We don't seem to have done Snoopey much good, after all. The old bird's suspicious."

"Still, Wharton's had time to warn the silly ass, and the old boy won't catch him in the act," said Nugent.

"Serve him right if he did," grunted Johnny Bull.

The four juniors looked along the path after Mr. Huggins. The big gentleman, going strong, had disappeared, and his rapid footsteps died away in the wood. They had done their best for Snoop, little as he deserved it, and could only hope that he had had time to clear, but, to judge by the rate at which Mr. Huggins was going, he was not likely to have more than time.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Skinner Knows Best!**

"**T**HAT rotter again!" snarled Skinner.

The card-players on the log stared round as Harry Wharton came sprinting breathlessly down the footpath towards them.

They eyed him sourly as he came up. "What the thump do you want now?" demanded Skinner. "Have you come back to give us seventhly, or lastly?"

Snoop sniggered. "You can keep it, Wharton," he said. "We don't want to hear it. Look here, what are you butting in for? Can't you jolly well mind your own business?"

"Bad form buttin' into another man's bizney, dear boy," drawled Aubrey Angel.

"Meddlin' ass!" said Stott.

Wharton panted for breath. He had lost no time covering the ground, and he was breathless.

"Look here—" he gasped.

"Oh, can it!" said Snoop derisively. "You're interruptin' the game." Luck had turned Snoop's way since the Famous Five had passed the party, and he had been winning. And a little success had bucked Snoop considerably. "Get on with it, you men. No need to listen to Wharton's gas."

"Your uncle—" gasped Wharton.

"Oh, let my uncle rip!" interrupted Snoop. "No bizney of yours to jaw me about my uncle, that I know of."

"You silly chump!" exclaimed Harry.

"Your uncle's coming!"

"What?"

"We've just met him on the path, and I cut back to warn you," panted Wharton.

"Oh crumbs!"

Snoop, for a moment, sat frozen with dismay. His startled eyes stared up the footpath, in the direction from which Wharton had come, in fear of seeing Mr. Huggins emerge into sight. But the Canadian gentleman was not yet at hand.

Skinner stared suspiciously at the captain of the Remore.

"Gammon!" he said. "Why should old Huggins come by this path? Hardly anybody ever does. You're pulling Snoop's leg to frighten him."

"Oh, you rotter!" gasped Snoop. "If it's that—"

"I've warned you, you silly ass!" snapped Wharton. "Mr. Huggins is coming along this path, and will pass in a few minutes, at the most."

"And you've come back to warn us?" sneered Skinner.

"Yes."

"Good for evil, and all that," yawned Skinner. "Quite in the style of Good Little Georgie in the story books—if a fellow believed it. I don't, for one."

"You don't believe me?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Of course not!" answered Skinner, with an air of humorous surprise. "You didn't expect me to, did you?"

"You miserable worm—"

"Oh, draw it mild," remonstrated Skinner. "No need to get your hair off, simply because you can't pull a fellow's leg."

"I tell you, Snoop—" said Harry, turning to Sidney James again.

Snoop was looking alternately at Wharton and Skinner, in a state of doubt and indecision.

"Oh, ring off!" said Skinner contemptuously. "If Snoop's uncle was coming along to catch him you'd be the last fellow at Greyfriars to warn him. What's the good of telling a silly story like that?"

"Too thin, you know," said Frederick Stott, shaking his head. "Try something better next time."

"Dashed if I ever heard such a feeble thing," drawled Aubrey Angel. "You must think we're pretty guileless, Wharton."

Wharton stared at them. His face was dark with anger, and he already regretted that he had taken the trouble to butt into Snoop's dingy affairs to save him from the wrath of his uncle.

Three of the black sheep grinned at the anger in his face. Skinner, who rather prided himself on never believing anything, did not believe for a moment that the warning was genuine. Stott and Angel followed his lead. Only Snoop was doubtful, because the bare possibility of Mr. Huggins catching him in his present occupation was terrifying to him. He believed as Skinner believed, but he was scared all the same.

"I—I say, we'd better chuck it," stammered Snoop. "We—we should all get into a frightful row—"

"You mooning ass!" said Skinner contemptuously. "Huggins isn't anywhere about, and Wharton's pulling your silly leg. Are you ass enough to be taken in by a palpable jape like that?"

"N-no—but—"

"Think Wharton would have come back to warn you, if it was genuine?" sneered Skinner.

"I—I suppose not—but—but—" Snoop's eyes were fearfully on the path through the trees. "If—if—"

"Get on with the game," said Skinner. "You can go back to your friends, Wharton; and tell them it hasn't come off. You can't pull our leg quite so easily as all that."

"Not quite!" drawled Aubrey Angel.

"Not at all!" chuckled Stott.

Wharton breathed hard.

"I've warned you, Snoop," he said.

"If you've got the sense of a bunny

rabbit, you'll chuck this before your uncle comes along. But as you say, it's no bizney of mine, and you can do as you jolly well like."

Sidney James Snoop rose from the log.

"I—I'm not going to chance it, you fellows," he said. "I—I might have to leave Greyfriars if my uncle was down on me—and he's ragged me for this sort of thing before. I—I'm going."

"Funk!" sneered Skinner.

"I can't afford to chance it," muttered Snoop, with white lips. "If Wharton's telling the truth—"

"He isn't!"

"Well, I'm going."

"Funk!"

The sneering contempt of his associates almost made Snoop change his mind. But not quite. He threw down the cards, hesitated a moment or two, flushing under the scornful looks of his friends, and then, making up his mind, hurried down the footpath and disappeared into the wood.

Harry Wharton had turned away, and was going up the path again, to rejoin his friends.

A turn of the path hid him from Skinner & Co's eyes. They resumed their game, without Snoop.

A minute later Wharton passed a tall gentleman who was coming down the path with long and rapid strides. Mr. Huggins gave him a frowning glance in passing, but did not stop, and did not acknowledge the junior's salute. He strode on rapidly.

Skinner was dealing the cards, Stott counting his money, and Angel of the Fourth lighting a fresh cigarette, when Mr. Huggins, coming rapidly round the bend in the path, burst upon the scene.

Swift as he had been before, he quickened his pace as he came in sight of the three young rascals, and was upon the scene before Skinner & Co. could make a movement.

He halted, staring down at them grimly.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Stott.

"Oh gad!" murmured Aubrey Angel.

Skinner sat, cards in hand, staring up at the tall gentleman, his jaw dropping with dismay.

Not for an instant had Skinner believed in the warning Wharton had given. But he wished now, fervently, that he had not been so extremely knowing and sceptical.

Mr. Huggins' keen eyes searched the three dismayed faces. He was relieved not to see his nephew there, as undoubtedly he had expected.

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themselves on a half-holiday?" asked Mr. Huggins, in a deep voice.

"We—we—we—" stammered Skinner.

"It will be my duty to mention this to your headmaster," said Mr. Huggins. "Oh dear!"

Mr. Huggins turned away from the group, and pursued his way down the footpath, at a less rapid pace than before.

Skinner & Co. looked at one another with sickly faces.

"Oh gad!" said Aubrey Angel. "You fool, Skinner—"

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Stott. "You fool, Skinner—"

"Oh crikey!" said Skinner.

"It means a floggin', if that brute gives us away to the Beak—and he's sure to!" muttered Angel. "You silly idiot, when Wharton gave us the tip, why—"

"How was a fellow to know—"

"You silly ass!"

"You were always too jolly clever, Skinner," growled Stott. "Always too clever by half, you howling chump."

"Oh, shut up!" snarled Skinner.

The card-party broke up abruptly. Mr. Huggins was on his way to the school, where there was little doubt that he would report what he had seen. Three sportsmen—no longer feeling in the least sportive—drifted drearily away from the spot. "Nap" had lost its charms, and the cigarettes their flavour. Skinner & Co. were not thinking of cards and smokes now, but of the wrath to come; and the more they thought of it, the less they liked it.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Coward's Courage!

"O H!" gasped Snoop.

He cowered into the thickets.

He was not a dozen yards away from the spot where the card-players sat when Mr. Huggins burst suddenly upon them, and the deep, powerful voice of the Canadian gentleman reached his ears clearly.

Snoop cowered out of sight, his face pale, and his heart beating in painful thumps.

The voice of his uncle had a terrifying effect on him, as he realised how narrow his escape had been.

Only Wharton's warning had saved him from being caught in the act. But for that, and for his heeding it, Snoop would have been sitting with the other young rascals on the fallen log, gambling and smoking, when Mr. Huggins arrived on the scene. The thought of it made Sidney James feel quite faint. Owing to his father's misfortunes, he was almost wholly dependent on his Uncle Huggins, and it rested with Mr. Huggins to decide whether he remained at Greyfriars or not.

That his uncle was dissatisfied with him, displeased by the incessant bad reports his Form master gave, he knew, and he was aware that Mr. Huggins was losing patience with him. Precocious vice was the last thing that the healthy, hearty Mr. Huggins was likely to tolerate, and the sight of Snoop with a cigarette in his mouth, cards in his hands, and the gambler's greedy look on his face, would probably have meant the finish.

For some moments Snoop cowered there in terror, fearful that his uncle might discern him through the thickets, fearful that Skinner & Co. might mention his name, fearful that he had not, after all, escaped detection. Then he dragged himself away, and hurried through the wood, caring nothing where

he went, so long as he got to a safe distance from Mr. Huggins, and was not found by him anywhere near Skinner & Co.

As he hurried through the wood, he dreaded to hear the heavy footsteps of Mr. Huggins following him. But there was no sound of pursuit, and he hoped that the Canadian gentleman had gone on to the school.

Snoop plunged on through the trees and bushes, till he came to a sudden stop, on the bank of the stream that flowed through Friardale Wood, a little tributary of the Sark. In summer it was a shallow stream trickling between steep, ferny banks, but in the autumn it was fed by the rains from the downs, and now it rolled swift and deep under the overhanging branches of the trees. Snoop, without observing where he was going, had reached it, and it barred his further progress. He stopped, and threw himself down on the grassy bank to rest.

He was tired out, with the smoking, the excitement of gambling, and the fright he had received. He was glad to rest for a while, and think over what he was going to do. Mr. Huggins would be at Greyfriars soon, and would doubtless wait for him to come in at tea-time, which was not far off. No doubt he would ask Snoop where he had been that afternoon—and Snoop tried to think of some plausible tale that would satisfy him. Lying came as a natural resource to his weak and unscrupulous nature, but he knew that falsehoods would falter on his tongue, under the keen searching eyes of Mr. Huggins.

He wondered whether it would be safer to stay out. After all, he was not supposed to know anything about the telephone call; he had been out of gates when it came. Mr. Huggins could not expect him to guess that he was visiting Greyfriars that afternoon. On the other hand, Mr. Huggins might talk to Harry Wharton & Co., and they might mention that Snoop had been told. He decided that he had better go in; but, anyhow, there was no need to turn up till tea-time. And somehow he had to make Mr. Huggins believe that he had been nowhere near Skinner & Co. that afternoon.

Sitting on the bank of the turbid, deep stream, leaning back against an oak trunk, Snoop thought it out wearily. The woods round him were silent. There was no building within miles of him, except the woodcutter's cottage near the spot where the little woodland stream joined the Sark, and that was a quarter of a mile away. For some minutes Snoop heard, without heeding, a sound at a little distance, and when he gave it attention at last, he took it for the squealing of some animal caught in a trap. But he sat up suddenly, with the knowledge that it was a human voice he heard—a child's voice uttering faint, inarticulate little shrieks.

"What the dickens—" grunted Snoop.

He rose to his feet, stepped closer to the stream, and looked along it. What he saw made his heart jump unpleasantly.

The stream was not more than a dozen feet wide. But it was deep, and it rolled swiftly to its junction with the river. The late rains had swollen it to the brim of the bank. On the other side, a short way down the stream, a little figure was clinging to a projecting root that trailed half in the water.

Snoop stared at it.

It was a boy about five or six years old. Clinging to the root, with the water up to his neck, the boy was uttering a series of frightened shrieks.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Snoop.

He stared across the turbid water. The little fellow had evidently fallen in

from the opposite bank, and caught at the root and held on, but obviously he would not be able to hold on long against the suck of the swirling water.

Snoop's face whitened.

To see the child drown before his eyes was impossible. He scrambled along the bank to a spot exactly opposite the boy. He shouted to him to hold on.

The faint shrieks were growing fainter. Snoop gazed across the stream in horror.

He could swim, but he was a poor swimmer; he had never exerted himself to excel at that or anything else. And the water in the middle of the narrow stream was far beyond his depth—ten feet at least. Out of his depth in the racing stream, a strong swimmer was needed to cross the space, narrow as it was. Snoop's eyes turned towards the Sark in the distance—the wide river into which he would be swept if he ventured—and where he would be helplessly drowned.

"Good gad!" muttered Snoop between his chattering teeth.

He shouted for help at the top of his voice. The woodcutter must be somewhere about, and Snoop, who had seen the little boy before, knew that he was the woodcutter's son. Where was that fool Jarvis? What had he let the kid wander into danger for? It was his fault—his fault! Snoop could not be expected to get himself drowned. He could not—and he would not! He stood white and trembling on the brink, his shouting dying away. There was no answer save the echoes of the wood, there were no ears to hear; the woodcutter was not there.

The faint shrieks of the frightened child grew fainter and fainter. Snoop shivered.

That he was not brave Snoop had always known; but he had never realised that he was a coward before. If the thought had ever come to him, he had put it aside as too unpleasant. But now he could not put it aside—white and trembling he stood there, knowing that he was too cowardly to take the risk of saving the child. There was a chance—he could swim, though not strongly; the risk was terrible, but there was a chance. If he had the pluck to take it—

He had not!

The thought came into his mind of hurrying up the stream, finding a narrower spot where he could jump across, and returning down the other side for the child. But he did not stir. He knew that it was a matter of moments now—the child would be washed away and drowned long before he could cross the stream and reach it.

The wretched fellow caught at a trunk close by, and leaned on it for support. His knees were knocking together—he was overcome with the horror of what he saw, the horror of his own cowardice. He knew what he ought to do—he knew what Harry Wharton or Bob Cherry would have done in his place. But they were sturdy fellows—they could swim—and, he realised with a groan, they had pluck and he had none.

The child was silent now—it could not last many moments longer. And then suddenly some impulse stirred in Snoop that was a surprise to himself. He had told himself that he could not, and he would not, throw his life away, that it could not be expected, that it was madness—and yet he found himself scrambling down the bank into the water. He was afraid—he was horribly afraid—fear was on his heart like the contraction of an iron band. Yet in spite of fear, in spite of cowardice that almost palsied his weedy limbs, Snoop plunged into the stream and struggled towards the child.

In a few moments he was out of his depth; and the current was even stronger than he had supposed. Snoop felt himself whirled away towards the broad waters of the Sark, where death lurked and waited. Yet strangely enough, that terrible danger had ceased to fill his mind, and it was of the child that he was thinking as he fought against the swirling current. Sheer desperation lent him strength, and he fought his way across; and his hand grasped a trailing branch only a few yards from the child. The hold gave him new life, and he scrambled along from one hanging branch to another till he reached the boy. The child's eyes were closed now, the little hands slipping from the root. Snoop grasped him and held him, holding on with the other hand.

The water swirled round him; it seemed as if greedy hands were trying to pluck him away from his hold. His right hand grasped the child by the collar, holding the head above the water. His left clutched convulsively at a drooping branch that sank lower and lower to the water under his weight and the pull of the current. Snoop realised, with terror and desperation, that it was impossible to drag himself to the bank so long as he held the child. With one hand it was all that he could do to hold on, and that could not last long. His arm seemed to be cracking under the terrible strain.

A spasm of terror ran through him. Without that burden on his hands he could drag himself to safety. Yet he did not let go. Something stronger than himself, stronger than his fear, seemed to be working within him. In the face of death Snoop held on to the child.

There was a loud crack as the branch he held snapped off close to the trunk above. In an instant Snoop was whirling away in the waters, torn away as if by a giant's hand.

Still he held the child. His head went under, and came up again—he knew that he was whirling away to the open river, where death waited for him. Yet he still held on to the boy. There was a sudden shock as he struck something. The next moment, to his amazement, he was grasped and felt himself dragged up. Half-conscious now, dazed and dizzy, he saw a bearded face. He felt himself laid in a boat, the unconscious child beside him. Like a fellow in a dream he recognised the face of Jarvis, the woodcutter. As from a far distance he heard the man's voice.

"Heaven bless you, sir—Heaven bless you!"

Snoop found his voice.

"The kid?"

"Safe, sir—safe, and you've saved him! Heaven bless you!"

That was the last Snoop knew. He sank back in the boat, utterly exhausted, and darkness rushed upon him.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Taking Care of Skinner!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter met Harry Wharton & Co. as they came into the House. There was a fat grin on Bunter's podgy face. Something appeared to be amusing the Owl of the Remove.

"Seen Snoop?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Harry. "Hasn't he come in?"

"No. I say, his uncle's come, and he's tramping about like a jolly old caged tiger waiting for Snoopey," chuckled Bunter.

"Didn't Snoop come in at tea-time?" asked Harry.

"He hasn't come in at all. I say, you



There was a loud crack, as the branch Snoop held snapped off close to the trunk above. In an instant, the Greyfriars junior was whirling along in the waters, torn away as if by a giant's hand, to where death awaited him. Yet he still held on to the boy! (See Chapter 5.)

fellows, he's dodging that long-legged johnny," grinned Bunter. "Nunky wants to see him, but the want's all on nunky's side—what? He, he, he!"

"Where's Mr. Huggins now?" asked Bob Cherry.

Bunter jerked a fat thumb towards the visitors' room.

"Waiting there. He's been mooching about a long time in the quad and up and down the place. He's asked about a dozen fellows if they know where Snoopey is. He went to Snoop's study at tea-time, but Snoopey wasn't there. Man has a right to cut tea on a half-holiday if he likes—I dare say Snoop's teeing out, to keep out of his way. He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went up to the Remove passage. They had been for a long ramble, and come in at dusk, to a rather late tea. They had, as a matter of fact, forgotten all about Snoop and his uncle, until the Owl of the Remove reminded them.

"The chap's a silly ass!" remarked Bob. "He's got to see nunky sooner or later. What's the good of dodging?"

"I suppose he's dodging him," said Harry.

"Must be. He knows nunky's here, because you told him the old johnny was coming. He must be staying out on purpose. I don't see why. Nunky never caught him with the sporting party."

"He caught the others," said Harry. "Likely enough to report it to the Head."

"That wouldn't hurt Snoop. But he's the fellow to be afraid of a shadow," said Bob. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Skinner, looking merry and bright!"

"The merry and brightness is not terrific," chuckled Hurree Singh.

Skinner and Stott were on the Remove landing, and their looks were anything but joyful.

"Enjoying life, you sporting men?" grinned Bob Cherry.

Skinner gave him a scowl.

"I say, you chaps," said Stott uneasily, "that beast Huggins said something about reporting us to the Beak. Think he meant it?"

"Shouldn't wonder."

"He's that sort of meddlin' ass!" said Skinner bitterly.

"I rather think it's his duty to report you," said Harry. "The Head would expect it of any man coming here who found Greyfriars fellows smoking and gambling. Huggins is really bound to mention it."

"You'd think so, of course!" sneered Skinner. "My idea is that the old fool ought to mind his own business. Anyhow, his own nephew's as deep in the mud as we are in the mire."

Wharton looked at him.

"Snoop wasn't caught with you," he said. "He had the sense to clear off when I gave him the tip."

"It may come out," said Skinner.

"If you're going to give Snoop away,"

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exclaimed Bob hotly, "you're a measlier worm than I thought you!"

"Thanks for your good opinion!" sneered Skinner.

"I'm not going to give him away!" growled Frederick Stott. "If we're for it, we're for it, and it won't help us to get Snoop a lickin', too."

"The old brute might hold his tongue if he knew he was going to land his nephew in a flogging," muttered Skinner. "He hasn't told the Beak yet, or we should have been sent for. The brute's keeping us in suspense."

"Forgotten all about you, perhaps," suggested Nugent.

"That's not likely. If he goes to the Head, it will mean a flogging for us—the sack, perhaps! The Head's had his eye on me for a long time, and he gave me a jolly serious warning this term," said Skinner, biting his lips. "He might jump at the chance of sacking me. At the very least, it means a flogging. The same for Snoop. Old Huggins can't want to get his nephew flogged; he's fond of the chap, goodness knows why. If he knew Snoop was with us, he'd hold his tongue, I'm certain."

"Well, he doesn't know, and he's not going to know!" said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "You're not going to give Snoop away!"

"I'm going to let Huggins know that Snoop was in it, and keep it from the Head," said Skinner viciously. "That's the only way of shutting the old brute up."

"I won't have a hand in it!" said Stott, and he walked away up the Remove passage, and went into his study.

"Come on, you men!" said Johnny Bull. "I want my tea!"

"Hold on a minute!" said Harry Wharton quietly. His eyes were on Harold Skinner's sullen, uneasy face.

Skinner, evidently, was in a perturbed and scared frame of mind. He had plenty of nerve to do things from which other fellows shrank, but no nerve to face the consequences when they came. All his nonchalance and impudence had vanished now.

"Look here, Skinner—" said the captain of the Remove.

Skinner interrupted him angrily.

"You can mind your own business, Wharton! You're not wanted to butt into this!"

"Very likely; but I'm butting in all the same," said Harry coolly. "You think you may keep Huggins from reporting you, by letting him know that Snoop was in your shady gang—"

"It's a chance, anyhow."

"Isn't there such a thing as honour among rogues?" asked Wharton scornfully. "You can't give a man away."

"It's not like giving him away to the Beak," muttered Skinner. "Huggins isn't a master here."

"He's Snoop's uncle, and that makes it more serious for Snoop than if he was a master."

"Oh, rot!"

Skinner was uneasy and uncertain. Even Skinner would not have thought of taking the step he now contemplated except to save his own valuable skin. But it was pretty certain that he would take that step, or any other, rather than face a Head's flogging.

Wharton compressed his lips.

"You can't give Snoop away to his uncle, Skinner?" he said.

"Mind your own bizney!" snapped Skinner irritably. "I suppose I can do as I jolly well like, without asking your permission? What would Quelch think of his priceless head boy," he went on, with a sneer, "if he knew that his spotless head boy was protecting a black-guard from being found out?"

Harry Wharton coloured.

"You know what I think of Snoop, and of you, too," he said. "But betraying a fellow is a dirty trick. You can't do it, and you shan't!"

"Who's going to stop me, if I choose?" sneered Skinner.

"I am!" answered Harry.

"And how?"

"Like this!"

The captain of the Remove grasped Skinner by the shoulder and spun him along the passage to the doorway of Study No. 1. There a swing of his strong arm sent the cad of the Remove spinning into the study.

Skinner staggered across the room, bumped on the table, and sat down on the floor, with a bump and a howl.

Harry Wharton followed him in. His chums, grinning, followed Wharton, and the door was shut.

Skinner sat on the floor, gasping for breath, and scowling at them savagely.

"You rotter!" he panted.

"Shut up!"

"What's the big idea, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Skinner's staying here—with us," said Wharton. "He's not going to give his pal away. He's staying here till Huggins is gone."

"I won't!" yelled Skinner, scrambling to his feet.

"You will!" said Wharton coolly.

"You bullyin' rotter!" yelled Skinner. "Easy enough to rag a fellow when you're five to one!"

Wharton's lip curled.

"If you want a scrap, you can pick out your man, and the others will see fair play," he answered.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. "Pick me out, Skinner, old man! I'd take it as a personal favour."

"Me!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Me!" pleaded Nugent.

"The pickfulness would be an esteemed boonful blessing," chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Pick out my esteemed and absurd self, Skinner!"

Skinner did not pick out anybody. He was not anxious for a scrap with any member of the famous Co. He retreated across the study to the window, and threw himself into the window-seat.

"You'll stop here," said Harry calmly.

"Snoop's a worm, but you're not going to give him away. Now about tea, you men. You can tea with us if you like, Skinner, as you're here."

"Go and eat coke!" snarled Skinner.

"Please yourself."

Harry Wharton & Co. sat down to tea round the study table. They chatted cheerily over the meal, taking little heed of the sullen-faced fellow scowling in the window-seat.

Skinner eyed them viciously.

He was watching for a chance to escape from the study. The opposition of Wharton had had the effect of causing Skinner to make up his mind; and he was now determined to see Mr. Huggins before that gentleman went to the Head, and warn him that a report would have to include his own nephew. That, in Skinner's opinion, was very likely to make the Canadian gentleman hold his tongue—and it was, at all events, the only resource Skinner had.

The Famous Five had ceased to regard Skinner; and it seemed to him that his opportunity had come. He

rose suddenly from the window-seat, and made a dart across the study to the door.

"Stop him!" exclaimed Wharton.

The Famous Five jumped up. Skinner, with a desperate bound, reached the door and tore it open.

He leaped for the passage.

Crash! Bump!

"Yarooogh!" A roar of anguish woke the echoes of the Remove passage.

Skinner staggered back into the study. The next moment Harry Wharton's grasp was on him, and he was swung back across the room. He rolled in the fender with a howl.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Bunter!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yarooogh!" came from the fat junior sitting outside the doorway of Study No. 1. "Ow! Wow! I'm killed! I'm injured! I'm smashed! I'm dislocated! My neck's broken! Yarooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts! I'm hurt! Yarooogh! Ow! Wow!" roared Bunter. "Beasts! Call this pally—charging into a fellow when he's coming in to tea!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" gasped Bunter. "Help me up, you beasts!"

Bob Cherry kindly gave the fat junior a helping hand up. He grasped him by one fat ear for that purpose.

There was a fiendish yell from Billy Bunter. Bob's assistance did not seem grateful or comforting, somehow.

"Yarooogh! Leggo!"

"You asked me to help—"

"Leggo! Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter scrambled up and glared at the grinning juniors, with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Come in, old fat bean!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You've come in useful for once; Skinner would have got away if you hadn't butted in—"

Bunter blinked at Skinner, who was scrambling out of the fender with an almost demoniac expression on his face.

"You fellows keeping Skinner in here?" he exclaimed in amazement.

"Just that."

"What on earth for?"

"Because we love his company so much," explained Bob Cherry. "He doesn't love ours, so he was trying to bolt. But we're not parting with our beloved Skinner in a hurry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can make you out," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I thought I'd drop in to tea—"

"And you dropped into the passage instead!" said Bob sympathetically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, that looks a decent cake—"

"Sit down and have some."

"What-ho!"

Billy Bunter forgot his painful experience, and sat down with a beaming face to have some. Skinner was sidling towards the door; and Bob Cherry lifted a foot in a very significant way. Skinner hastily backed off.

"Look here, you rotters, you're not keeping me here!" he snarled.

"I think we are!" said Harry.

"The pickfulness is terrific!"

Wharton locked the study door, and put the key in his pocket. After which the Famous Five and William George Bunter finished their tea in peace, leaving Skinner to scowl as much as he liked. Which was quite a lot.

(Continued on page 12.)

You'll thoroughly enjoy reading  
**"THE TYRANT!"**

By Martin Clifford.

A ripping story of Tom Merry & Co.  
in this week's GEM.

# INSIDE INFORMATION!



By "The OLD REF."

Many strange things happen on the football field—intricate problems which puzzle the spectators, and sometimes the referee, too. If YOU'VE got any knotty problem you're stuck over, send it along to our expert, "Old Ref," he's at your service, and will be only too pleased to give you a decision on the matter.

**G**ATHER round, boys, we are going to have a weekly chat about football. And when I say a chat I mean it. I don't mean that I am going to do all the talking and you are going to do all the listening. That isn't a chat. You are going to ask me questions, and I am going to answer them. We are going to get involved in some hot arguments, too.

Those of you who play football come right up against ticklish problems sometimes. Those of you who watch football see quaint things happen. This game of football is so full of possibilities; of unusual happenings. It is of those unusual happenings that we are going to chat week by week.

I shall tell you of some of the things I have seen—strange things which have puzzled the spectators, and sometimes puzzled the referees, too. And if I wander off from these problems to tell you a story here and there of a big football personality—well, I hope you will find those stories interesting. They are stories picked up in my travels after the big ball, and in talking as a friend with the star players of to-day.

That's a sort of foreword. Now we can get on. A strange thing happened in a First Division match at Highbury the other day which I don't suppose a handful of spectators of the whole fifty thousand noticed.

*Arsenal were playing Bolton Wanderers. The Arsenal captain won the toss, and Bolton kicked off to start the match. That was all right. After half-time the Arsenal should have kicked off, of course, but actually the Bolton centre-forward kicked off again. And neither referee, linesmen, or players noticed the mistake.*

That reminds me of an incident which shows that we get into such a habit of doing certain things in a certain way that we come to accept that way of doing things as being a rule.

A few seasons back Nils Middleboe, who is now a director of Clapton Orient, was the captain of Chelsea, and prior to the start of the game he tossed up with Joe McCall, the captain of Preston North End. Middleboe won the toss, and having done so said: "We will kick off." McCall stared at him, the referee stared at him, and the spectators wondered what was happening. McCall said: "You can't do that!" However, the referee, having thought for a moment or two, remembered that the rule book gives the captain who wins the toss the option of choice of ends or of kicking off.

**F**OR so many years, and in so many hundreds of matches, however, the captain who has won the toss has chosen which goal his side should defend that we had all forgotten that optional clause in the rules.

You know, of course, that there is a new clause in the rule books this season concerning what the goalkeeper shall do when a penalty kick is being taken. The new rule says that he must "stand on the goal-line" until the ball is kicked from the penalty spot.

It may seem a strange thing to say, but I don't believe for a single moment that the rule-makers, when they put that clause in, meant what the rule actually says. I don't think they meant to tie the goalkeeper down, as it were. What they meant to insist upon was that the goalkeeper must not advance from the goal-line or go back behind the goal-line.

Farquharson, the goalkeeper of Cardiff City, used to adopt this latter ruse of going to the back of the net and springing forward just as the kick was being taken. He did it for the first time in a Cup-tie against Chelsea, and Andy Wilson, who took the kick, was so taken by surprise that he failed to score.

However, whether the rule-makers meant that the goalkeeper must now stand still with both feet on the line doesn't matter. The word "stand" is in the rules, and referees have to interpret the rules as printed. And this new rule has led to some confusing situations.

A reader from Uxbridge has written to the Editor telling him about one strange thing he saw in connection with the new rule, and has asked what the referee should have done.

The facts were these:

*A penalty kick was awarded against a certain side. Five times that kick was taken, and five times the goalkeeper stopped the ball. But on each occasion he had moved forward off his goal-line and, of course, the referee ordered the kick to be retaken each time. At the sixth time of taking the kick the ball was sent over the bar.*

Now the point is this: Suppose that goalkeeper had kept on coming out time after time. Would that have meant that the penalty kick would have gone on being taken over and over again until the time of the match was up?

A referee who knew his job would not have allowed that to happen. I'll tell you what he would have done. After the goalkeeper had broken the rule, say a couple of times, the referee would have warned him not to do it again. And if the player had done it again he would have rendered himself liable to be sent off the field for ungentlemanly conduct. A player who persistently breaks the rules is guilty of ungentlemanly conduct, and the punishment for that is dismissal from the field.

Now there comes another ticklish problem:

*To what extent is a referee justified in changing his decision when he is convinced that he has made a mistake?*

This question arises out of a recent match between Everton and Leeds United. A Leeds forward got the ball and sent in a beautiful shot—straight for goal. But the referee, thinking that the man who shot was offside, blew his whistle as the ball was on its way to the net. Then the referee, taking another look, saw that he had made a mistake: that the man who shot was not offside. So, according to the story as I have it from a reader, he awarded a goal.

That seems like common justice, doesn't it? But if the facts are as reported to me, the referee was wrong. Having blown his whistle for offside he could not then give a goal on discovering that he had made a mistake; that the scorer was not offside. The instant the referee blows his whistle the ball is dead.

Now I have told you of one or two weird happenings on the football field. Strange things are always happening; incidents over which you have an argument after the match is over. I am here to settle those arguments. But I can't settle them unless you write and tell me about them. So send along your queries; the more the merrier.

## COWARD'S COURAGE!

(Continued from page 10.)

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

## The Rescuer!

**S**IDNEY JAMES SNOOP opened his eyes.

He did not stir. There was no strength left in Snoop's weedy limbs. He was conscious again, but he lay exhausted.

Dizzily he looked round him.

He was wrapped in blankets in a bed. Across the room a wood fire burned in a large grate, and before the fire his clothes were hung to dry. Dimly he remembered what had happened.

He guessed that he was in the woodcutter's cottage. It was Jarvis, the woodcutter, who had picked him up in the boat; he remembered that. How long had he been there? He was alone in the room; and for a long time he lay and stared at the crackling fire, in a state of tired and lazy comfort. Then the door opened, and Jarvis came in with his heavy tread.

Snoop's eyes turned on him.

"You're awake, sir?" said the woodcutter; and there was a grateful respect in his manner that struck Snoop very strangely. It was unusual for anyone to address Snoop with respect. In the Remove he was a fellow of very little account; and his friends rather tolerated him than liked him, and certainly never had dreamed of respecting him.

"Yes," said Snoop.

"Feel all right, sir?"

"Oh, yes! Only a bit tired!"

"You would be, sir, after what you did," said Jarvis. "I s'pose you're a pretty good swimmer, sir?"

Snoop's pale cheeks coloured.

"I've been told that I'm the worst swimmer in my school," he answered. "I felt like it, when I was in the water, too."

"Thank goodness I was there in the boat!" said Jarvis. "I'd been across the Sark, and was coming back in the boat when I saw you—and the kid. You see, sir, the missus is away to market, and Mick was left in the garden while I went in the boat. He must have got through the hedge and wandered into the wood, and I suppose fell into the water."

Snoop explained how he had seen the boy.

"And you a poor swimmer, you say, sir, and you went into deep water for him," said Jarvis. "You are a good plucked one, sir!"

Snoop's colour deepened.

"I'm not," he said, with a burst of frankness. "I was horribly frightened—horribly!" He shivered at the recollection.

"But you went in, all the same, sir."

"I suppose I did," said Snoop.

"There's strong swimmers would be afraid to go into that current, sir," said Jarvis. "I don't like to think of what might have happened, if I hadn't come back in the boat."

"The kid's all right?" asked Snoop.

"Right as rain, sir!"

"I—I suppose I fainted," said Snoop shamefacedly.

"And no wonder you did, after what you'd been through, sir," said Jarvis. "I've brought you here, and tucked you up in them blankets. Your clothes will soon be dry, sir. You belong to Greyfriars?" asked the woodcutter.

"Yes," said Snoop.

"I'd like to know your name, sir, to

remember the lad who saved Mick from drowning."

"Snoop—Sidney Snoop. I'm in the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars. But—but it's nothing," said Snoop. "I tell you I was horribly frightened—I don't know how I came to do it."

Jarvis grinned.

"You did come to do it, sir, and that's good enough. You wasn't so frightened as you thought you was."

"I—I suppose not," admitted Snoop.

"It was as plucky a thing as ever I heard of," said Jarvis. "There ain't anything a poor man can do but to thank you, sir; but you may be sure I'll never forget what you've done, and the missus, too."

Snoop lay back in the bed, with a feeling of comfortable satisfaction. He had done a brave deed; he knew that he had. How he had nerved himself to do it he did not know; but there it was. He had saved a life—a child's life—and very nearly lost his own in doing it. He wondered what Skinner would say, if he knew.

He wondered what the other fellows would say, too, if they knew—the fellows who condemned him as a funk! He smiled rather sourly at the thought that they would not believe him if he told them.

He could picture the derisive grin that would go round the Remove, if he went back and told the fellows that he had risked his life to save a kid from drowning. He could see Skinner's sneer, and the Bouncer's ironical grin, the disbelief in all faces; he could hear the cackle of Billy Bunter. Nobody would believe a word of it if he told the story; the fellows would not doubt for a moment that it was an invention from beginning to end. Well, they could think what they liked—he had done it!

"It'll be your tea-time at the school, sir," said Jarvis. "P'rhaps you'll have some tea here, sir, before you leave. Your clothes ain't dry yet."

"Thank you!" said Snoop.

He sat up in the blankets to tea, which Jarvis brought on a tray. He found that he was very hungry; and he enjoyed a substantial tea of new-laid eggs and home-made bread-and-butter. Jarvis waited on him, he thought, with a grin, as if he had been a prince. It was a new and happy experience for the nobody of the Remove. He was nobody at Greyfriars; but in the woodcutter's cottage he was honoured and respected by the man whose child he had rescued.

The thought came suddenly into his mind of his uncle. He had forgotten about Mr. Huggins till then.

Mr. Huggins would be waiting at Greyfriars to see him. What had happened would be a sufficient excuse for not turning up, and Snoop thought of remaining at the woodcutter's cottage till it was too late to see his uncle. But he dismissed that thought. If Mr. Huggins suspected that he was staying out purposely to avoid him it would make matters worse—and the interview had to take place some time.

After he had finished his tea his clothes were dry, and Snoop dressed himself.

He was feeling tired, and a deep lassitude lay upon him, the result of his exertions. Snoop was not fit; he never troubled to keep himself fit; and he had exerted himself beyond his strength. He moved slowly and heavily.

"You'd like to rest a bit longer before you go, sir," said Jarvis.

Snoop shook his head.

"I can't! My uncle's come to the

school this afternoon to see me, and I shall miss him if I don't get back."

And Snoop took his leave of the woodcutter, and started. The dusk was already deepening on the woods, and it was almost dark by the time he reached the school.

He was just in time to enter before Gosling closed the gates.

He trudged across the quad, with slow and heavy steps. The walk back had tired him out, and he felt that he could hardly place one foot before another, as he reached the House and went in.

"Hallo, Snoopey!"

Vernon-Smith greeted him with a grin, as he came in. Snoop glanced round at the Bouncer.

"Had a good time?" grinned Smithy.

"What do you mean?" grunted Snoop.

"You look as if you'd been enjoying yourself!" grinned the Bouncer. "Too many smokes, what?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Your jolly old uncle's here!" said Vernon-Smith. "Did you know?"

"Where is he?" asked Snoop.

"Waiting in the visitor's room. I say," added the Bouncer good-naturedly, "you'd better pull yourself together a bit before you see him, or he'll spot at once that you've been on the razzle. You look half-baked."

"I haven't been on the razzle, you ass!" muttered Snoop.

"Well, you look it!"

The Bouncer walked away, grinning derisively. Snoop scowled after him, and with slow steps took his way to the room where Mr. Huggins was waiting.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

## Uncle and Nephew!

**"S**IDNEY!" Mr. Huggins rose from a chair by the fire as Snoop entered.

To Snoop's relief, he looked quite good-tempered. Snoop had feared to meet a frowning face, but he realised that his uncle did not know that he had been aware of the visit, and could not have expected him to guess that his relative was at the school.

Mr. Huggins shook hands with his nephew, with a powerful grip that made Snoop wince.

The junior coloured uncomfortably as he felt the keen, searching eyes of the Canadian gentleman on his face.

He knew that he was looking his very worst. It was not wholly due to the cigarettes and the gambling. He was worn out with unaccustomed exertion and the stress of emotion, and so fatigued by the walk back to the school that he was ready to sink where he stood. But he saw the good-natured, kindly smile die off Mr. Huggins' rugged face.

"You look tired, Sidney," said Mr. Huggins.

"I am tired," muttered Snoop.

"Sit down, my boy."

Snoop fell rather than sat into a chair.

His uncle remained standing before the fire, looking at him. The kind face was growing harder in expression.

Snoop knew that his ordeal was coming.

"It will be calling-over soon, I think," said Mr. Huggins quietly. "I will not keep you long, Sidney. I have waited a long time for you to come in, and I have to leave very soon."

"I—I couldn't help—"

"I do not blame you—it seems that you had gone out before I phoned to

Mr. Quelch," said the Canadian gentleman. "I expected you to come in at tea-time."

"I had my tea; I——"

"Quite so; you were not to blame, as you did not know that I was here," said Mr. Huggins.

Snoop wriggled uncomfortably. He wondered whether Mr. Huggins suspected that he had known that he was there.

"What I have to say to you, Sidney, may be said in a few minutes," went on his uncle. "From what I have written to you, you are aware that I

is not a question of a cigarette or two," said his uncle. "I am no fool, Sidney, and I am not blind. You have been smoking this afternoon—not a cigarette or two, as you express it, but excessively."

"I haven't. I——"

"You will find it better to keep to the truth, Sidney. Your fingers are stained with tobacco at this moment," said Mr. Huggins. "I must speak seriously to you, Sidney. This afternoon, as I came to the school, I came on several Greyfriars boys smoking and playing cards in the wood. Two of them were the boys

young rascals, Sidney?" asked Mr. Huggins sternly.

"No," said Snoop desperately. "I wasn't."

"You were not with them a few minutes before I came up?"

"No," breathed Snoop.

"You were not warned that I was coming, by a boy who saw me on the path, and ran back?"

Snoop's heart almost ceased to beat. Obviously, the Canadian gentleman was more observant than Snoop had imagined, or Wharton either, for that matter. But he was committed to denial now, and he shook his head.

"No!" he repeated.

"There were three boys in the party," said Mr. Huggins. "Two friends of yours, and one boy I do not know. But there had been a fourth."

"I—I don't see how——"

"I have said that I am not blind, Sidney. There had been four boys sitting round the log, smoking. There were cigarette-ends and burnt matches lying about, where they had been dropped by smokers—and four places were indicated. There were heel-marks



"Betraying a fellow is a dirty trick," said Wharton fiercely. "You can't do it, Skinner, and you shan't!" "Who's going to stop me?" sneered Skinner. "I am!" answered Wharton. And with a swing of his strong arm he sent the cad of the Remove spinning into Study No. 1. (See Chapter 6.)

am not satisfied with you; but you do not, of course, expect me to be satisfied."

"I had my tea; I——"

"Every report from your Form-master has been a bad one," said Mr. Huggins. "You are a slacker at work, and a slacker at play, Sidney. Owing to circumstances, I stand in loco parentis to you—your father's responsibility has fallen upon me. I have tried to be a good uncle to you; and I have not lost my affection for you, though you have bitterly disappointed me."

"Quelch never gives some fellows a good report!" muttered Snoop. "He's got his favourites in the Form, and he's down on some fellows."

Mr. Huggins raised a hand.

"That is sheer nonsense, Sidney. I have every faith in Mr. Quelch's fairness and good judgment."

Snoop was silent.

"If Mr. Quelch has any prejudice against you, Sidney, as you suppose, you must have given him cause. You have been punished by your headmaster for smoking, more than once. You cannot deny that."

"A—a cigarette or two——"

"That would be silly enough; but it

I know to be your familiar associates—two boys named Skinner and Stott."

"I can't help what they were doing!" muttered Snoop.

"It would be wiser not to associate with boys of that character, Sidney. You were not with them when I came on; but——"

Mr. Huggins paused.

Snoop felt a tremor.

"When you left the school this afternoon, Sidney, were you not in the company of Skinner and Stott?"

"I—I—No!" stammered Snoop.

"I—I mean, I—I——" Had Mr. Huggins, while he was waiting about Greyfriars, learned from some fellow that Snoop had gone out with Skinner & Co.? It was likely enough; and the wretched junior felt that he had to be wary. "I mean, I walked some distance with them, and left them."

The bronzed face of the Canadian gentleman grew harder. To an experienced and keen man of the world, Snoop's mind was almost like an open book. Mr. Huggins was quite aware that Sidney had been about to deny having gone with Skinner that afternoon at all, and had changed his mind.

"Do you tell me that you were not smoking or card-playing with those

in the ground which plainly showed that a fourth person had been sitting on the log."

Snoop was dimly silent. How was a wretched liar to keep his end up in dealing with a man so observant as this?

"I do not say that that fourth person was yourself, Sidney," went on Mr. Huggins, "but I cannot help thinking that it was so. You say you walked a short distance with Skinner——"

"Yes," muttered Snoop, with dry lips.

"Where did you leave him?"

"In—in the lane."

"How long were you with him?"

"About—about ten minutes."

"Are you prepared for me to see Skinner privately and question him, and ascertain whether he says the same thing?"

Snoop gave a convulsive start. He did not answer. It was useless to answer. Even if Skinner was loyal to a pal—which was very doubtful—his story could not tally with Snoop's unless they compared notes first. Snoop sat dumb.

"You are not?" asked Mr. Huggins.

No reply.

Mr. Huggins gave a sigh.

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

"You have spoken untruthfully, Sidney. I can scarcely doubt that the boy who saw me coming on the foot-path ran back to give you a warning, and that you left your friends just before I reached the spot."

Snoop shivered and did not speak.

"And that implies," said Mr. Huggins, "that you knew I had come, that you must have known that I had reached Greyfriars, and yet you left me waiting here for hours."

"I—I—I can explain——"

Mr. Huggins raised his hand again.

"No doubt you can explain, Sidney, but I will not listen to further untruthfulness. I fear that you have no scruple whatever in lying."

"It—it wasn't my fault I was kept out late—you wouldn't blame me if you knew the reason, I can tell you——"

"You need tell me nothing," said Mr. Huggins. "I could not believe a single word you said, Sidney, so the less you tell me the better."

Snoop was silent. He had been about to tell the story of his adventure, of the rescue of the woodcutter's little boy. But it died on his lips now. His miserable lying had placed him in a false position, and it was useless to tell the truth. There was not the remotest chance that he would be believed.

Yet as his uncle gave him a chance to speak, Snoop made one more attempt.

"I couldn't have come in," he said. "I——"

"You could have come in if you had chosen," said Mr. Huggins. "I repeat, I will listen to no more untruths, Sidney."

"But I can tell you——"

"Not a word more," said Mr. Huggins sternly. "You have lied to me already, and for very shame's sake you should be silent and tell me no more falsehoods. I will ask you no further how you have been occupied this afternoon because I know perfectly well that you will not utter a word of truth on the subject."

"I'd like to tell you——"

"Silence!" rapped out Mr. Huggins; he was angry now, which was not surprising, and his voice was very deep and stern.

Snoop was silent.

There was a sound of many footsteps in the distance. The fellows were going to Hall for call-over.

"I need not detain you longer, Sidney," said Mr. Huggins. "I have only a few words to say. I have felt for a long time that you are wasting your time at this school, that Greyfriars is not doing you any good, and you certainly are doing Greyfriars no good. You are neglecting all your opportunities and wasting your time, and your health, on vicious frivolities. If you keep on here you will probably be expelled by your headmaster sooner or later, and that disgrace, at least, may be averted—by your leaving."

"Leaving Greyfriars?" muttered Snoop.

"What is the use of your remaining here?" exclaimed Mr. Huggins. "I do not grudge your expenses at the

school, as you know well, so long as the school is doing you good and fitting you to take your place in the world. But what are you learning here? How to become a public-house loafer when you grow up?"

"I—I'm going to try to do better," muttered Snoop. "I—I think you might give me another chance——"

"If I could believe that!" said Mr. Huggins, and his eyes dwelt wistfully on the miserable face of the junior. "I am returning to Canada soon, and I would gladly leave you at Greyfriars if I thought there was any chance of your making good here. If you had shown capacity, or grit, in a single direction—but you have failed in everything. You are a slacker in class, and you cannot even say that you are good at games. Your reports are consistently bad, and you are frequently punished—not for schoolboy thoughtlessness or carelessness, but for bad conduct. If you could point to one single creditable action that you have ever done——"

Mr. Huggins paused.

"If you'd listen——" muttered Snoop.

"If I would listen you would invent some falsehood," interrupted Mr. Huggins scornfully. "That is the very worst of your offences, Sidney—that I cannot believe a single word you say, even if by chance you may be telling me the truth."

Snoop licked his dry lips.

The game was up, was the wretched thought in his mind. He was going to be taken away from Greyfriars—and it was his own fault. He could not deny that he had been given chances enough.

"I came here to-day," said Mr. Huggins, "hoping that by a serious talk I might prevail upon you to make one more effort, for your father's sake as well as your own. That hope is now gone. I find that you were disgracefully occupied, and that you were ready to tell me unscrupulous falsehoods. This must be the end of it, Sidney. I have no hope that you will ever be anything but a disgrace to the school you belong to. You must make up your mind to leave Greyfriars."

"I—I'll try——"

"How many times have you said the same thing before, Sidney?"

Snoop mumbled, and was silent.

"I shall not decide in haste," said Mr. Huggins, "and I must consult your father. I shall see you again, Sidney, and let you know what is decided. Now I will leave you."

Snoop rose to his feet.

His uncle did not offer to shake hands with him, and he went slowly and miserably to the door.

He cast a last look back before he went out. The bronzed face was like granite.

Snoop realised, with a shiver, that the game, indeed, was up. He had tried a kind man's patience too far, and it was the end. He joined the stream of fellows going into Hall, with a face so white and wretched that it caused many glances to turn on him curiously.

He did not see his uncle again. When the fellows came out of Hall after calling over, Mr. Huggins was gone.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### A Scrap in Study No. 11.

"THE rotter!" growled Skinner.

It was not a happy trio that gathered in Study No. 11 in the Remove, for prep.

Snoop was white and silent, Skinner in a savage and bitter temper. Only Stott looked stolid and unemotional.

There had been no summons before the Head; no call to Mr. Quelch's study.

Skinner had remained with Harry Wharton & Co. till call-over, and they had walked into Hall with him. He had had no opportunity of seeing Mr. Huggins. By this time, however, Skinner was rather glad of it. At call-over, he had expected to be told to remain behind after the rest were dismissed, or ordered to his Form master's study. But nothing had happened; and, as Mr. Huggins was now gone, it was clear that nothing was going to happen. The Canadian gentleman had not, after all, reported at the school what he had seen in Friardale Wood.

Stott concluded that he had forgotten about it. Anyhow, as there was no trouble to accrue, Stott dismissed the matter from his mind. But Skinner was feeling bitterly resentful. Mr. Huggins, apparently, had let them off—after leaving them in painful doubt and suspense—perhaps considering that the fright was enough. Skinner owed him a grudge for every minute of fear and uneasiness.

"The rotter!" he repeated. "The meddling old ass! I dare say he never meant to peach on us at all. Just trying to scare us. Keeping a fellow on tenterhooks. The rotter!"

Snoop looked at him.

"If you're speaking of my uncle——" he said.

"You know I am," said Skinner.

"Then shut up!"

Skinner sneered.

"I fancy you're about as fond of the old blighter as I am," he remarked. "Don't be a fool, Snoopey!"

"I'd rather be a fool than a sneaking cad," said Snoop bitterly. "I know why those fellows kept you in Study No. 1. I got it from Bunter."

Skinner coloured rather uncomfortably. He was glad, on the whole, that Harry Wharton & Co. had prevented him from betraying Snoop to his uncle, as matters had turned out. It had not been necessary, after all. It would have been a wasted act of treachery. He would have preferred Snoop to know nothing about it; but, as Billy Bunter had been on the scene, it was likely that most of the Remove would know about it.

"If they hadn't stopped you, you'd have let on to my uncle," said Snoop. "I'd never have thought that, even of you, Skinner."

"Beastly mean," said Stott.

"Only to keep him from going to the Beak," said Skinner. "He threatened to report us, and it might have stopped him."

"Well, he didn't, anyway," said Stott.

"I know he didn't, fathead; but he might have," growled Skinner. "As it turned out, the old brute was only trying to frighten us. A fellow couldn't know that. Did he rag you much, Snoopey?"

"Yes," muttered Snoop. "He guessed that I was with you in the wood; he's as sharp as a razor. Of course, he can't have felt certain, though he'd have been certain enough if you'd given me away as you meant."

"Oh, let that drop," said Skinner. "It never came off, anyhow."

"I owe that to Wharton, a fellow I've always been up against," said Snoop bitterly. "He stopped you. I wish I'd taken a bit more notice of Wharton, and less of you, this term. I mightn't be in such a frightful hole now."

"There's still time to join the goody-goody brigade!" said Skinner sarcastically.

"There isn't! I'm done for here," said Snoop miserably. "My uncle's going to take me away."

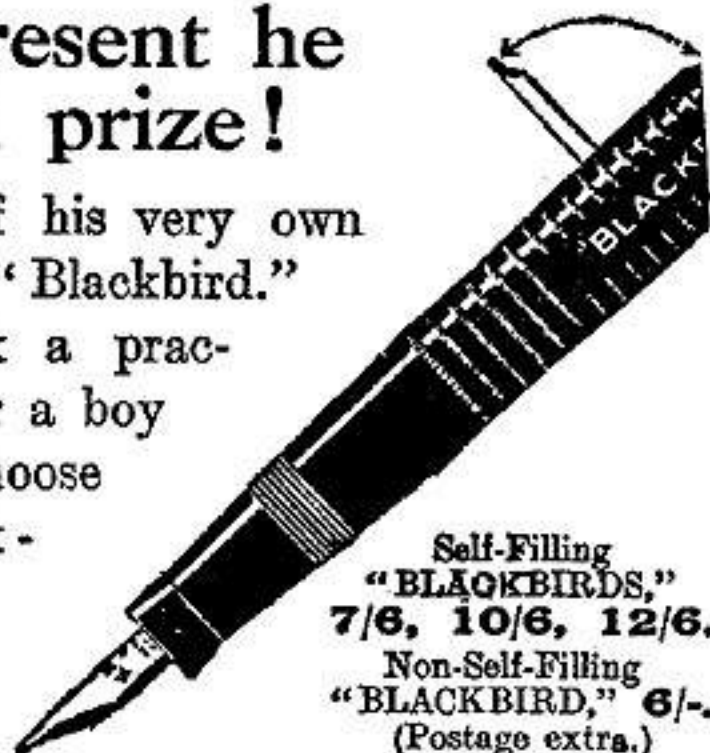
(Continued on page 18.)



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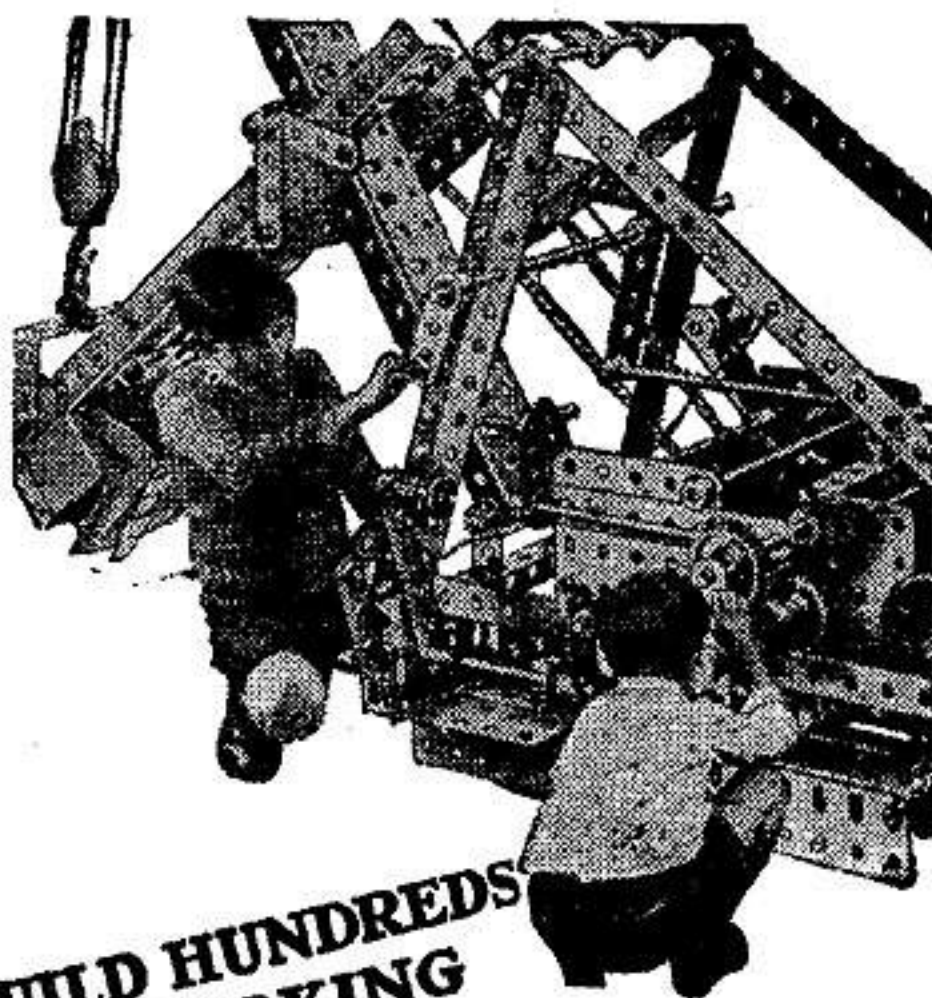
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## COWARD'S COURAGE!

(Continued from page 16.)

"You're leaving Greyfriars?" exclaimed Skinner.

"Yes."

"Well, there will be a lot of dry eyes when you go," said Skinner coolly. "If you're worrying about the grief that will be felt when you depart, old bean, take comfort. There won't be any."

"You rotter!" said Snoop. "You've landed me in this, and now it's all up, you can only gibe at a fellow. I've chucked up blagging half a dozen times, and you always jeered and sneered me into it again. Now the game's up for me, and you can't do anything but sneer."

"Man has to take what's comin' to him," said Skinner. "You've called the tune, and you've got to pay the piper. Anyhow, you're not doing any good here, that I know of."

"Whose fault is that?" demanded Snoop fiercely.

"Your own, you miserable worm!" answered Skinner contemptuously. "If you've come to me for sympathy you've come to the wrong shop, I can tell you. If you'd had the nerve of a rabbit you could have stuffed up that old fool of an uncle of yours. But I suppose you quaked under his eye and gave yourself away."

"I'm not so good at lying as you are," said Snoop.

"Oh, shut up!" grunted Skinner. "I'm fed-up with your whining. Give us a rest."

"I'll please myself about that."

"You won't!" said Skinner. "I know those fellows in Study No. 1 handled me as they liked, and I don't pretend that I can put up my hands to Wharton or Bob Cherry. But I can jolly well lick you, Snoopey, any time I choose; and if you don't mind your p's and q's, I'll do it."

"Will you?" said Snoop, eyeing him.

"Yes I will!" snapped Skinner. "So shut up while you're safe."

Snoop rose to his feet.

"Get on with it, then," he said quietly.

Skinner stared at him.

This was rather a change in Snoop. As a rule, Skinner was undisputed leader in Study No. 11. If ever he had any trouble in that study, it was from Frederick Stott. Snoop, as a rule, knuckled under to Skinner without protest. But what had happened that afternoon had had its effect on Sidney James Snoop. He had done a thing that he knew Skinner was incapable of doing. He had not been afraid, when the test came, to risk his life, and after that he was not likely to be afraid of Skinner.

"What's this game?" asked Skinner, in astonishment. "If I get on with it, you funky worm, you'll be howling for mercy in a minute or two. Sit down, and don't be a fool!"

Snoop's lips curled.

"I don't think I'm the funk," he said. "I've told you to get on with it, Skinner."

"Oh, cheese it!" said Skinner uneasily. "I'm not going to scrap with you, you silly ass!"

"You are!" said Snoop.

"What the thump do you mean?"

"What I say. Take that, to begin with!" said Snoop, and he reached across the study table and bestowed a sudden smack on Skinner's thin face that elicited a yell of surprise and rage from Skinner.

Skinner leaped to his feet.

"Why, I'll smash you!" he roared.

"I'm waiting," said Snoop.

Skinner whipped round the table and rushed at him. He looked so angry and

savage that Snoop's heart failed him, and he backed away across the study, his brief courage oozing away.

But it was too late to back out. That smack had roused Skinner's savage temper, and he came on, hitting out right and left.

Snoop went with a crash against the wall.

"Ow!" he gasped.

"I'm getting on with it," grinned Skinner savagely. "Stand up to it, you worm; you're not getting off yet."

"Oh, chuck it, you two!" said Stott.

"I'll chuck it when I've given that worm the licking of his life," snarled Skinner. "Come on, Snoop! You asked for it."

Snoop, rather unexpectedly, came on. Skinner's blows had had the effect of rousing his temper, and with temper came a revival of courage. He came desperately at Skinner, hitting out. His sharp knuckles caught Skinner's nose, and Skinner went staggering back with a gasp. Snoop, encouraged by success, followed him up, and a second blow landed in Skinner's eye, stretching him on the floor with a crash.

"How do you like that?" grinned Snoop.

Skinner sat up quite dazedly, blinking at him.

"Why, you—you—you—" he gasped.

"Don't jaw," said Snoop. "Get up and come on! I've been through something to-day a bit more hefty than a scrap with you, Skinner. You're a cad and a funk, and I'm done with you. Now get up and come on, you coward!"

Skinner scrambled up and came on. For the next few minutes matters were lively in Study No. 11. Frederick Stott looked on in astonishment. He had never seen Snoop coming out like this before. Neither had Skinner, and to the latter it was a painful surprise.

At the end of five minutes Skinner was on the floor again, and Snoop stood over him, panting, his nose streaming crimson, and his eyes flashing. He had lost all fear now; once more he had discovered that he was not the coward he had thought himself.

"Get up and have some more!" panted Snoop.

Skinner lay and gasped.

"My hat!" said Stott. "Are you licked, Skinner?"

"I'm done, hang you!" said Skinner. "I'll jolly well lick you another time, Snoop!"

"No time like the present," sneered Snoop. "If you want any more, get up and have it."

Skinner got up; but he placed the study table between him and Snoop. Skinner had had enough.

"Licked, by gum!" said Stott, staring at him.

"I'm not licked, you fool!" snarled Skinner.

"If you're not, you're going to be!" said Snoop victoriously. "You'll own up you're licked, or you'll put up your hands again."

"I won't do either!"

"Then I'll jolly well pull your nose till you do!" said Snoop.

"My hat! What's come over you?" exclaimed Skinner in wonder and rage.

"Why, you worm, I've known you funk a scrap even with Bunter!"

"I'm not funkng a scrap with you, anyhow. Do you own up that you're licked?" demanded Snoop.

"No, I don't!"

Snoop started round the table.

"Oh, sheer off!" growled Skinner.

"I own up, if you like! Now chuck it, hang you!"

"That's good enough," said Snoop.

And he left the study, to bathe his streaming nose—leaving Skinner caressing a darkening eye, and Stott grinning.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Astonishing the Natives!

"COME in!" called out Harry Wharton as there sounded a tap at the door of Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Prep had finished, and Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh had come along to Study No. 1 to join Wharton and Nugent. They were chatting in the study for a few minutes before going down to the Rag, when a rather timid tap came.

It was Snoop of the Remove who opened the door and came in. The Famous Five looked at him in surprise. Sidney James Snoop was a very infrequent caller at that study.

"Hallo, Snoop!" said the captain of the Remove. "Want anything?"

Snoop hesitated, looking round at the surprised faces.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You've got a prize nose," said Bob Cherry. "Been scrapping, Snoopey?"

The juniors grinned. Scrapping was not in Snoop's line. So his answer surprised them.

"Yes; I've had a row with Skinner."

"Scrapping with Skinner?"

"Yes."

"Which ran away first?" asked Bob humorously, and his comrades chuckled. Snoop flushed.

"I came here to speak to you, Wharton," he said abruptly.

"Go ahead," said Harry. "What about?"

"Football!"

"Football!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Do my aged ears deceive me, Snoopey, or did you say football?"

"I said football!" snarled Snoop.

"The deceptiveness of our esteemed ears must be terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, shaking his dusky head.

"Look here——"

"My dear chap," said Harry Wharton, laughing, "you mustn't mind our being surprised. Football really isn't in your line, you know. You never have anything to do with footer—except dodging games practice as often as you can."

"No reason why a fellow shouldn't take it up," said Snoop.

"Hem! No! I—I suppose not," said Wharton, puzzled. "But you haven't come here to tell me that you're going to take up footer?"

"Yes."

"Oh, my hat!"

Snoop gave a lowering glance round the study.

"I suppose I might have expected this," he sneered. "You fellows have jeered at me often enough for not playing games, and called me a slacker and a frowster, and so on. But you don't want to give me a chance."

"Oh, that's rot!" said Harry at once. "If you're going to take up something better than smoking and frowsting, I'm jolly glad to hear it, and I'll do anything I can to help."

"Well, if you mean that, give me a chance in the footer on Saturday," said Snoop.

"In the match. do you mean?"

"Yes."

"My dear man, this is rather too sudden," said the captain of the Remove, smiling. "If you're going to take up footer, I'll help you all I can; you'll have to keep to practice some time before you can expect to get a chance in a match. Talk sense, you know."

"It's not much of a match," said Snoop. "I'm not asking you to play me against St. Jim's, or Highcliffe, or Rookwood. It's only a Form match on Saturday—with the Fourth."

"That's so; but—"

"The Remove always beat Temple's lot, and you generally put in second-rate men, to give them a chance," said Snoop.

"But you're not second-rate," said Harry. "You're tenth-rate, or—"

"Or twentieth!" said Johnny Bull.

"Or hundredth," grinned Bob Cherry.

"You won't give me a chance, then?" said Snoop.

Wharton looked at him curiously.

"Suppose you explain yourself?" he suggested. "All through the term you've dodged football practice, and given me more trouble than any other fellow in the Form, rounding you up on compulsory days. Even Skinner hasn't slacked so much as you have."

"Rub it in!" said Snoop bitterly. "I'm up against it, and I don't expect any sympathy."

"Sorry," said Johnny. "I didn't mean that. But if your uncle's fed-up, you must admit that you've done your hardest to feed him up, Snoopey."

"I know I've been a fool and played the goat. But—I don't want to be taken away from Greyfriars." Snoop's voice faltered. "If he would give me another chance, I think I could do better. And he may. He's not decided yet. I believe he will be down here again by Saturday. I—I'd like to show him that—that I'm not quite the rotter he takes me for. There may be a chance for me—"

"Oh!" Wharton understood now.

"Well, I'm not going to tell you anything," he said. "You wouldn't believe it, though it happens to be true. Look here, Wharton, we have games practice to-morrow, and I'm going to turn up and do my best. I don't say I'm a keen footballer, or that I'm in great form. But I'll do the best I can. You don't run much risk playing a dud against Temple's lot on Saturday. You can put in enough good men to make sure of beating a lot of fumblerers like that crowd. Give me a chance."

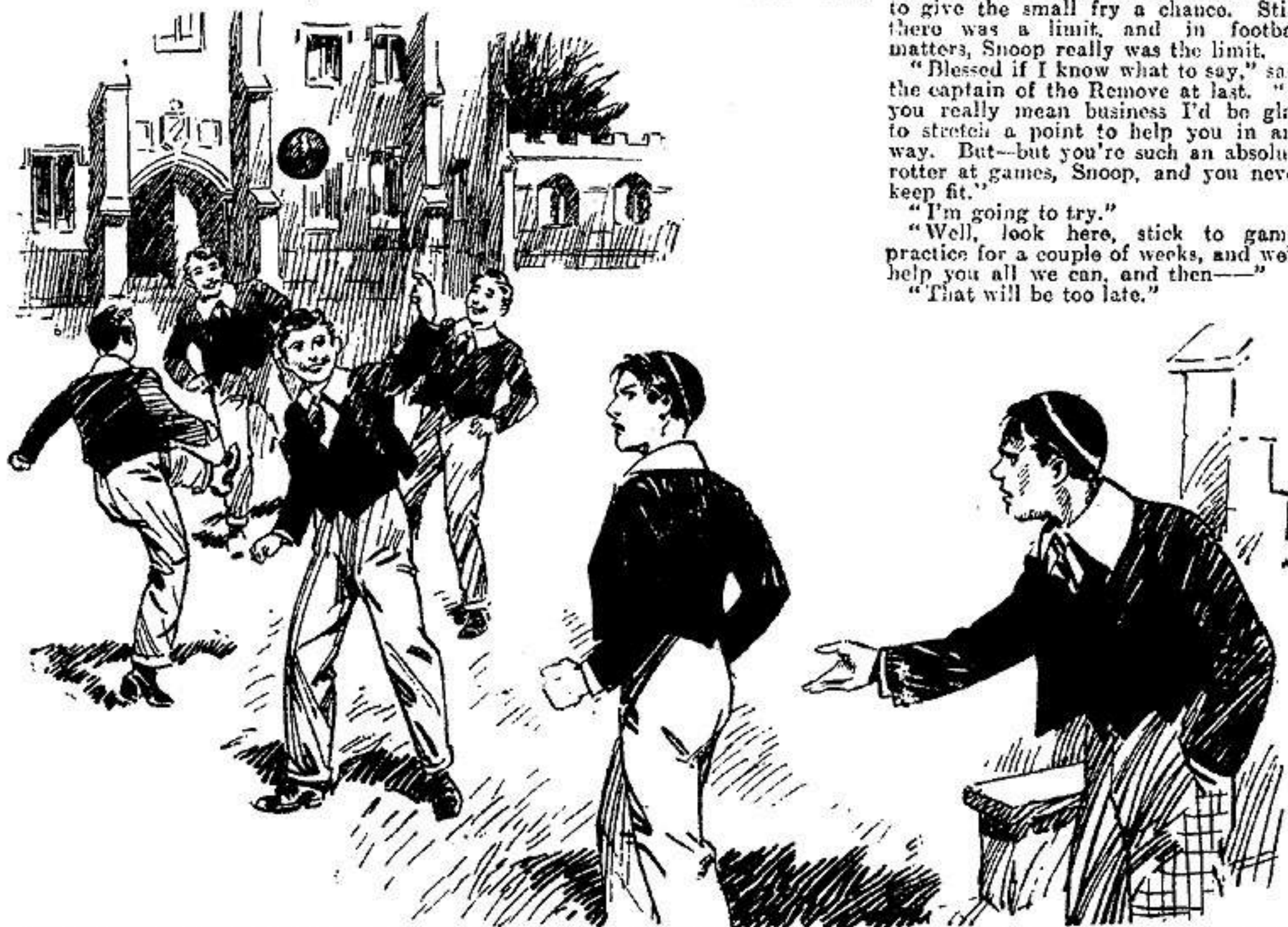
Wharton looked at him and hesitated. It was true that a football match with Cecil Reginald Temple's team was regarded, in the Remove, merely as practice, and that the mighty men generally stood out on such occasions, to give the small fry a chance. Still, there was a limit, and in football matters, Snoop really was the limit.

"Blessed if I know what to say," said the captain of the Remove at last. "If you really mean business I'd be glad to stretch a point to help you in any way. But—but you're such an absolute rotter at games, Snoop, and you never keep fit."

"I'm going to try."

"Well, look here, stick to games practice for a couple of weeks, and we'll help you all we can, and then—"

"That will be too late."



"This way, kid!" shouted Bob Cherry, waving to Snoop. "Come and help us punt this ball about." "Don't you," said Aubrey Angel. "You don't want to dig up mud with those hooligans." But Snoop had made up his mind. Turning his back on Angel, he joined the punters, leaving the dandy of the Fourth scowling. (See Chapter 11.)

Now you butt in all of a sudden and want to play in a match. We don't want to chuck away even a Form match. What are you driving at, Snoopey?"

"Why this sudden change?" asked Bob.

"I'm in a hole," said Snoop sullenly. "You fellows have always been my enemies—always been down on me. I've been Skinner's friend—well, now I've chucked Skinner, and jolly well punched him till he owned up he was licked. I want to begin afresh. My uncle—"

"O my prophetic soul, my uncle—Shakespeare!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"My uncle's going to take me away from this school!" said Snoop. "You men know that my father's in bad luck, and I'm landed on my uncle—there's no secret about it. Well, my uncle's fed-up with me—what with Quelch's bad reports, and—and other things. He thinks I'm a rotten, worthless slacker, and—"

"Nunky's a man of judgment!" said Johnny Bull. "Nunky knows something!"

"That's why you want to take up footer?"

"Yes. If old Huggins found me playing in a football match when he came, it might make a lot of difference—if he hasn't decided yet about taking me away, and I don't think he has."

"And we're to throw away a football match to set you right with your uncle!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Why, a dud like you in the team might give the Fourth a chance of beating us!"

"You see, you can't play for toffee," said Harry. "You'd funk a charge that a bunny rabbit wouldn't be afraid of—"

"I'm not such a funk as you think," said Snoop. "I could tell you something if I liked—"

He paused.

Bob Cherry laughed. "Don't tell us what a lion-hearted fellow you are!" he begged. "Don't tell us how you thirst for danger! Spare our ribs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Snoop scowled.

"Well, be reasonable, you know," urged Wharton. "A fellow will do anything he can, but a football captain has the game to think of."

"I—I know," Snoop gulped. "It was like my cheek to come here and ask you, especially as we've never been friends. Anyhow, it was only a last chance—it mightn't be any good. Wash it out!"

He turned to the door.

Had he answered with the sneering impudence that was usually to be expected from Snoop, the matter would have ended there. But his unexpected humility, and the deep gloom and miserable trouble in his face went to the heart of the captain of the Remove.

"Hold on, Snoopey!" said Wharton.

Snoop paused with his hand on the door and looked back. Harry gave his comrades an uncomfortable glance, and then looked at Snoop again.

"Give him a chance," murmured Bob Cherry. "We can beat the Fourth carrying a passenger—even Snoop."

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"Look here, Snoop," said Harry, "this is jolly sudden, and you admit it's like your cheek to ask. But look here, turn up at games practice to-morrow and we'll see. If you put up anything like a game you shall go down for the Form match on Saturday, and chance it."

Snoop's despondent face brightened. "I'll play up to-morrow like billy-oh," he said eagerly.

"Leave it at that, then," said Harry. Snoop nodded and left the study. The Famous Five looked at one another, half-smiling, and half-serious. After all, if Snoop was going to give up slacking and frowsting and blagging he was welcome into the fold. But undoubtedly it was a very big change in Sidney James Snoop, and it was exceedingly doubtful whether it would last.

"Give every man a chance," said Bob. "Anyhow, Snoopey's made a good beginning by punching Skinner—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Well, that looks as if he means business," said the captain of the Remove. "If he does, he's going to get his chance, and I hope it will set him right with his jolly old-uncle. I'm sure that Huggins would give him another chance if he believed that Snoop was trying to be decent. But—"

"But—" said Nugent. "The butfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

But at least, if Snoop meant business the chums of the Remove were ready to help him all they could, and now it was up to Snoop.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Path of Reform I

**M**R. QUELCH'S glance rested several times on Sidney James Snoop in the Form-room the following morning. Snoop observed it, and he had no doubt that his uncle had had a talk with his Form master the previous day, and that Mr. Quelch was aware of the Canadian gentleman's intentions. Snoop had intended to make a good beginning in class that morning, in the hope of interesting his Form master in his favour. But habits of slacking were not easily dropped all at once. Moreover, his scrapping with Skinner had taken up time and energy that should have been given to prep.

Snoop's construe, when the Form master called on him, was as bad as ever, or a little worse, and Snoop stammered through it dismally, while Mr. Quelch compressed his lips. But Snoop did not get the acid edge of Quelch's tongue, as he expected; for some reason the Remove master was forbearing.

Snoop thought that he could guess the reason. Quelch knew that it was Mr. Huggins' intention to take his nephew away from Greyfriars, and with the idea that Snoop had only a few days more at the school Quelch forbore to rag him.

When the Form were dismissed for break Snoop lingered behind.

Mr. Quelch, busy with papers at his desk, did not notice him for some minutes, and Snoop waited timidly, nervous of speaking, and hoping to catch his eye. Mr. Quelch looked up at last and saw him.

His gimlet eyes fixed on Snoop coldly. "Do you want anything, Snoop?" he asked.

"Ye-e-es, sir," stammered Snoop. "I—I'd like to speak to you, sir, if—if I may."

"Certainly you may," said the Remove master, though his manner was not encouraging.

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Snoop approached his desk.

"I'm afraid my uncle is thinking of taking me away from Greyfriars, sir," he blurted out, growing red.

"Indeed!"

"I—I don't want to leave, sir."

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"You have not done so well here, Snoop, that you should be eager to stay," he said. "You have wasted your time—"

"I—I know, sir! But—"

"It is a matter for your relatives to decide," said Mr. Quelch.

"I—I thought you might speak for me, sir," said Snoop humbly. "I know I haven't done well, but I'm going to do better if I get a chance. If you'd speak a word to my uncle—it depends on him—"

"How can I speak in your favour, Snoop? You are not naturally an obtuse boy, yet you are one of the most backward in the Form. It is your own fault entirely. I cannot tell Mr. Huggins that I entertain any hope of your doing better, for I entertain no such hope."

"I'm trying, sir—"

"You have not shown as much in class this morning," said Mr. Quelch. "You must have neglected your preparation as usual last evening."

"I—I—I meant to work hard, sir," said Snoop miserably. "Something happened to stop me—"

## THIS BRILLIANT GREYFRIARS LIMERICK

earns for its author one of this week's useful pocket wallets.

Two ratters, viz., Skinner and Snoop,  
Used Bunter, the Owl, as a dupe,  
But the tongue of the latter  
By unguarded chatter,  
Soon landed the pair in the soup!

Sent in by Harold W. Steff,  
167, Rockingham Road, Kettering.

The Form master's eyes dwelt for a moment on Snoop's swollen nose.

"You have been fighting," he said.

"Well, yes, sir. I—"

"You can hardly expect me to take it as a sign of reform, Snoop, that you devote the time intended for preparation to fighting," said the Remove master dryly. "I should be glad, Snoop, to intercede for you with your uncle, if I saw any just reason for doing so. But I see no such reason."

"I'm going to do better, sir," mumbled Snoop.

"When you have done better it will be time to discuss the matter," said Mr. Quelch; and he made a gesture of dismissal.

Snoop left the Form-room.

There was no hope of intercession from his Form master until he had proved that he intended to follow a new line. Snoop fully intended to do so, if he was given time. But that was the question, and it was a perturbing one. Mr. Huggins was fed up, and no more likely than Quelch to believe in promises of reform. Any day now the blow might fall. Snoop had had his opportunities and had let them pass; and opportunities once gone were not likely to recur.

He drifted out dismally into the quadrangle.

It was not easy for a fellow like Snoop to reform, and the uncertainty of the future made him inclined to abandon the struggle. It was infinitely easier to let things end.

Angel of the Fourth joined him outside the House. Skinner was keeping his distance, on the worst of terms now with his former friend. In his dismal frame of mind Snoop was glad of a friendly word from anybody, and the dandy of the Fourth, patronising as his manner was, was welcome.

"You're lookin' seedy," said Aubrey Angel, scanning him. "Nunky give you a ragging yesterday?"

Snoop nodded.

"Come along to the Cloisters and have a smoke," said Angel. "We've got time before third school."

Snoop hesitated.

Surreptitious cigarettes in a shady corner of the Cloisters were quite in Snoop's line; but not very useful in the way of reform. But Snoop's good resolutions were tottering already.

"Right-ho!" he said. "I'll come!" He had hesitated; and it is well said that he who hesitates is lost. He walked away from the House with Aubrey Angel.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled a cheery voice from a group of Removites who were punting an old footer about.

"This way, Snoopey!"

Sidney James glanced round.

Bob Cherry waved to him.

"This way, kid!" he shouted. "Come and help us punt this ball about."

Snoop hesitated again. His vacillating mind was easily influenced one way or the other.

"Come on," said Aubrey Angel. "You don't want to dig up mud with those hooligans!"

"Join up, Snoop!" called out Harry Wharton.

Snoop made up his mind. A little cheery encouragement helped him to stick to his good resolutions. He left the Fourth-Former.

"Look here, aren't you comin'?" exclaimed Angel angrily.

"No!"

And Snoop, turning his back on Angel, ran to join the punters, leaving the dandy of the Fourth scowling.

Snoop forgot all about Angel of the Fourth as he joined in the punt about. He found that he enjoyed it, too; and when he went in again he had a healthy colour in his cheeks, and a brightness in his eyes, that certainly would never have been gained by smoking cigarettes in the Cloisters.

His good resolution was firmly fixed once more. That afternoon he was one of the first fellows in the changing-room, getting ready for games practice. When Skinner loafed wearily in he found Snoop already changed, and gave him a sneering look.

"Getting keen on games, what?" jeered Skinner.

Snoop made no answer.

"Suckin' up to Wharton and his gang?" asked Skinner derisively.

Snoop looked at him.

"You've got a blue eye, Skinner," he said. "Do you want another to match?"

Skinner said no more.

Harry Wharton kept an interested eye on Sidney James Snoop during games practice. There was no doubt that Snoop was doing his best, and trying hard. He seemed to have dropped loafing and slacking and finking; and the captain of the Remove was glad to see the change.

When the juniors went back to the House, Wharton clapped him on the shoulder. Snoop was breathing very hard; but he was looking better than he had looked any time that term.

"You seem to be meaning business," said Wharton, with a smile.

"I do!" said Snoop.

"Well, all right; your name goes down for the Form match on Saturday," said Harry. "But for goodness' sake, Snoop, play up, old man, and don't let me down too frightfully."

"I'll try hard," said Snoop simply.

That evening there was a surprise for the Remove, when the list for the Form match was posted in the Rag. Fellows gathered round it, to stare at an unexpected name there—S. J. Snoop.

"Snoop playing for the Form!" said the Bounder. "Is that a joke?"

"Must be!" said Squiff. "Either a giddy jest, or Wharton's gone off his rocker!"

"Can't be serious!" said Peter Todd.

But it was serious—and Snoop, at least, read his name in the list with deep satisfaction and elation. He was on the right road; he was among the men of his Form now, instead of among the slackers and frowsters. If his uncle came down on Saturday and found him playing for his Form, it might make all the difference to him. And somehow or other he was going to make a better impression on Quelch—he was going to show his Form master that he could and would work, and put it up to him to tell Mr. Huggins so. There was a chance yet—and he was going to make the most of it.

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## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### Bob Does Some Boxing!

"**B**EASTLY rot!" growled Skinner.  
"Rotten tosh!" growled Stott.

Snoop did not contribute his opinion—which, as a rule, was in accord with that of his study-mates. That evening he was in the study to work.

He sorted out his books, and sat down to it. Stott loafed about the study, and Skinner smoked a cigarette. Neither was in a hurry to begin prep. Snoop started his work, and kept to it sedulously, his study-mates eyeing him occasionally with surprise and disapproval. Work was not popular in Study No. 11 in the Remove.

"Have a smoke, Snoopey," said Skinner at last.

"No, thanks."

"Oh, what's the good of keeping this up?" said Skinner. "We've had a row, but I suppose we're not goin' to keep at loggerheads in the study till the Christmas hols. What's the good of scowlin'?"

"I'm not scowling!"

"Well, ease up on that rot, and have a fag, and be sociable, like a pal," said Skinner.

Snoop was only too strongly tempted to ease up; it was certain that work did not appeal to him. But he shook his head.

"Prep!" he said.

"You're mighty particular about prep all of a sudden!" sneered Skinner. "Are you sucking up to Quelch, as well as to Wharton's gang?"

"Shut up while a fellow's working," said Snoop.

"Hoity-toity!" jeered Skinner. "Mustn't a fellow speak? Are you taking up swotting like that sap Linley?"

No reply.

Snoop worked on steadily. Skinner rose and yawned, and with a wink at Stott, took some boxing-gloves out of the study cupboard. He threw a pair to Stott.

Stott grinned, and donned the gloves.

Prep was a difficult business in a

study, not of large dimensions, while two fellows were boxing there. Snoop set his lips hard.

He quite understood that this new departure on his part was not liked by his study-mates. No serious work was going to be done in Study No. 11 if they could help it.

He worked on, trying to close his ears to the trampling and shuffling and exclaiming. There was a crash as Skinner backed up against the table, sending it rocking. Ink spurted from the inkpot, and Snoop's books went scattering to the floor.

"Oh! Sorry!" grinned Skinner.

Stott chuckled.

Snoop rose to his feet, his face pale and set.

"I can't work here while that's going on, Skinner," he said quietly.

"Too bad!" said Skinner sympathetically. "You're frightfully keen on work all of a sudden, ain't you?"

"Yes!" snapped Snoop.

"Too bad—because it's goin' on, you see!" grinned Skinner. "We ain't all keen on work in this study, are we, Stott?"

"Not half!" chuckled Stott.

"Go it, old bean! I'm coming for your nose!" said Skinner; and the boxing was resumed.

Skinner and Stott were far from keen on boxing, as a rule; but now they were immensely keen on it. Snoop set the table right again, and Stott crashed into it the next minute.

"Look here, you'll have to chuck that, you rotters!" exclaimed Snoop. "How's a fellow to work?"

"How's a fellow to work, Stott?" asked Skinner, with a grin.

"Ask me another!" chuckled Stott.

Snoop stood in troubled silence. Skinner and Stott rested for a time; exertion was not really in their line. But as soon as Snoop sat down to work again the boxing recommenced. The next crash on the table sent it spinning over, landing Snoop's books in the fender.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner.

Snoop clenched his hands.

"You've got to stop this, Skinner! I've jolly well licked you once, and I'll lick you again!" he shouted.

"Back up, Stott!" chuckled Skinner.

"You bet!" grinned Stott.

"Look here, let a fellow work!" muttered Snoop backing away. It was futile to enter into a scrap with the two of them.

"Swotting ain't the thing in this study," said Skinner, shaking his head. "We don't approve of it, do we, Stott?"

"No fear!" said Stott.

"You'll get into a row with Quelch to-morrow, if you don't do some prep, you two," said Snoop weakly.

"We'll chance that!"

"Well, I don't want to chance it!"

"Hard cheese, old bean—because you've got no choice in the matter."

"You rotter!" muttered Snoop.

"Chuck up swotting, and be a pal!" said Skinner. "Nobody's goin' to sack up to Quelch in this study."

Snoop stood silent for some moments, and then left the study. A roar of laughter followed him.

"I fancy we've put paid to that!" chortled Skinner.

But Sidney James Snoop was not long absent. He came back in a few minutes, not alone. To the surprise and alarm of Skinner, Bob Cherry came back into Study No. 11 with him.

"What the thump do you want here?" demanded Skinner.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"I hear there's boxing going on in this study," he said cheerily. "It's

preventing Snoopey from getting on with his prep."

"No bizney of yours."

"You see, I'm frightfully keen on boxing," explained Bob. "When there's boxing going on, I simply yearn to join in it. You fellows being so keen on it, you can't have any objection—"

"I jolly well have," said Skinner, in alarm.

"Your objection doesn't count then," said Bob coolly. "I've come here to box, and I'm going to box. I'm not going to leave off till you two fellows are tired—quite tired. Now then, put your paws up."

"I won't, you silly idiot!" snarled Skinner. "The fact is we're rather tired, and we're not boxing any more!"

"Your mistake—you are!" said Bob. "Perhaps that will help you to get started."

"That" was a tap on Skinner's nose that drew a howl from him. A thump on Stott's chest caused that youth to sit down suddenly on the carpet, with a roar.

"Now, get going," said Bob. "I've chucked prep, to box you fellows—and you can't expect to keep me waiting. Go it."

"Look here—"

"Get out!"

Bob Cherry did not get out. He had, as he said, come there to box, and he proceeded to box.

As he had no gloves on, it was a painful process to Skinner and Stott, and they were driven to self-defence.

In a few minutes the three of them were going strong, Snoop, standing in the doorway and grinning. It was his turn to grin now.

"You keep clear, Snoopey," said Bob. "I can handle these two frowsters—I shan't have to put on much steam. That's for your nose, Skinner."

"Yaroooooh!"

"That's for your chin, Stott."

"Yooooop!"

"And that's for your eye, Skinner."

"Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Snoop.

Skinner and Stott, in sheer desperation, hurled themselves on Bob Cherry, hitting their hardest. But the champion fighting-man of the Remove was too much for the two of them—much too much. There was no need for Snoop to lend aid. Bob was not in need of aid, it was Skinner and Stott who needed it.

Crash! Bump! Yell! Bump! Crash! The din in Study No. 11 rang along the Remove passage.

In five minutes, Skinner and Stott were strewn on the floor, gasping for breath, and feeling a good deal as if they had been under a garden-roller. Bob grinned down on them cheerily.

"Tired?" he asked.

"Ow! Yes! Get out, you beast."

"Sure you've had enough?"

"Ow! Yes! Clear off, you rotter!" moaned Skinner.

"Well, if you're sure you're tired of boxing, I'll get back to prep," said Bob. "But mind, if there's any more, I shall come back and take a hand. I'm frightfully keen on it, you know."

Bob Cherry tramped out of the study, and went grinning back to Study No. 1. Skinner and Stott picked themselves up.

Snoop sorted out his books again, and recommenced work. There was no more boxing in Study No. 11. There was no more ragging at all. Snoop worked peaceably till his prep was done, what time Stott and Skinner gasped, and mumbled, and rubbed their damages, which were extensive and painful. They were still gasping and mumbling when Snoop finished his work and left the study.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

## A Crushing Blow!

SATURDAY dawned bright and clear and cold. Sidney James Snoop turned out that morning in unusually good spirits.

He turned out at the first clang of the rising-bell, instead of slacking in bed till the latest possible moment. Bob Cherry was generally the first out of bed in the Remove dormitory, and it was his way to help lazy fellows out with a bolster. On this especial morning, however, Snoop did not need any help, he was out as early as Bob.

He went down with the Famous Five to take a run in the quad before brekker. At the breakfast table, where Mr. Quelch presided, the master of the Remove glanced once or twice at Snoop.

There was a healthy colour in the usually pale cheeks, a brightness in the dull eyes, an alertness in the slack movements, that were very noticeable. Even in so short a time, Snoop had improved very considerably. In class he had improved also, for a whole day Mr. Quelch had had no fault to find with him.

Mr. Quelch began to form the opinion that Snoop really was in earnest on the path of reform, and regretted that he had not taken to it a little earlier, before it was too late. That it was too late now, he had little doubt, for he was aware of Mr. Huggins' intentions.

In first school that morning, Snoop surprised his Form master once more, and surprised the Remove. His "con" was almost faultless, and showed that he must have worked. Mr. Quelch was pleased to utter some kind words of approval.

When the Remove were dismissed for break, the Form master called to Snoop. The junior came up to his desk hopefully.

"I am glad to see an improvement in you, Snoop," said Mr. Quelch. "I trust that it is intended to last."

"Oh, yes, sir," said Snoop.

Whether it would last or not, if Snoop succeeded in placating his uncle, was rather a doubtful point. But there was no doubt that Snoop, in his present mood, intended it to last.

"You could be quite a creditable member of the Form, if you chose," went on Mr. Quelch.

"I'm going to try, sir."

"In that case, I shall regret it very much if your relatives decide to take you away from Greyfriars this term."

Snoop breathed hard.

"It depends on my uncle, sir! If you'd put in a word for me, I think he might give me another chance."

"I fear that that is very doubtful, Snoop. I believe that Mr. Huggins has made up his mind on the subject."

Snoop's face fell.

"However, I shall certainly express my opinion to Mr. Huggins that you are doing better, and that you appear to have resolved to make up for lost time," said Mr. Quelch kindly. "You cannot be surprised, Snoop, that your uncle has lost patience with you. But so far as a word from me will help you, it shall not be wanting."

"Thank you, sir," mumbled Snoop.

He left the Form-room with a clouded face. He really was trying hard now, but what was the use of it, if Mr. Huggins had made up his mind? If the matter was already settled, a word from Quelch was not likely to make any difference.

"Letter for you, Snoopey," called out Bob Cherry, and Snoop went to the rack to take his letter.

His heart beat painfully as he recognised his uncle's handwriting on the

envelope. It was probable that that letter contained the decision of his fate, and Snoop hesitated to open it.

He walked away with the letter in his hand, and sought a quiet corner of the quad to open and read it.

But for many minutes he stood with the letter in his hand, unopened. He dreaded to see what it might contain. The stern, set look on Mr. Huggins' face was fresh in his mind. If Mr. Huggins was coming to see him, if he intended to give him another chance, why had he written? Snoop's heart was heavy as lead.

He opened the letter at last, desperately, and unfolded it. The colour faded from his cheeks, as he read the first few lines.

He crumpled it in his hand.

It was as he had feared—as he had expected. His attempt at reform had come too late—his promises, so often broken before, were disbelieved. He could not wonder that his uncle had lost all faith in him, but it was a crushing blow.

He read through the crumpled letter at last, with dull eyes and a heavy heart. It was brief—Mr. Huggins never wasted words. But it was very much to the point:

*"Dear Sidney,—I have considered the matter I spoke to you about on Wednesday, and consulted your father. It is obviously useless for you to remain longer at Greyfriars, where you are wasting your time and getting no good. As it has been decided to remove you from the school it will serve no purpose for you to remain till the end of the term, and as I am shortly due to return to Montreal I have no time to lose. I hope to find an opening for you, where you will have a chance of making good by steady work and application to duty. This will be your last chance so far as I am concerned, and you will be well advised to make the most of it."*

*"I am communicating with your headmaster, and I shall come down to Greyfriars on Saturday afternoon to take you away. You will be prepared to leave with me."*

*"Your affectionate uncle,*

*"J. HUGGINS."*

So it was the finish!

Snoop crammed the crumpled letter into his pocket and moved slowly away under the leafless elms. It was the finish! His belated attempt at reform had come too late—as he might have expected. The iron must be struck while it is hot, and he had let opportunity after opportunity pass. He had only himself to blame, but that reflection was no comfort to the miserable junior.

It was the finish.

He looked round as his name was called. A dozen Remove fellows were punting a ball, and it had shot away under the trees, with a cheery crowd in pursuit. Johnny Bull shouted to him.

"Send in that ball, Snoopey."

Snoop did not stir. The football shot past, and the crowd of juniors jostled past him in pursuit.

Bob Cherry caught him by the arm.

"Come on, Snoopey! Look alive, you know."

Snoop shook his arm free savagely.

"Let me alone," he muttered.

Bob gave him a stare.

"What's the row? Slacking again, old bean?"

Snoop gave a bitter laugh, and swung away. He might as well slack now, as effort was wasted. He had done his best, and there was nothing in it. He loafed away towards the House, his hands in

his pockets, his shoulders drooping, looking quite the old Snoop.

When the bell rang for third school, and the Remove trooped to their Form-room, Snoop heard the clang unheedingly. He might as well be late, he told himself bitterly. The game was up, anyhow—what was the good of taking pains that led to nothing? Perhaps, at the bottom of his heart, there was relief at having got rid of the necessity of effort. Anyhow, he was feeling bitter and wretched and hopeless, in a mood to snap at friend or foe, utterly out of sorts with himself and everybody else.

He was five minutes late for third school. The gimlet eye of Henry Samuel Quelch turned on him as he loafed into the Form-room.

"Snoop!"

"Yes, sir!" grunted Snoop.

"You are late."

"Am I?" said Snoop sullenly.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"You will take a hundred lines, Snoop! Go to your place."

Snoop almost laughed as he lounged to his place. A hundred lines did not matter much to him now, or a thousand. He would not stay at the school long enough to write them.

He was leaving—that afternoon! He had a stinging sense of injustice. It wasn't fair on a fellow who was trying his hardest! He was going to be put in some dingy office. "Steady work and application to duty" were to be his lot—according to his uncle's letter. Even for that he should have felt thankful—his unfortunate father was in no position to help him or even support him, and he had no real claim on his uncle. Lots of fellows had uncles who never even saw them, and hardly knew their names. His uncle had been as good as a father to him, and he had repaid him with ingratitude and disregard and disappointment. He had to leave Greyfriars, but in a new sphere. It was his duty to play up, to show Mr. Huggins that his kindness and care had not been wholly wasted. But Snoop was too angry and miserable to think of that.

He had to go, and when he went nobody would miss him. His friends—Skinner and Stott—precious friends for a fellow to have. Without them he would have done better. They wouldn't miss him, anyhow—they would forget his existence in a day or two, as he would forget theirs. His Form master would be glad to be relieved of a slacking, troublesome pupil. Nobody wanted him at Greyfriars—yet he passionately wanted to stay. And he had to go—he had to go!

"Snoop!" Mr. Quelch spoke for the third time. "What is the matter with you, Snoop! I have spoken to you three times."

Snoop came out of his black reverie.

"Have you?" he said sippantly.

The gimlet eyes glared at him.

"You are impertinent, Snoop."

Snoop gave him a sullen look. It was on his lips to reply with further impudence; he would have liked to "cheek" Quelch, just once, before he went. But under those gimlet eyes the "cheek" died off his tongue.

Many of the fellows were looking round at Snoop, wondering what was the matter with him.

As Mr. Quelch's irritated glance dwelt on him it softened a little. He could read the lines of trouble in Snoop's face, and probably he guessed what the trouble was. He was aware that there had been a letter for Snoop from Mr. Huggins that morning.

"You must pay attention to the lesson, Snoop," said Mr. Quelch, with a mildness that astonished the Remove.



The wood-cutter started a little, and stopped, as he came on Snoop and his uncle, standing in the path. "You, sir?" he said in surprise, turning to Snoop. "I'd have come up to the school to ask after you, only I didn't like to. I was afraid you might be ill after getting my little boy Miek out of the water." "Why, what has my nephew done?" asked Mr. Huggins. (See Chapter 15.)

After which he passed Snoop over, leaving him to his own black reflections. Snoop was hardly conscious of third lesson; he could hardly have said afterwards what it was all about. But he was glad when it was over, and he could escape from the Form-room.

In the passage Harry Wharton tapped him on the shoulder.

"Feeling fit, old bean?" he asked.

"Fit!" repeated Snoop, staring at him.

"Football this afternoon, you know."

"Football!"

Snoop had forgotten all about the Form match, in which he had been so eager to play. He laughed harshly.

"Kick-off at three," said Harry cheerily; and he hurried on to rejoin his friends.

Snoop laughed again.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked in vain for Snoop, when the Remove men went down to Little Side to play the Fourth that afternoon.

"Where's Snoop?" a dozen fellows were asking.

"The silly ass!" said Wharton wrathfully. "He badgered us to let him play, and now he hasn't turned up. Where is the silly fathead?"

"O where and O where can he be?" grinned the Bounder. "Gone blagging after all, most likely."

"Some of you men look for him," said Harry.

Snoop was looked for, but he was not found. It was from Billy Bunter that news of him was heard at last. Bunter had seen him going out of gates immediately after dinner. Bunter stated that he had asked him whether he was playing footer that afternoon, and that Snoop had told him to go and eat coke. Puzzled and considerably angry,

Wharton scratched Snoop from the team. It was no loss to the Remove—it was easy enough to find a better man to take his place. The Form match proceeded without Sidney James Snoop; and Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth received their usual licking from the Remove. After the match some of the fellows looked for Snoop again, to tell him what they thought of him. But still Snoop was not to be found. Skinner and Stott were within gates, so it was evident that he had not made it up with his old associates and gone out with them. Where he was, and why, was a mystery.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Something in Snoop!

**S**IDNEY JAMES SNOOP was thinking of anything but football that afternoon.

He had forgotten the Form match till Wharton reminded him of it, and a few minutes later he had forgotten it again.

After dinner he went down to the gates, chiefly anxious to get away from the other fellows, in his miserable and troubled frame of mind.

He was glad to find himself alone in the lanes, if only to indulge his black and bitter reflections without interruption.

That day he was to leave Greyfriars. He turned into the wood, where the solitude was soothing in his present dreary mood. At the back of his mind was a thought that his uncle might yet relent, and for that reason he wandered on the footpath, by which Mr. Huggins had come on the last occasion, and by which Snoop expected him to come to-day. He had a vague idea of making

some final appeal to Mr. Huggins, of begging for one more chance.

But even while the thought lingered in his mind he knew that it was hopeless.

How long he wandered dimly about the footpath he hardly knew, but at length the silence was broken by a footstep, and his heart beat painfully as he looked up and saw the tall, athletic figure of Mr. Huggins in the distance.

The Canadian gentleman came on with his rapid stride, not at first noticing the white-faced schoolboy in the shadow of the trees.

But as he perceived him he stopped.

"Sidney!" he said.

His voice was quite kind, and there was no frown on his rugged, bronzed face. Snoop felt a faint hope rise in his breast. After all, the big man from Canada was fond of his sister, and his sister's son. There might be a chance yet.

"I—I came to meet you, uncle," faltered Snoop.

"Very well; you may walk to the school with me," said Mr. Huggins. His keen eyes searched the pale, troubled face of his nephew. "Was my letter a blow to you, Sidney?"

"Yes," breathed Snoop.

"You must have expected it, surely."

"I—I suppose so."

"I am sorry if you do not like the idea of leaving," said Mr. Huggins. "But it is for your own good, my boy. You will see yourself that it is useless for you to waste further time—"

Snoop gulped.

"I—I was making a fresh start," he muttered. "My Form master hasn't ragged me the last day or two. I—I"

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was down to play in a football match this afternoon—"

"You do not seem to be playing, however," said Mr. Huggins, with a faint inflection of sarcasm in his voice.

"I—I hadn't the heart, after—"

Snoop faltered, and was silent.

Mr. Huggins stood silent for some moments, scanning him. Snoop waited, hoping for the best. But the Canadian gentleman shook his head.

"There is nothing doing, Sidney," he said. "I have fully considered the matter, and your father concurs. Have you made your preparations for leaving the school with me this afternoon?"

"N-n-no."

Mr. Huggins frowned.

"You should have done so, Sidney, as I directed you."

"I—I hoped—" mumbled Snoop.

"That is childish," said Mr. Huggins severely. "You have left me no choice but to take the course I have taken, Sidney; and it has been very painful to me to take it. I hoped against hope that you would make good at the school—that even if you could not obtain distinction in any way, you would at least turn out a decent average lad. Have you done so?"

Snoop was miserably silent.

"Can you point to a single action you have ever done that reflects credit on you?" said Mr. Huggins. "Can you point out any exception to the rule of laziness, dilatoriness, slacking, frowsting, mean and blackguardly conduct? You cannot. And I am ashamed to say that if you could I could not believe your word without corroborative evidence."

"You're hard on me," mumbled Snoop.

"I don't think so—and your father does not think so. I think I have been very patient," said Mr. Huggins. "In fact, you are yourself aware that I have treated you with a patience and forbearance that you have not deserved, Sidney."

"Well, I suppose you have," mumbled Snoop. "I—I suppose it can't be helped. I've got to go. I meant to do better, but I suppose I can't expect you to give me a chance, after letting you down before. I shall have to stand it somehow."

Mr. Huggins looked sharply at him, at the white face glimmering through the November dusk that was falling on the wood. For a moment indecision seemed to come into his firm look.

"If I could believe that there was anything in you—anything that was not weak, and vicious, and cowardly, and self-indulgent—" he said.

Snoop winced.

"If that's what you think of me—" he muttered.

"What else do you expect me to think of you?"

Snoop was silent.

"Come," said Mr. Huggins, "this is painful, and it serves no purpose. Let us go on to the school."

A figure came along the path from the direction where the wood had been cut—the spot where Skinner & Co. had sat to play cards a few days ago. A burly figure, with an axe on his shoulder, tramping homeward in the dusk after a day's labour.

The woodcutter started a little and stopped as he came on the two, uncle and nephew, standing in the path.

He turned to Snoop at once.

"You, sir?" he said.

Snoop glanced at him carelessly. Then he, too, started, as he recognised Jarvis. He nodded.

"I'd have come up to the school, sir, to ask after you, only, I didn't like

to, somehow, sir," said Jarvis. "But I hope you was all right, sir, after the ducking. I—I thought you was very pale, sir, when you left my cottage, and I was thinking about you a lot, sir, if you'll excuse me."

"I'm all right," said Snoop.

"I was afraid you might be ill. And you ain't looking very well to-day, sir," said Jarvis, eyeing him. "But you'll be glad to hear that the kid is all right, sir—never turned a hair afterwards. I wish you'd come along to my cottage, Mr. Snoop, some day, when you've got time, for the missus to thank you for what you did. She was that upset, sir, getting back too late to see you that day."

"What does this mean, Sidney?" asked Mr. Huggins, who had listened to the woodcutter in growing astonishment. "For what are you thanking my nephew, my man?"

Jarvis touched his hat to the Canadian gentleman.

"Your nephew, sir?"

"Yes."

"You will excuse my speaking to him, sir, but I haven't seen the young gentleman since he got my little boy, Mick, out of the water—"

Mr. Huggins stared at Jarvis, and stared at Snoop. The colour flushed into Sidney's face.

"What is this?" asked Mr. Huggins.

"Tell me what my nephew has done."

"Certainly, sir!" answered Jarvis.

"And you'll be proud of him when you're told, sir."

"Proud of him?" repeated Mr. Huggins.

It had never crossed his mind, hitherto, that he might ever be proud of his nephew, Sidney James.

"I'd be proud of a boy like that, sir, if he was my nephew," said the woodcutter. "It's a mercy that he's still alive, sir. If I hadn't come back in my boat just when he was being swept away into the river, with Mick in his arms—"

"Tell me what the boy has done?" interrupted Mr. Huggins sharply.

The woodcutter proceeded to describe the rescue of Mick. Snoop stood silent, with crimson in his cheeks. He did not look at his uncle; but he felt Mr. Huggins' eyes searching his flushed face.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Huggins, when the woodcutter had concluded. "Was that how you were engaged last Wednesday afternoon, Sidney, while I was waiting for you at Greyfriars?"

"Yes, but—" Something drove Snoop to frankness. "But I was with Skinner before that. I—I left them when I was tipped that you were coming up the path, and—and afterwards I saw the kid—"

"You risked your life to save a child!" said Mr. Huggins, as if he could scarcely credit his own words. "Why did you not tell me?"

Snoop made no answer. But Mr. Huggins did not need an answer; he knew that, had Snoop told him, he would not have believed a word of it, as he would have been fully justified in not believing a word of it. He remembered how Snoop had tried to speak, and he had cut him short.

The bronzed face softened.

"I am glad that I have learned this," said Mr. Huggins quietly. "It gives me hope of you, Sidney. My good man, I should like to walk to your cottage with my nephew, and see the little boy—if you have no objection to—"

"You're more than welcome, sir," said Jarvis, "and the missus will be fair glad to see the young gentleman and thank him for what he did. It's

been on her mind that she ain't done so, sir."

Mr. Huggins did not speak a word during the short walk to the woodcutter's cottage. There, if any doubt had lingered in his mind, it was speedily banished, as the woodcutter's "missus," on hearing who Snoop was, overwhelmed the rather embarrassed junior with thanks and gratitude—little Mick staring on at the scene with round eyes.

After leaving the woodcutter's cottage, Mr. Huggins was again silent as he walked to the school with his nephew. It was dark now, and Snoop, stealing a glance occasionally at the tall man's face as he walked by his side, could only see there a thoughtful frown.

Greyfriars was in sight when Mr. Huggins broke his long silence.

"Sidney! I am surprised—but I need not say how glad I am that I have learned of this—learned that you have the makings of a man in you. I said that if you could point to a single action reflecting credit on you I would give you another chance. I am a man of my word."

Snoop's heart beat faster.

"If I judged you too harshly, I am sorry!" said Mr. Huggins. "Sidney, when I go back to Canada I shall leave you at Greyfriars—and hope for the best. A boy who had done what you have done has good stuff in him—and I shall hope that you will make good."

"I'm going to try!" said Snoop earnestly; and he meant what he said.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked rather grimly at Snoop when he came into the Rag that evening. Snoop came in with a bright face, looking as if he was walking on air. He came over to the Co., smiling.

"How did the match go?" he asked.

"Have you remembered after all that there was a football match?" asked Bob Cherry, with withering sarcasm.

"I don't suppose you missed me much," said Snoop.

"Not at all," said Wharton politely.

"The missfulness was not terrific, my esteemed Snoop."

"I'm sorry I cut it—but—I was expecting to be taken away from Greyfriars to-day, and—and—"

"Oh!" said Wharton. "So bad as that?"

"Yes. Only my uncle's giving me another chance," said Snoop, "and—and if you'll do the same, Wharton, I'm going to stick to footer, and—and play up all round the best I can. I'm not much use, I suppose," added Snoop ruefully, "but a fellow can only do his best."

"Stick to that, and you'll be all right, old bean!" said Bob Cherry.

"I mean to," said Snoop.

"Let the esteemed stickfulness be terrific and the successfulness will be preposterous," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is never too late to mend the cracked pitcher that saves a stitch in time."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Bob.

And Snoop grinned, and declared that the stickfulness should be terrific. And the chums of the Remove charitably hoped that it would last.

THE END.

(Be sure you read next week's topping tale of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, entitled: "SIX IN THE SOUP!" You'll enjoy every line of it. Your newsagent will reserve you a copy if you ask him.)

# PETER FRAZER— IRONMASTER!

By JOHN BREARLEY.

(Introduction on next page.)



"The college kid!" That is what the burly workmen of Frazer's Foundry call their youthful master. But Peter soon shows them that he is quite capable of looking after himself—and the interest of his newly-acquired property as well!

## The Strike I

**A**S Peter Frazer, accompanied by his manager, Mr. Dimmock, walked in through the vast arched doorway of Frazer's Iron Foundry, the dull roar of the place met the young master with full force.

For five minutes Peter could only stare and blink. The crashing, rattling pandemonium, the suffocating heat and sudden blinding glare as one of the great furnaces yawned for a second, made his head spin. Dimly the boy made out blackened men working in tattered vests and aprons, gleaming, sweating faces and knotted fists gripping black hammers and tongs.

Moller, muscular body set off by stained dungarees, came up with the silent unexpectedness that seemed characteristic of the man, and beckoned him in.

Peter followed through the clamour to where men toiled in groups at small sheet mills or shone redly near the furnaces. Gradually the maelstrom began to take shape as Moller pointed here and there.

The main body of the foundry—"a small one, my only aunt!" muttered Peter—was a vast hall, its ceiling lost in smoke grime, its brick walls coated with dirt. Furnaces roared down one side, and rolling-mills crashed as the men rushed the hissing, wax-like metal between the rollers with a skilful hike and pull.

Half-way down the other wall another

high archway led to a second but smaller hall. From where he stood Peter could see men working round a huge bath.

"Yon's the galvanising rooms and plant, sir," drawled Moller, close to his ear. "Most of our work's galvanising-sheets. We run 'em through acid in that and wash 'em in the sheds beyond."

Peter nodded dumbly.

"Suppose I'll get the hang of it one day," he grinned ruefully to himself. "But—"

The force of Mr. Dimmock's remarks about skilled iron-men began to strike him forcibly. He felt uncomfortably insignificant, and not quite so confident amid all this gigantic bustle.

Mr. Dimmock joined them, and at that moment a man by one of the rolling-mills, straightening his back leisurely, caught sight of the group over his shoulder—and stiffened.

A minute later Moller turned to point out something else, and, looking past him, Peter saw that a knot of men round a mill had stopped work and were staring at him in silence. Their hammers and tongs lay at their feet, and their arms hung loosely. Some were half-crouched where interest had fixed them.

A half-frown of wonder dawned on Peter's face. For they stared at him unmistakably, through the heat-laden air, with leering, hostile contempt.

The man who had spotted him first alone stood fully erect and grinning. He was a tall man, sparely built, with

flaming hair, piggy eyes, and the jutting nose and jaw of a leader. As Peter caught his eye he drove his thumbs into his belt and laughed again contemptuously.

Peter went suddenly scarlet with rage at the insult, his black hair bristling, grey eyes snapping. He heard a sudden cry from Mr. Dimmock, felt Moller's iron grip flash to his shoulder, his muttered warning:

"Granger's gang!"

Then the red-haired Granger, his face alight with vicious mischief, raised his voice amid a roar of derisive laughter.

"Boys, 'tis t' college kid at last! Three cheers for t' schoolboy master!"

Back in the small, stuffy adjoining office of the foundry again Peter Frazer faced his manager with a grim look. He had dismissed the clerks, and Moller, having helped to lead him there, had hurried back into the works forthwith.

The young ironmaster was still shaking with anger, and the look in his grey eyes told how hard he was fighting to keep his temper.

"I suppose you acted for the best, Mr. Dimmock," he said slowly, at last: and the manager bowed his head silently. "But, by heaven, to climb down like that and then have me dragged—dragged away!—before the men—why"—his face burned again—"it was madness! What chance have I now of

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any authority? You've beaten me yourself before I start! Either that chap must go, or I must!"

At memory of the laughing, jeering foundrymen, as Dimmock and Moller hauled him out of the foundry, his hands clenched and he swung away fiercely. Mr. Dimmock lifted an imploring hand.

"That's just it, Peter!" he cried. "I know you're hurt—but consider. If Granger goes—the others go, too! He and his gang will see to that! They rule the men here, don't you see; even if some wanted to stay Granger would force them to leave. And we simply must keep going! Besides, I couldn't stand by and see you tackle Granger!"

That was the worst remark he could possibly have made, and Peter turned on him in a flash.

"Tackle him!" he blazed. "Why, I'll smash him! Don't treat me like a child, Mr. Dimmock—or a schoolboy!" he added bitterly. "I can take care of myself, and Granger's going out of Frazer's to-day—on his neck if he likes! And his pals with him!"

Mr. Dimmock's eyes opened wide in dismay. There came a faint click behind them, and Moller stood in the doorway. His long face was as dour as ever, but his eyes gleamed deeply at Peter's flushed face.

"Well!"

The engineer shook his head.

"It isn't, sir," he said dryly. "I'm afraid what happened just now's torn it. The lads are out of hand!" His eyes turned significantly to Mr. Dimmock's lined face. "There's dog-racing in the city to-day!"

With a groan the manager slumped heavily in his chair.

"Ye'll get no more work after two to-day, sir—I'm tellin' ye," said Moller. There was a silence, then:

"So what'll we do, sir?" asked Moller quietly.

Peter glared from one man to the other, and gradually his anger died away. Here was an obstacle demanding swift thought and action! Here was his chance to act—to show what he could do! Turning to the window he stared out at the great smoke stacks, and when he swung round there was a shrewd light in his eyes, and the beginnings of a grin on his lips.

The two men saw that grin, and they stared at him.

"Do nothing," said Peter abruptly, and walked out, leaving two astonished men looking after him helplessly.

At precisely two o'clock that day Granger, the leader of Frazer's foundrymen, stopped work and blew mightily on a whistle. The sound carried shrilly above the clang of work around him, whereat the work ceased.

Other whistles blew. Five minutes later, boisterous, reckless, caring nought for the loss the stoppage would cause, the men and boys of the foundry poured out into the yard.

Moller, his face inscrutable, watched them go. This was a special gesture of defiance, got up for the schoolboy master, and he knew better than to try and stop them.

Not so Mr. Dimmock, however. The manager rushed gallantly up to Granger, imploring him frantically to get the men back. Of Peter Frazer, the new master, there was no sign.

Granger, grinning derisively, shook the manager off carelessly and swaggered on, the men clustering at his heels. He gave the signal to start.

With a cheer they started forward and crossed the yard, and turned the angle of the foundry to where the tiny bridge

crossed the mill stream. Beyond the stream the big, wide gates stood open.

On the bridge, leaning casually against a post, was the schoolboy master of Frazer's!

He was lightly clad in shirt and trousers, and there was a genial smile on his face as he regarded his approaching workmen.

From his hands dangled two pairs of shiny brown boxing-gloves!

The mob stopped, and heads were lowered like puzzled bulls. If Peter had held a club, a firehose, or a fistful of bricks, they would have rushed him on the instant. But gloves—boxing-gloves—hanging idly from his hands! It intrigued them—it did more, it puzzled them.

Only Granger advanced out of the crowd. His head bent, and shoulders hitched truculently, he strode forward.

"Well!" he growled, as he came up to the young ironmaster.

Behind him his gang hustled to the van.

"Nosh him, Ted! Hoik him in t' ditch!" came a cry.

Peter's smile vanished. He flung up his hand.

"Halt!" he ordered, so sharply that Granger himself stepped back a pace. Peter stood away from the post, and straightened himself. "Men!" he cried, in ringing, forceful tones. "I'm asking you not to leave here to-day! The works cannot afford it!"

For answer came an ominous growl.

"If any man advances one more step——" began Peter slowly.

At the implied threat Granger, the leader, exploded suddenly.

"Well," he raved, waving his fists, coarse face scarlet with rage, "an' what'll you do?"

The crowd tensed itself.

"Bunk!" answered Peter, simply and sweetly.

And as they fell back in gaping, dumb surprise, he smiled at them, a wide, cheerful grin.

Some of the men, caught suddenly by its infection, laughed hoarsely. Quickly Peter followed up his advantage.

"My dear chaps," he drawled, "I haven't the least intention of trying to stop you! I couldn't, anyway." He stepped forward coolly right into their midst. "Neither can I afford to let you cheat me of four hours' work! Listen, now! You want some sport—I'll make you all a sporting offer! Give

#### INTRODUCTION.

*Head and sole owner of Frazer's Iron Foundry! It is a strange prospect that lies before Peter Frazer, a youngster of eighteen, when he arrives in the squalid industrial city of Maxport late one night to take over the great business left to him in his dead uncle's will. Without thought of danger, Peter hires an ancient hansom cab to take him from the station to Manston, the house that is to be his future home. The lad's first inkling of the forces working against him comes when he is kidnapped and taken to a ship anchored in the estuary of the River Maxwell. There he learns that he is to be taken to sea—never to return, and the only clue to the identity of his unknown enemy that he discovers is that the man is completely bald with a great scar running across the top of his head. Peter manages to escape from the ship, and later he learns from Mr. Dimmock, his manager, that he must have fallen into the hands of the same gang that have long been working to ruin Frazer's Foundry. Before long, it seems, they will have gained their object, but Peter is determined to fight them tooth and nail. On the morning that he is to make his first visit to the foundry, the youngster feels a queer thrill of excitement. He is going to see his works—the foundry he has made a vow to fight for and save!*

(Now read on.)

up your racing and I'll offer you half-an-hour's fun!"

He held his hands up high. "Here's the gloves! Yonder's a good field. Send your best man out round about twelve stone and I'll fight him! If I'm licked—you go racing; if not, then back to work!"

Granger stuck his heavy face close. The men were clearly wavering before the master's bold front.

"You cockerel——" he rasped; and got no further.

Peter, setting a hand deliberately on the man's chest, sent him flying into the arms of the crowd. He hung there, cursing, but something in Peter's eyes steadied him. Heaving himself out of his mates' hands, Granger turned and faced the spellbound foundrymen.

"Lads," he bawled, "it's a bargain! In five minutes I knocks this cockerel's head off—then we go to t' dogs!"

With a single evil glance out of his bloodshot eyes he strode into the crowd and thrust through them.

They followed to a man, back through the foundry yard and on to the old football field.

Peter, swinging his gloves, sauntered after them. His lips were set in a tight, pleasant smile. This, he thought, was a chance with a vengeance!

If he licked Granger—and he was sure he had a little surprise or two waiting for him—it would be a great start in the battle.

So Granger must be licked!

Moller loomed up alongside. Somehow this man always seemed to be there at the right moment.

"Careful, sir!" he growled. "He's a scrapper—and dangerous."

"Come and give me a knee!" was Peter's answer.

At that moment Mr. Dimmock dashed up, but Peter waved him aside gently and strolled on.

By the time he reached the field a big ring had been formed in the middle. As he pushed through, some of the men gave him an ironic cheer.

He tossed a pair of the gloves to Granger and noted the man had taken off his boots. Sitting quietly on Moller's knee, he did the same.

At last the ring was cleared and held. A stocky little puddler, huge silver watch in hand, referee and timekeeper, too, glanced at the two opponents.

"Are ye ready?" he growled.

They nodded.

"Then time!"

#### A Shock for the Gang!

**A** MID an uproar of cheers, laughter, and catcalls, Granger, evil mouth confidently agrin, chin tucked in, and arms held low, slid out of his corner—and the despised "collego kid" met him like a whirlwind!

At the call of "Time!" he had left Moller's knee before the engineer had realised it, and the next instant the fight was on!

Peter's tigerish rush carried him slap into his heavier opponent. It was too swift for him to side-step, and it rocked him back on his heels. There came a blur of muscular forearms, then, like a lightning flash, Peter's left streaked through the other's guard, and Granger dropped stiffly to the grass!

The men in the ring gave a cracked bellow of surprise, and then stood transfixed.

Peter, hands ready, stood back from his opponent, who, with murder in his



"You cockerel——" cried Granger. He got no further, however, for Peter, setting a hand deliberately on the man's chest, sent him flying backwards in the arms of his cronies. (See page 26.)

little eyes, began slowly to pick himself up.

A voice from the crowd came sharply: "Don't wait, young 'un!"—but he could have saved his advice.

There was no mercy in Peter's heart—he was fighting for too great a stake! The second the burly red-head was up-right he was at him again in a head-long, irresistible dive.

Granger's face was a study of evil and dismay as it emerged from the flurry of blows. Never before had he encountered such a mad opponent or such a lightning left.

With iron arms and bunting shoulders he strove to fight this wild fury off and win breathing space; but ever Peter was on him, over and through his guard, the whistling, driving left punching holes in Granger's defence from all angles.

Peter had never fought like this before. The ganger's blows were heavy, and he was already battered, but drive and slam, duck, counter and lead, and always follow up, left after left shooting into the distorted furious face, and twisting gasping body before him.

Granger could not time his young opponent at all. The ganger sent a right and left to the body that at last knocked Peter backwards, but even as he lurched in to follow up, the lad, back on his heels, stopped him dead with a smashing left between the eyes, and amid a yelling, rolling roar from the crowd socked home a swinging right to the jaw.

For the second time Granger went down heavily.

"Time!"

There was fury and pandemonium in the crowd. Granger's gang dragged their panting leader to his corner, and while they tended him, they glared round, slit-eyed and vicious.

For mutiny was springing up before them, plain as a pikestaff.

Granger's gang had ruled the foundry-men with iron hands for over two years, and now that their leader lay battered

and nearly beaten, their rule was wobbling.

Already several of the foundrymen around were looking eagerly to where the young master sat composedly on Moller's knee, and though their cheers were in the minority there was nothing ironic about them now.

So hearty indeed was one man that suddenly, in the middle of rubbing Granger's arms, "Spider" Higgins, his lieutenant, started up with a snarl and crashed his fist into the man's face.

His fierce eyes swept round as the man dropped back, but they met stares just as hard. He snarled again and bent down to his work.

"Time!"

They pushed Granger into the ring this time, and Peter, following his bull-like tactics, met him breast to breast. Fierce grey eyes stared into blue ones over the barrier of brown gloves. They strove for a second, Granger bearing down his opponent's arms by sheer strength in the clinch, and his huge right fist slid low into Peter's ribs.

But the youngster's footwork was too good! He stepped backwards, coolly drew his opponent's left, slipped it prettily and landed one, two heavy blows to the face.

Then a tornado of flashing lefts, and the ganger was on the retreat again, gasping, sobbing for breath, with Peter all over him, the left hand never idle, blocking eyes, nose and mouth, and with it now the persistent dig, dig of stiff propping rights to the body.

Granger was beaten. It came suddenly to Peter that his opponent was crumpling.

Mercilessly he crowded on all steam, tingling from shoulder to toe as his blows drove home steadily, seeming to get faster every time. He was winning!

His left leads, as they shot through Granger's faltering guard, were just blurs of brown forearm. One of the steady grey eyes was closed, and his face was badly bruised. But he was cleanly on top.

Round the ring they went, faster and wilder, and louder and wilder grew the roars of the men. Some of them now were cheering solidly for the young master.

Granger's men were pale and silent, glancing around like trapped wolves as their leader reeled to defeat, and when Peter had caught his man in a corner the foundrymen were beside themselves.

Then, having fought his enemy to a complete and groggy standstill, Peter slammed in a mighty right, and down went Granger on his face.

The men were now out of hand, and only excitement made them keep the ring. To Peter, as he watched his crumpled foreman, the scene was horrible—hoarse, raving men and boys cheering him or hissing according to their side.

Dimly he heard the referee counting, and suddenly Granger was on his feet again and wobbling towards him.

A gleam of admiration for the man came into the young ironmaster's one remaining eye, and he half dropped his hands.

There came a sharp warning from the crowd again, and Granger lurched forward swiftly. Using all his remaining strength, he let fly in one terrific kick!

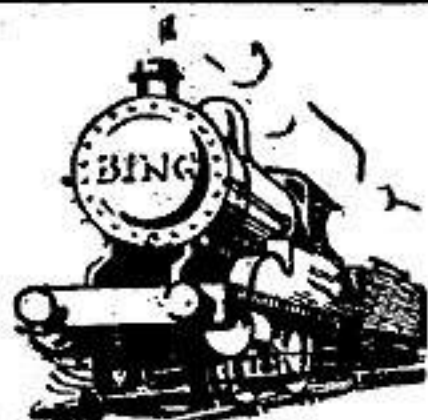
What he hoped to do with a stockinged foot Peter didn't wait to inquire. Blind with anger, he curtsied quickly and received Granger's shin on two iron knees.

A yell of pain burst from the man's lips, and stopped with a final jerk as Peter's right starting from far below his waist, swept upwards in a swishing arc and slammed into his upturned jaw.

The fight was over!

(Round one of Peter Fraser's fight to save his foundry has finished—with Peter on top! But he's not succeeded in his purpose yet by any means. Look out, then, for another thrilling instalment of this powerful serial next week—it'll grip you no end!)

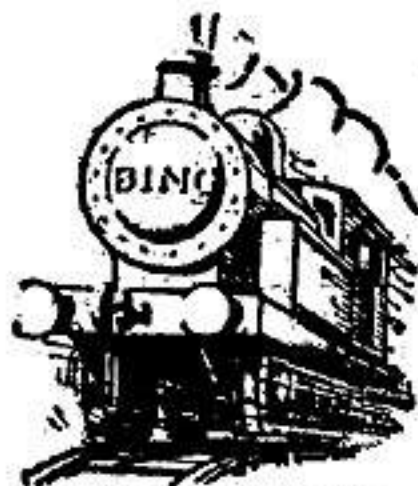
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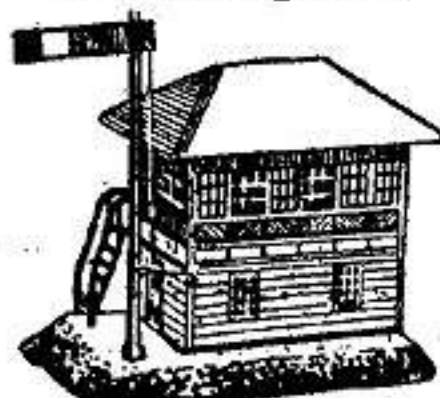
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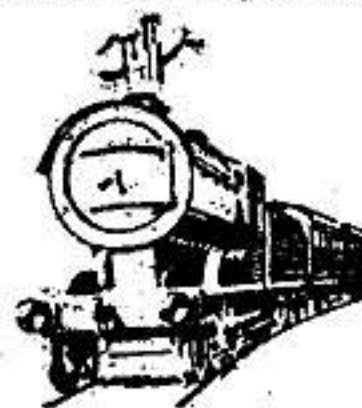
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"WHEREFORE, the worried frown, ma'am?" Jack Jolly of the Fourth addressed that kind inquiry to Dame Grubbe, who kept the skool tuckshop at St. Sam's.

There was some egginess for our hero's question. Dame Grubbe's face was usually beaming like a fool moon.

Natchurally, she could afford to beam, with unlimited tuck in front of her all day. But on this occasion, something seemed to be troubling the good dame.

A slyly worried eggexpression was hovering round her die, while her brow was nitted and rinkled with thought.

She jumped violently when she heard Jack Jolly's question.

"Dearie me, Master Jolly! I'm sure I didn't mean to show my feelings on my face!" she eggclaimed. "But I must admit I'm worried, and I'll tell you for why. In the first place, I'm going for a holiday."

"A holiday?" cooressed Jack Jolly & Co., in surprise.

"Eggactly!" The tuckshop dame smiled. "I suppose you're thinking it's late to go holiday-making. But there's no cause for surprise. As a matter of fact, I am visiting a warmer climate."

"Going mountaineering, ma'am?" asked Merry, who was sometimes a bit dense.

"Of course not, Master Merry! What ever made you think of such a thing?" "Well, you mentioned something about a warmer climate, didn't you?" asked Merry innocently. And the rest fairly roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm afraid you've got the wrong end of the stick, Master Merry. What I meant was that I am going abroad to a warmer climate. Doctor Dopewell has been treating me for a severe attack of the jim-jams, and now he has ordered me abroad. So I am going to take a brief trip to the French Riviera. See?"

"Yes, rather?" cooressed the Co.

Dame Grubbe looked serious again. "The only thing that worries me is,

"Who will manidge the shop while I'm away?" she said. "I've been looking round for a respectable, honest person, but they're few and far between nowadays. I'm afraid. Hence my worried frown."

"Good-morning, ma'am!"

"That polite greeting from the doorway interrupted the proceedings just then. The juniors reekertised immediately the refined, cultured accents of Dr. Birchmell, the headmaster of St. Sam's. Turning round, they saw him barge his way into the tuckshop, grinning all over his die.

"Did I hear you say you are going to the Riviera for a holiday, Mrs. Grubbe?" he asked.

"Right on the wicket, sir!" answered the tuckshop dame, dropping a cursey.

Dr. Birchmell thought deeply for a minute. Then he looked up with a very cunning eggpression on his fiz.

"I believe you mentioned that you were looking for somebody to manidge the shop during your absence," he said.

"Mrs. Grubbe, I think I can help you in this little matter."

"Indeed, sir! It will be a grate wait off my mind if you can," said Dame Grubbe, dropping another cursey. "Do you mean you can recommend somebody?"

"I do—I does!" grinned the Head. "Now, ma'am, the person I have in mind is a gentleman. I don't think, however, that that ought to count against him, for from what I know of him he is just the man for the job."

Dame Grubbe looked interested. "Have you known him long, sir?" she asked.

"All my life!"

"And is he honest?"

"Almost too honest for this wicked world!" answered Dr. Birchmell, with a sad shake of his head. "Furthermore, he is a keen man of business, with a profound nollidge of tuck and a wonderful personality."

"Dearie me! This sounds almost too good to be true!" eggclaimed the tuckshop dame. "Can you bring this gentleman along to speak to me, sir?"

The Head smiled.

"There is no need to do that, ma'am. He is speaking to you at present."

Dame Grubbe fairly jumped.

"Then—then you mean—"

"I mean myself. Eggactly!" assented the Head, with a nod. "The remarkable gentleman is none other than Alfred Birchmell."

"Oh, my hat!" grinned Jack Jolly & Co.

Dame Grubbe looked almost dazed. "But—but you're the headmaster! And a headmaster can't be the tuckshop dame, too!"

"Can't he?" That's all you know about it!" grinned Dr. Birchmell. "As a matter of fact, I think I shall make an eggcellent tuckshop dame. I have an intimate nollidge of the toffy and clockit market. And what I don't know about doonuts isn't worth knowing. I assure you!"

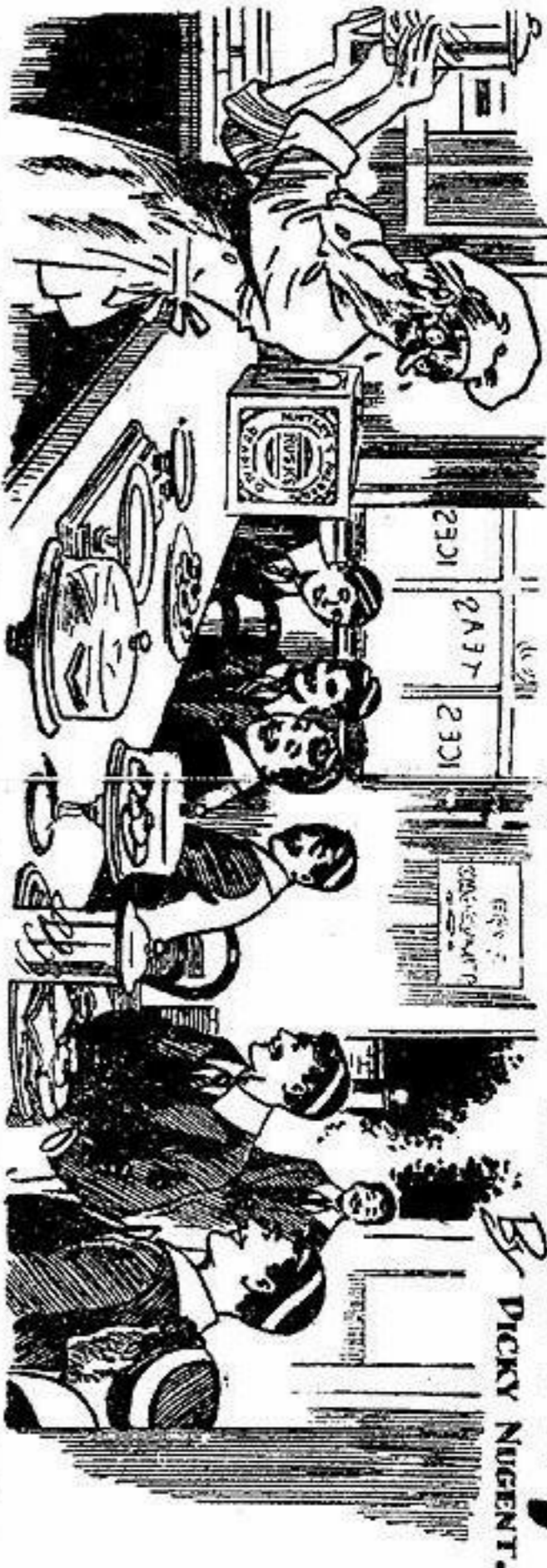
"Are you really serious, sir?"

"I was never more serious since Lickham upset a pan of boiling eggess over my nappet last Pancake Day!" said the Head, solemnly.

Dame Grubbe breathed a sigh of relief. "Well, it's very kind of you, sir."

# DR. BIRCHEMELL'S TUCKSHOP!

DICKY NUGENT.



Can you imagine such a majestic person as Dr. Birchmell, the Head of St. Sam's, standing behind a counter, attired in a chef's hat and white overalls, dishing up doughnuts, carving currant cake, and serving out sausage rolls? Such is the unexpected that happens this week.

Under the circumstances I am very pleased to appoint you tuckshop dame during my absence. There's just the trifling question of terms—"

"Terms?" said the Head, his grin fading away suddenly.

"I shall want you to pay me ten shillings a week out of the prophets, sir; and to begin with, I shall eggpect a deposit of ten shillings, also. Will that be all right?"

Dr. Birchmell frowned, for a moment, then his skollerly face cleared again.

"Yes, that'll be quite all right," he grinned. "Unfortunately, however, I left my wad of fivers lying on the grand piano. I suppose you'll axcept my IOU?"

Dame Grubbe shook her head. "Sorry, sir, but it can't be done," she said, with yet another cursey. "I've been had like that before, sir, begging your pardon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Jack Jolly & Co.

The Head skowled.

"You refuse to axcept the IOU of a gentleman?" he cried.

"Well, I mite axcept that, sir, but I couldn't think of axcepting an IOU from a headmaster!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dr. Birchmell flung the tuckshop dame a look of withering scorn which she was just in time to dodge. After that, he hung out of the tuckshop. He pawed in the doorway to make the following dignified retort:

"Blow your blessed tuckshop! Bust your piffing doonut store! I wouldn't take it now if you went down on your bended neeze and begged me to! Yah!"

After that, he stalked back to the Skool House in majestic silence.

## II.

UP the headmaster of St. Sam's was not the kind of gentleman to take defeat easily.

On getting back to his study, he dismissed all thoughts of the tuckshop from his mind. But those thoughts insisted on returning. The picture of tuck contained in Dame Grubbe's little shop kept tantalising him; he could not banish it.

At last, he summoned Jack Jolly into his majestic presence and addressed him as follows:

much good for the Head's present purpose.

By the time Jack Jolly reached the study of Mr. Justiss, the Fifth Form master, he began to realise that his prospects of recovery—something lingering and painful from the Head were becoming distinctly rosy.

When the kapin of the Fourth trotted in, Mr. Justiss was roaring with larier over a comic paper he had recently appropriated from one of his pupils. On seeing our hero, however, his larier ceased and his usual sover eggpression reappeared.

"Well, Jolly?" wrapped out Mr. Justiss. "For what reason have you invaded the privacy of my sunktum, my boy?"

"Please, sir, the Head wants to know if you can lend him ten bob," said Jack Jolly boldly.

Mr. Justiss smiled grimly. "He does, does he? Well, Jolly, you can give him my compliments and tell him there's nothing doing."

"Certainly, sir!"

"You might add, Jolly, that I strongly disapprove of borrowing, in any shape or form," added Mr. Justiss. "Tell the whiskery old bouncer that any further attempts I hear of will be reported to the Gaverners."

"Yes, sir," grinned Jack Jolly. And with that he gave it up as a bad job and returned to Dr. Birchmell's study.

The Head was still waiting, wearing on his face a greedy, avacious look. "Got the dibbs?" he asked eagerly, as Jack Jolly entered.

The kapin of the Fourth shook his head and breeily recommenced his eggperiences. Dr. Birchmell's skollerly die turned pink, then scarlet, then purple, as he listened.

"The mean, sly, mingy rollers!" he hissed. "I feel like giving 'em all a taste of my birchrod! Perhaps, however, that would be inadvisable, so I will content myself by flogging you instead."

"Half a minute, sir!" said Jack Jolly, as a sudden branewavo occurred to him. "Perhaps I can help you myself."

"You?"

"Little me!" grinned the skipper of the Fourth. "As it happens, my pater sent me a big remittance this morning, and I think I can spare ten bob. Suppose we come to terms?"

"By all means!" agreed the Head breeily. "I'll agree to anything you like so long as I get the spondulix."

"What do you want, my boy?"

"Alceyly this—a promise from you not to punish my pals or myself for the rest of the term!"

"Granted as soon as asked!" grinned Dr. Birchmell. "Now let's see the ten bob!"

In return for such a promise, Jack Jolly was only too pleased to part up. He handed over a crisp, rustling note, and the Head, having snatched it away and eggaminated it closely to make sure it was good, rased out of the study and made a bee-line for the tuckshop.

In less than five minutes the deal was concluded, and Dr. Birchmell was the proud temporary owner of the tuckshop at St. Sam's.

On the following day there was the greatest sensation of the term when a newly-painted shineboard was seen over the tuckshop. The shineboard bore the following words:

"ALF BIRCHEMELL.

PURVEYOR OF GOOD TUCK. PARTIES CATERED FOR. STUDIES WAITED ON DAILY."

The sensation was grater still when the fellows entered the shop itself. Standing behind the counter, attired in a chef's hat and white overalls, was the Head himself! Nobody had eggpected to see such a majestic person as the Head dishing up doonuts, carving currant cake, and serving out sausage-rolls. But the uneggpected was always happening at St. Sam's, and that was eggactly what the Head was doing.

Trade was brisk. Everybody was anxious to have the honour of being served by the Head, and the tuckshop fairly echoed with orders.

"Two doonuts, please, sir!"

"Half a dozen jam-puffs this way, shelf!"

"Bottle of jinjer-pop over here, Birchy!" yelled one bold spirit, and there was a roar of larrier.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Meanwhile, the Head rushed to and fro, the inspiration fairly steaming off his fiz.

"Doonuts coming up, sir! Jam-puffs, you said, I believe? I'll have 'em injiner-pop ready in half a minute!" And so on and so fourth.

At the end of the day the Head spent a solid hour counting up the takings. And when he discovered that the prophets exceeded one pound sterling, his delite knew no bounds.

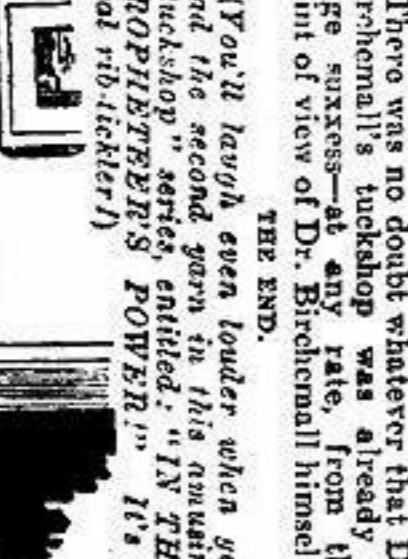
Taking everything into consideration, he felt justified in having a good tuck-in himself.

It was several hours later when he emerged from the tuckshop. His face was shiny and there was a smear of jam round his mouth, and he hummed happily to himself as he returned to the Skool House.

Birchemell's tuckshop was already a huge success—at any rate, from the point of view of Dr. Birchmell himself!

THE END.

(You'll laugh even louder when you read the second yarn in this running "tuckshop" series, entitled: "IN THE PROPHET'S POWER!" It's a real rib-tickler!)



Jack Jolly made a rush for the door as Mr. Lickham grabbed a cane and bore down on him.